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Florida House of Representatives

THE MAYFIELD MINUTE

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Florida's Old and New Capitols

September will be a busy month here in the district and in Tallahassee. The Legislative Delegation Meetings for Brevard and St. Lucie County will take place in early September and the Indian River County meeting will take place at the end of the month. Also this month the 2012 Legislative Session kicks off committee meetings during the week of September 19th. I am looking forward to heading back to Tallahassee to fight the good fight!

I can't tell you how much I appreciate all of the wonderful input I have received from District 80. I encourage you to stay active and engaged in the legislative process and please do not hesitate to contact my district office.

WAR ON BUDGET DEFICITS

Daytona Beach News Journal: August 22, 2011



Lost in the debate on the federal debt ceiling were the plaudits that Florida received in its war on budget deficits. Florida leaders made some tough decisions -- not just slowing down spending but cutting into the budget. It was a very frugal approach on the part of the governor and the Legislature, and the ax-wielding prompted an outcry from various interests. Recognizing the state's new budget, Standard & Poor's raised

Florida's credit rating to the vaunted AAA-stable status in July. That is the same top status the federal government lost earlier this month when S&P downgraded the U.S. to AA+.

Gov. Rick Scott points out that if Florida's credit rating had ticked downward, it would have cost state taxpayers about \$250 million in new interest on its bonds. Now taxpayers can expect lower interest payments on new bonds. The credit upgrade -- for school construction bonds -- puts Florida in a group of tight-fisted, fiscally healthy states that includes Indiana, Virginia, Utah, North Carolina and Minnesota, according to the Tax Foundation of Washington, D.C.

It's interesting to note who is not on that list of top AAA ratings. New York state, which often struggles to pass its large budgets on time, is listed only as AA. California, with its annual gargantuan budget messes, has the lowest rating in the nation: A-. New Jersey, one of the wealthiest states in the nation, has a rating of AA-. Perhaps the ratings prove that high taxes do not bring a state's fiscal house into order. Of the four states hardest hit by the real estate downturn -- California, Nevada, Arizona and Florida -- the Sunshine State is the only one that now has an AAA rating. That is quite an achievement, given the number of foreclosures that shook Florida's economy to the bone.

Florida's constitution requires a balanced budget, so it can be argued that Scott and the lawmakers did what they had to do. But the state's approach to budget-cutting impressed S&P. S&P analyst John Sugden-Castillo said Florida has made "progress in addressing its structural imbalance through significant cost-cutting measures adopted in fiscal 2012 and maintenance of strong reserves." Please click the News-Journal link to read the full article via the Daytona Beach News Journal website.

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IMPORTANT DATES

September 6
North County Library
Office Hours

September 7
Brevard County
Delegation Meeting

September 8
St. Lucie County
Delegation Meeting

September 28
Indian River County
Delegation Meeting

Technology Corner:

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2011 CONDOMINIUM LEGISLATIVE UPDATES



The Division of Florida Condominiums, Timeshares and Mobile Homes will present information on **2011 Legislative Updates** and **Condominium Elections** relating to condominium associations. The seminar will include question and answer sessions and educational materials.

The seminar is free and open to the public. The date, time and location is listed below. Reservations are not necessary. If you need directions, please call the number listed for the location.

Sebastian/Vero Beach

North Indian River County Library
1001 Sebastian Boulevard
Sebastian, Florida 32958

Friday, October 14, 2011, 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

If you have any questions, please contact Patrick Flynn at 850-717-1471 or email at patrick.flynn@dbpr.state.fl.us

NOTICE OF PROPOSED PROPERTY TAXES

Earlier this month, your local Property Appraiser should have mailed you a Notice of Proposed Property Taxes (TRIM Notice) for each piece of property you own. This begins a 25 day period in which you can discuss your value with the Property Appraiser's staff. If you disagree with the Property Appraiser's assessed value of your home, you must file a Protest of Valuation and pay a \$15 filing fee by the deadline contained in the TRIM Notice.

In late September, the Value Adjustment Board (VAB) meets to review any challenges to the Appraiser's assessed value. It is important to remember that the VAB rules on facts relating to the assessed value of the property, not on hardships such as the inability to pay higher taxes.

If you have any questions about the appraisal process or need additional information, you can contact your local Property Appraiser's office.

Local Property Appraiser Contact Information

Brevard County
Jim Ford
321-364-6700
[Website](#)

St. Lucie County
Ken Pruitt
772-462-1000
[Website](#)

Indian River County
David Nolte
772-567-8000
[Website](#)