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Florida House of Representatives

THE MAYFIELD MINUTE

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Considering how busy this week has been, it is hard to imagine there are only three weeks remaining in the 2013 Legislative Session. Although much has been accomplished, these final weeks will be the most productive by far. Many bills have made their way through committees and are now ready for consideration by the full House of Representatives. Therefore, we will spend much of the coming weeks debating legislation on the House floor. Below are highlights of some of this legislation.

It is always my privilege to meet with my local constituents while in Tallahassee. This week, I was pleased to meet with groups including Indian River County Realtors, the Democratic Women’s Club of Indian River County, and the Humane Society of Vero Beach & Indian River County.

As always it is an honor to serve you in Tallahassee.



Florida Realtors “Great American Realtor Days” Rally in Tally

Health Care

The Federal *Affordable Health Care Act* requires states to expand health care coverage, however because of last year’s Supreme Court decision, each state has some choice in how to do so. Both the House of Representatives and Senate have rejected the Governor’s approach of expanding Medicaid in favor of their own alternatives. Aside from Medicaid’s inherent flaws, the primary reason the Legislature has rejected Medicaid expansion is its fiscal risk; States split the cost of Medicaid with the Federal Government, and if Washington decides to contribute less, Florida taxpayers would take on billions of dollars of financial burden. We simply cannot trust the federal government to keep its

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Email Representative

Community Events

April 15

Riverside Theatre
"Israel Can Live With A
Nuclear Iran" Debate
Admission: \$40 for
adults \$12 for students
For more information
click

[Here](#)

April 17

IRC Chamber of Com-
merce Networking
Breakfast:
7:45-9:00 am

For more information
click [Here](#)

Technology Corner:

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Florida's Old and New Capitols

funding promise. Florida's Medicaid spending has more than doubled in the last decade, and now consumes more than twenty-nine percent of our State's budget. It is not in Florida's best interests to increase our reliance on Medicaid.

The House of Representatives proposal, released Thursday, would provide a two thousand dollar annual subsidy to help an estimated 116,000 Medicaid ineligible Floridians buy basic health care coverage from private insurers. From the State budget's viewpoint, this is a defined-contribution rather than a defined-benefit plan, which creates much needed fiscal certainty. It is estimated the House plan would cost about \$237 million per year as opposed the estimated \$1.3 billion cost of Medicaid expansion.

K-20 Education

Friday, the House of Representatives passed a sweeping education bill which revises educational programs and creates funding incentives to increase the likelihood that Florida's public schools, colleges, and universities will better prepare students for future occupations and careers. Research shows that the one-size-fits-all, college-centric focus for today's high school students forces them into a path that may not be relevant to their personal education goals. Our education system must adapt. This bill includes the following changes:

K-12

- Changes high school diploma requirements and creates two designations students can earn through course choices: Scholar and Merit designations
- Makes the high school curriculum more relevant by emphasizing digital literacy and technological competence
- Expands opportunities for high school students to earn industry certifications in various fields by increasing funding to these programs
- Provides for a transition to a new statewide assessment program based on the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards

Higher Education

- Expands state efforts to promote online education by establishing an institute that offers fully online baccalaureate programs
- Establishes goals and standards that encourage our universities to be among the best in the country
- Establishes criteria for the Board of Governors to designate qualified institutions as "preeminent"
- Establishes a "Complete Florida Degree Program" that encourages Floridians who have earned some college credit to finish their degree

Legislation Update

[The General Appropriations Act](#): On Friday, the House of Representatives passed the General Appropriations Act, which is our version of the 2013-2014 Budget. This fiscally responsible budget prioritizes education, healthcare, infrastructure, and reserves. Beginning next week, there will be a Budget Conference to reconcile House and Senate versions.

[HB 301 The Cancer Treatment Fairness Act](#): The Health & Human Services Committee has placed The Cancer Treatment Fairness Act on its schedule for this coming Tuesday. This is great news and I look forward to presenting the bill for the committee's consideration.

[HB155](#): Signed into law Wednesday, this bill effectively eliminates "internet cafes" in Florida by banning electronic gambling devices.