



THE MAYFIELD MINUTE

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Florida's Old and New Capitols

As the House continues to move forward in crafting the budget, last Tuesday's revenue announcement of a \$3.2 billion budget deficit for the coming fiscal year continues to define the challenges that we face this session.

Therefore, we must remain steadfast in our obligation as legislators to assure our citizens that their tax dollars are spent wisely and effectively.

-Rep. Debbie Mayfield

ENERGY SAVINGS

In today's economy, few homeowners and commercial property owners have the upfront capital to invest in retrofitting their homes or buildings to take advantage of the advances in clean energy technologies and the possible energy cost savings obtained from those improvements.

To alleviate the burden of paying up-front costs, the Energy & Utilities Policy Committee passed P.A.C.E. - Property Assessed Clean Energy - a financing plan that could be utilized to help consumers and businesses pay for retrofitting their properties with clean technology at no cost to taxpayers. P.A.C.E. is a no-cost to taxpayers, no-mandate, consumer opt-in approach to bringing clean energy technology to homeowners and businesses that will help create jobs for Floridians. The projects generated by these private sector clean energy improvements hold the promise of green job creation for Florida's economy.

In addition to helping homeowners save on energy costs, the P.A.C.E. approach also could be used to help homeowners retrofit their homes for windstorm hardening, which should help create savings on insurance costs.

PROTECTING TAXPAYERS

On Thursday, the House passed the Transparency in Private Attorney Contracting Bill (**House Bill 437**) which protects taxpayer dollars by providing a reasonable limit on attorney fees when the Attorney General hires private attorneys on a contingency fee basis.

Florida's Attorney General has the power to hire private attorneys to sue on behalf of Floridians. Floridians deserve to know three basic things about contracts with private lawyers: who is getting the contract, why is the contract required, and how much are they getting paid. This legislation enhances accountability, transparency, stewardship of taxpayer dollars and is a legislative priority of Attorney General Bill McCollum.

There have been multi-million dollar scandals in other states regarding Attorney Generals hiring political contributors to handle these types of cases, resulting in their trial lawyer contributors receiving millions of dollars in fees. The House agreed with Attorney General McCollum that Florida taxpayers deserve protection against those kinds of abuses by elected officials and their contributors who take advantage of the system.

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

Constituent Milestones

102 year B-day March 18th
Geraldine Searl

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

Energy Exploration

You can find information on energy exploration by clicking [here](#).

Session Live:

You can follow daily events in the House of Representatives at www.myfloridahouse.gov.



HIGH PERFORMANCE GOVERNMENT

This week I will be discussing a portion of Speaker Cretul's agenda that we addressed this past week in our committee.

State Agencies Made Efficient: We must ensure that Florida's state agencies are efficient and effective. Therefore, this week HB 7169 passed out of the House Governmental Affairs Committee with my support, that will make state government more efficient and responsive to Florida's citizens. This legislation creates a comprehensive database of state-owned real property using a database under development in the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). This legislation creates greater government efficiencies and will lead to cost-savings through the elimination of redundant databases.

Transparency Florida was created to provide the public with unprecedented access to state government spending. To find out more about this new initiative click the Transparency Florida logo at the top or follow the following link: www.transparencyflorida.com.



VISITING THE DISTRICT 80 TALLAHASSEE OFFICE



I routinely receive visitors from back home. We are starting to receive more than we can put in the newsletter weekly, but be assured we will include all photos from visits in futures newsletters. Representatives from the Florida Onsite Wastewater Association (left) and the St. Lucie County Classroom Teachers Association (right) made the trip to Tallahassee. Thank you to (left to right) Geoffrey Becker, Dennis Abel, Ron Davenport and Derek Woodruff from the FL Onsite Wastewater Association and Vanessa Tillman, Deborah Brothers and Charles Brothers from the Classroom Teachers Association for visiting my Tallahassee office.

TEACHING CIVICS IN OUR CLASSROOMS

Providing our children with a quality education remains one of my top legislative priorities. It is unfortunate that many of Florida's students lack a basic understanding of our government and how it works.

To address this education gap, legislation requiring students to complete at least one semester of civic education passed unanimously in the Florida House of Representatives on Thursday. **House Bill 105**, known as the "Justice Sandra Day O'Connor Civics Education Act" was inspired largely by the advocacy efforts of the former U.S. Supreme Court justice to improve the American public's understanding of its own government. The bill passed the House by a unanimous vote of 115-0 and will require that students entering middle school in 2012-13 will be required to pass a civics course to advance to high school.