



THE MAYFIELD MINUTE

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Florida's Old and New Capitols

This last week of the 2010 Legislative Session, the House considered legislation which will shape the state budget for the next fiscal year. The focus was to encourage job creation, safeguard our loved ones and encourage the use of renewable energy. With the assistance of several Florida economic development related programs I am hopeful businesses will have the incentive to expand operations and attract new businesses – which will help with much needed job growth for Floridians.

- Rep. Debbie Mayfield

BALANCING THE STATE BUDGET

The House started session this year facing a \$3 billion shortfall. This meant that we had tough decisions which needed to be made and we were required to look for real ways to reduce expenses while continuing to offer Floridians the critical services they expect from their state government.

While we had to make significant cuts, I am pleased that we were able to meet our goals in the budget:

- No new taxes or fees in the 2010-11 budget; we made sure the state lived within its means.
- Protected classroom spending for our schools; \$111 million increase for K-12 education.
- Maintained adequate budget reserves to help maintain our AAA bond rating; saves billions of dollars for taxpayers long term.
- Did not use uncertain federal dollars for essential services and recurring expenses.

The House worked hard to restore the trust of Floridians in the budget process and to make sure that Floridians knew we were being responsible with their tax dollars.

BACKGROUND SCREENINGS

This past week the House passed **HB 7069**, sponsored by Rep. William Snyder, which will close loopholes in the background screening process for individuals working with vulnerable Floridians. Our laws were outdated in regards to the technology now available for screenings and criminals were using loopholes to escape detection. This legislation will help make sure that the people hired as caregivers for our most vulnerable citizens are not criminals looking to prey on Floridians' loved ones.

Should you have any state constituent issues, please do not hesitate to contact Sandi Harpring in my Vero Beach office at (772) 778-5077.



Rep. Debbie Mayfield speaking on the House floor during the 2010 Legislative Session.

Technology Corner:

Twitter

I will be posting updates on my Twitter account and you can stay up to date by following me at www.twitter.com/debbie_mayfield



JOBS FOR FLORIDIANS

In today's challenging economic environment, getting Florida's economy back on track and creating the conditions necessary for job growth has been a top legislative priority. At the same time when Florida businesses are struggling to generate jobs, unemployment is at record levels and the state workforce faces challenging economic times. SB 1752, which passed the House and Senate unanimously, seeks to create the conditions necessary for Florida's businesses to generate jobs. Attracting high paying career sectors of the future to the state will allow Florida to develop a highly-skilled workforce and high paying jobs as it competes in the global marketplace. Florida will be poised for growth once the state economy revitalizes.



Some of the highlights of the legislation include:

- Jobs for unemployment tax credit—a tax credit of \$1,000 per hire for qualified businesses for hiring persons unemployed for at least 30 days;
- Local Government Matching Grants—matches 50% of expenditures by local governments to attract and retain businesses in Florida; state matching grant may be up to \$50,000.
- Permit Extension—provides a two year extension of permits issued by local governments, DEP or water management district that expire between September 1, 2008 and January 1, 2012
- Space Florida—Space Florida will receive \$16 million in order to help fund necessary infrastructure improvements, alleviate workforce reduction issues due to federal cuts to the space shuttle program, and assist with targeted business development.

PROPERTY ASSESSED CLEAN ENERGY

The House passed HB 7179, the Property Assessed Clean Energy financing (PACE), to help create jobs in the renewable energy industry and make it easier for Floridians to adopt renewable energy technology.

- PACE is a no-subsidy, no-mandate, no-cost to taxpayers, consumer opt in approach that can bring clean energy technology and windstorm hardening improvements to homeowners and businesses while creating jobs for Floridians.
- Many families in Florida are struggling to pay their utility bills or ever increasing homeowners' insurance costs because they lack the ability to mitigate those costs through energy efficiency or the hardening of their homes against storms.
- By helping consumers finance the upfront costs for energy improvements, local governments that choose to participate can help remove the largest obstacle to homeowners who want to make their homes more energy efficient and save money.