



**Budget conference: Private prisons,
pay for state attorneys and public
defenders remain sticking points**

'It's critical,' Sen. Keith Perry said of the need for new prisons.

The Florida House and Senate remain at odds over private prison operations and pay for state attorneys and public defenders after the latest **House Criminal and Civil Justice budget offer** Tuesday morning.

There is nearly \$14 million for private prison operations in the latest House offer, about \$20 million short of the nearly \$34 million included in the Senate budget.

The House also includes \$10.2 million for information technology improvements in the Department of Corrections, about \$5 million shy of the Senate’s preference.

Sen. **Keith Perry**, a Gainesville Republican and the Senate’s top Civil and Criminal Justice budget writer, said he thinks they’ll agree to at least one new prison and one new hospital — short of the Senate’s preference for two new prisons, but “on the right track.”

“It’s critical,” Perry said of the need for new prisons. “We have some facilities that look like the Green Mile when you walk into them.”

Perry said resolving the differences between the chambers over pay for public defenders and state attorneys will likely not happen at the subcommittee level, and will instead likely be “bumped” as issues to the full budget committees later in the week.

One issue that was agreed to was funding for the new 6th District Court of Appeal courthouse. The House offer came to the Senate’s preference of \$50 million for the new structure, which will house the newly created 6th DCA.

Perry and his House counterpart, Rep. **Scott Plakon**, a Longwood Republican, said they plan to meet Tuesday evening.

 Gray Rohrer

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Florida Prisons

Rep. Scott Plakon

Sen. Keith Perry

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