



**Debbie Mayfield, District 80
Florida House of Representatives**

THE MAYFIELD MINUTE

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Florida's Old and New Capitols

As the 2011 Legislative Session kicks off I want to take this opportunity to communicate my goals. This year, two of the main objectives I have are to keep taxes low and encourage private sector economic activity.

This will no doubt be a very difficult year and I am committed to focusing on what the primary functions of government are and use those principles to re-evaluate how and where citizens' tax dollars are spent. I am looking forward to the start of session and I am committed to fulfilling my duties as your State Representative and I will not shy away from the difficult decisions we are all faced with this year.

Debbie Mayfield

OPENING SESSION

The Opening Session of the Florida House of Representatives will convene in the House Chamber at 10:30 a.m. on Tuesday, March 8, 2011. During the first week of session the House will focus primarily on Committee and Subcommittee meetings with some limited time on the floor. The following bills or their Senate companions are anticipated to be heard during the first week of session:

- **CS/CS/HB 7005**, an act related to unemployment compensation, by the Economic Affairs Committee, Finance & Tax Committee, Economic Development & Tourism Subcommittee and Representative Holder
 1. Will tie the number of available benefit weeks to the unemployment rate
 2. Requires claimants to complete a skills assessment following benefit eligibility
 3. Modifies current law regarding claimant, employer responsibility to clarify when an employee may be dismissed for misconduct and when an employee may be disqualified for benefits.
- **HB 7007 (SB 944)**, a reviser's bill, by the Rules & Calendar Committee and Chairman Aubuchon
- **HB 7009 (SB 924)**, a reviser's bill, by the Rules & Calendar Committee and Chairman Aubuchon
- **HB 7011 (SB 946)**, a reviser's bill, by the Rules & Calendar Committee and Chairman Aubuchon
- **HB 7013 (SB 916)**, a reviser's bill, by the Rules & Calendar Committee and Chairman Aubuchon
- **HCR 7015 (SB 1202)**, a concurrent resolution establishing the Joint Rules of the Florida Legislature, by the Rules & Calendar Committee and Chairman Aubuchon
- **HB 7017 (SB 1204)**, an act related to joint legislative organizations, by the Rules & Calendar Committee and Representative Eisnaugle

The staff analyses for all of these bills have been published and are available at www.myfloridahouse.gov under the "Bills" tab.



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MAYFIELD LEGISLATION

This week, I will have three bills heard in committee. The following legislation will be taken up on Tuesday, March 8, 2011:

- **HB 19 Compensation of County Officials:** I am proud to report that this legislation has received the support of Representative Baxley and Representative O'Toole who have both signed on as co-sponsors. HB 19 is scheduled to be heard in Government Operations Subcommittee on March 8th. This bill authorizes county commissioners and constitutional officers to reduce their salaries on a voluntary basis. Currently, county officials have their salaries set by a statutory formula that accounts for county population. The Florida Legislature has recently given school board members and school superintendents the ability to voluntarily reduce their salaries, and HB 19 would extend this same flexibility to other county officials. Members of the Florida Legislature have reduced their own salaries by 7 percent in each of the last two years.
- **HB 641 Contaminated Site Rehabilitation Tax Credit:** This legislation is scheduled to be addressed in Agriculture & Natural Resources Subcommittee on March 8th. Florida's Brownfields Program provides opportunities for jobs, community revitalization and economic growth and development by encouraging parties to voluntarily clean up and redevelop brown-field sites in Florida. Since the program's inception in 1997, the program has resulted in the creation of nearly 30,000 direct and indirect jobs and approximately \$1.68 billion in capital investment. One of the main tools this program uses is the Voluntary Cleanup Tax Credit Program, or "VCTC". The program currently has an annual funding cap of \$2 million. That \$2 million cap has been exceeded by eligible applicants in each of the last 4 years, creating a backlog of more than \$7 million. Without a viable incentive, participation in this program is expected to drop off sharply, which is why this bill proposes to increase the annual cap to \$4 million. This is a proven program that serves 2 essential purposes: environmental cleanup and economic development.
- **HB 555 Indian River Mosquito Control:** This bill is scheduled to be heard in Community & Military Affairs Subcommittee on March 8th. The Indian River Mosquito Control District provides mosquito control services in Indian River County. This is a local clean-up bill. It updates and modernizes the District's special act in the following ways: clarifies that the District can hire a director and other experts and consultants as needed; revises the process of electing board members to be consistent with Ch. 189, F.S., and the Florida Elections Code; revises expense reimbursement policy to be consistent with Ch. 112, F.S.; clarifies that the District can purchase equipment and modernizes its competitive bidding requirements to be consistent with Ch. 287, F.S.; modernizes the District's authority to issue promissory notes, bonds, and purchase insurance.

CHAMBER DAYS & LIBERTY MAGNET SCHOOL TO VISIT TALLAHASSEE

I am happy to welcome Liberty Magnet School 5th Graders who are scheduled to visit the Capitol on Thursday, March 10th. It is shaping up to be an exciting trip for the group as they will participate in Mock Session, tour the Capitol and Supreme Court. This year Florida's First Lady, Ann Scott, will welcome the students at the Governor's Mansion and facilitate a tour. This trip is sure to be bitter sweet for Liberty's principal Dale Klaus who will retire after this year. Thanks to his efforts Liberty Magnet School has traveled to Tallahassee for the past 9 years and received excellent hands on lessons in civics and Florida history. Thank you Mr. Klaus for your service and dedication to your field.



I will also welcome the Indian River, St. Lucie and Martin County Chamber of Commerce members to Tallahassee this week. The members will travel to the Capitol this week for their 2011 Research Coast Legislative Conference on March 8-10th. Each year Treasure Coast business and community leaders gather in Tallahassee to participate in the Legislative Conference. I am looking forward to welcoming the chambers members this week.