



Debbie Mayfield, District 54
Florida House of Representatives

THE MAYFIELD MINUTE

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Inside this issue:

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| Sun Up ARC | 1 |
| Pension Reform | 1 |
| Other Legislation | 2 |

As the second week of the Legislative session wraps up, I am pleased to report meaningful progress on some key issues. Last Tuesday, the House passed a consequential elections reform bill with overwhelming bipartisan support. My bill, The Cancer Treatment Fairness Act, was unanimously passed by the Health Innovation Subcommittee this week, and is now in the [Insurance & Banking Subcommittee](#). After that, it will be considered by the [Appropriations Committee](#). If you consider this legislation important, please follow the links above and voice your support by contacting members of both committees.

Legislative Assistant
Andrew Liebert

District Executive Secretary
Mayra Hernandez

Vero Beach Office:

1053 20th Place
Vero Beach, FL 32960
(772) 778-5077

Tallahassee Office:

303 House Office Building
402 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399
(850) 717-5054

Toll Free Numbers:

Phone – (866) 857-7289
Fax – (888) 639-0034

District Meeting with Sun Up ARC

Last week, it was my pleasure to welcome a group of Sun Up ARC representatives to the Capitol for a press conference supporting [House Bill 1119](#) and the “End the R Word” campaign. The goal of this nationwide initiative is to raise awareness about the stigma associated with the term “retarded”. I am co-sponsoring HB1119, which proposes that all references to “mental retardation” be replaced with “intellectual disability” in the state law. The federal government and thirty-nine other states have adopted similar legislation, and I believe it is time for Florida to follow suit.



Sun Up ARC, a non-profit organization located in Vero Beach and Sebastian, provides a range of services to developmentally and intellectually disabled individuals. For more information about Sun Up ARC, or to help support their essential services, please see their [website](#) or call 772-562-6854.

Pension Reform: HB7011 Florida Retirement System

We have an obligation to Florida taxpayers and retirees to assure the long-term fiscal stability of our state’s retirement system. The current Florida Retirement System (FRS) is predominantly a “defined-benefit” plan that calculates a government employee’s pension based on the number of years of service multiplied by a percentage of peak salary. The FRS, which serves approximately one million active employees and retirees, also offers a 401(k)-style investment plan as an alternative to the defined-benefit plan.

Continued on pg.2



Email Representative

Important Dates

Saturday, March, 16

Former Secretary of State James Baker lecture at the Emerson Center in Vero Beach. 4 to 7 pm. Tickets \$65-90
Info: 772-778-5249

Wednesday, March, 20

Drug Abuse Resource Symposium: Indian River County Administration building A. 1 to 5 pm.
Info: 772-617-1721

Technology Corner:

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Florida's Old and New Capitols

One setback of the defined-benefit model is that it overpromises and under delivers, and Florida's taxpayers are forced to make up the difference. Currently, the FRS faces a \$19.3 billion unfunded liability, which will require taxpayers to contribute \$500 million to the FRS this year alone. These annual stopgap payments on the pension fund's liability are similar to paying only the minimum payment on a credit card bill; it seems to fix the problem now, but in reality, it just kicks the can down the road. The current system is unsustainable, and pension reform is needed now to protect Florida's future.

House Bill 7011, which was passed favorably by the Appropriations Committee last Friday, would close the traditional pension system to *new* employees, thus limiting them to the now-optional 401(k)-style investment plan. Although the bill's impact would start slowly, it will eventually save billions Florida taxpayers of dollars annually. For a summary of projected savings please see this [article](#).

It is important to understand that HB7011 would only apply to newly hired employees; *if you are a current FRS employee or retiree this bill does not change your pension*. This new model will create certainty for the state and instill confidence for employees already in the FRS system. The new plan would allow employees to be vested after only one year of employment, as opposed to eight years under the current system. Furthermore, the 401(k)-style plan enables employees to gain more control over their retirement funds. This bill faces one more committee stop before it can be considered on the floor.

Other Important Legislation

[HB119](#)- "Freedom from Unwarranted Surveillance Act"

You have likely seen recent news coverage regarding the use of drones in our country. The U.S. Constitution's Fourth Amendment safeguards us against unreasonable searches and seizures. To ensure our fundamental freedoms, it is essential that our Constitutional protections adapt to technological advances of the 21st century.

In an effort to ensure the privacy of Floridians, HB119 would prohibit law enforcement agencies from using drones to collect evidence or other information unless the agency first obtains a search warrant, or other narrow circumstances are met. It also makes evidence gathered in violation of the Act inadmissible in a criminal prosecution in any state court. This bill has now unanimously passed all three of its committees and is awaiting floor consideration. To learn more about the bill, please refer to this [article](#):

[HB13](#): Use of Wireless Communications Devices While Driving

This bill would ban driving when texting, emailing, or instant messaging, as a secondary offense, while still allowing these communications if the vehicle is stationary. A first violation would carry a penalty of \$30. A second violation within five years would be a \$60 fine and license points. This bill has passed two committees thus far, but must be considered by the Economic Affairs Committee before proceeding to the floor.