

# THE FLORIDA SENATE



2018 - 2020



# MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



**BILL GALVANO**  
President of the Senate

**W**elcome to the Florida Senate. We are so pleased you have taken time to experience a part of Florida's past, present, and future by walking the halls and chambers where citizen-legislators have gathered for generations.

The Florida Senate is comprised of independently elected women and men of differing walks of life, family backgrounds, and communities of faith. Each Senator comes to Tallahassee carrying the dreams, hopes, goals, and desires of over half a million Floridians. The microphones on our desks amplify not only our voices, but the 20 million Floridians we collectively represent. Only by working together can we effectively and efficiently do the job the people of Florida expect and deserve.

During the 2018-2020 Legislative Term, we have much to focus on in both the short and long term; however, I am very optimistic. I have confidence in our forty Senators and faith in the great State of Florida. We have an amazing history from which to draw guidance, wonderful people to inspire us, and an endless palette to create the future.

My colleagues and I share a commitment to the people of our state, the courage to boldly address the challenges of our day, and a passion for freedom and independence which has defined our nation, our state, and the institution of the Florida Senate throughout our history. You also play an important role in the legislative process, and we encourage you to stay involved by contacting your local Senator with suggestions, ideas, and feedback.

Thank you again for visiting the Florida Senate. I look forward to seeing you around the Capitol.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bill Galvano". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline.

Bill Galvano

# THE FLORIDA SENATE

When the first Senate was convened on January 7, 1839 — six years before Florida became a state — no business could be transacted because only seven of the sixteen Senators were present. There was no quorum of Senators for three of the first four days, and it was not until the fifth day of the first session that Territorial Governor Richard Keith Call addressed the Senate and the House of Representatives in joint session.

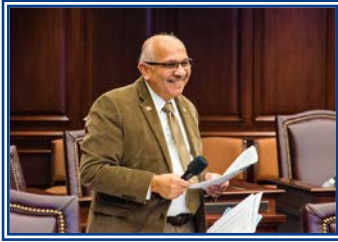
Since the beginning days, the Senate has evolved into a highly organized, smoothly functioning legislative body that meets annually to conduct the people's business. The year-round staff conducts vital research and prepares for the legislative sessions.

The Florida Senate today has 40 members, each elected from a single-member district and each representing approximately 470,000 Florida citizens. Each Senator is elected for a four-year term. He or she may be elected for more than one term, but may not seek reelection if, at the end of the current term, the Senator would have served



in that office for eight consecutive years (see Article VI, Section 4, State Constitution). The Constitution of the State of Florida specifies that Senators must be at least 21 years of age, must be registered voters, must be residents of the district from which they are elected, and must have resided in Florida for two years prior to their election.

While members of the other branches of government work full time in public service, the Legislature maintains its identity as the citizen legislature. Many of the Senators work in a business or profession when they are not carrying out their legislative duties. Their occupations include law, business, education, agriculture, and real estate. “Once a Senator, always a Senator” is a catchy phrase of good fellowship that conveys something of the philosophy of the Senate.



The Senate membership includes 28 men and 12 women. There are 23 Republicans and 17 Democrats. The average Senator is about 55 years old, is married, and has children. Thirty-two Senators have college degrees. Twenty-nine Senators served in the House of Representatives prior to their election to the Senate. The Senate is presided over by a President elected by the members of the Senate. Also elected is the President Pro Tempore. The President for the 2018-2020 term is Senator Bill Galvano from Bradenton. The President Pro Tempore is Senator David Simmons from Altamonte Springs.

Additional information on these officers and the other members of the Senate is contained on the following pages of this handbook. The handbook also further outlines and describes the Senate, its operations, and its relationship to the House of Representatives and the other two branches of Florida government.



Photo courtesy of Ounce of Prevention Fund



# PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

The Senate President is a constitutional officer who leads the Florida Senate for a two-year term. The President, who is elected by members of the Senate, manages the operations of the Senate and presides over its sessions. The President's many duties include: selecting a Majority Leader, appointing Senators to standing Senate committees, appointing committee chairs, and appointing citizens to a variety of boards and commissions.

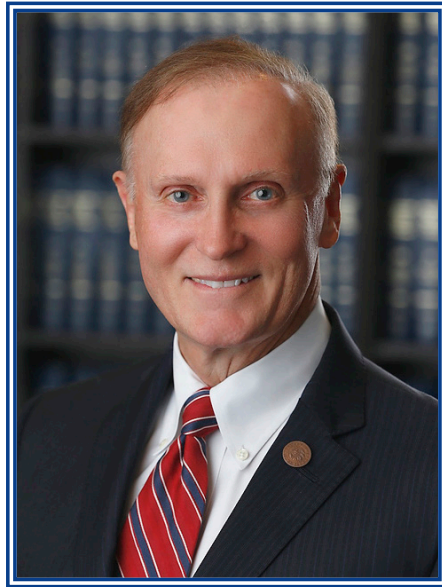


**BILL GALVANO**  
**REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 21**

Attorney **BORN** April 16, in Liberty, New York; moved to Florida in 1969 **EDUCATION** University of Miami, School of Law, J.D., 1992; University of Florida, B.A., 1989; Manatee Community College, A.A., 1986 **SPOUSE** Julie of Bradenton, Florida **CHILDREN** Michael, William, Jacqueline **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2012, reelected subsequently; Majority (Republican) Leader: 2014-2016; House of Representatives: 2002-2010 **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Catholic **RECREATION** Golf **EMAIL** [galvano.bill.web@flsenate.gov](mailto:galvano.bill.web@flsenate.gov)

# PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The role of the President Pro Tempore is defined by the President and the Senate Rules. Additionally, the President Pro Tempore may preside over sessions during the absence of the President.



**DAVID SIMMONS**  
**REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 9**

Attorney; Financial Managing Partner of de Beaubien, Knight, Simmons, Mantzaris, & Neal, LLP **BORN** June 13, in Nashville, Tennessee; moved to Florida in 1977 **EDUCATION** Vanderbilt University Law School, J.D., 1977; Tennessee Technological University, B.S., with highest distinction, Mathematics, 1974 **CHILDREN** Krysia, Alicya **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2010, reelected subsequently; Majority (Republican) Whip: 2010-2012; House of Representatives: 2000-2008 **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Catholic **RECREATION** Tennis, running, Spanish **EMAIL** [simmons.david.web@flsenate.gov](mailto:simmons.david.web@flsenate.gov)

# MEMBERS OF THE FLORIDA SENATE



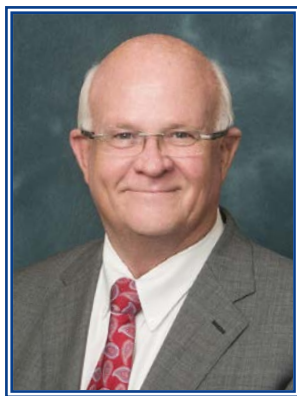
**BEN ALBRITTON**  
**REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 26**

Agribusiness Owner **BORN** August 17, in Lakeland **EDUCATION** Florida Southern College, B.S., Business/Citrus, 1990 **SPOUSE** Missy of Wauchula, Florida **CHILDREN** Rebecca, Joshua, Ryan **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2018; House of Representatives: 2010-2018

**RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Christian

**RECREATION** Spending time with family, reading

**EMAIL** albritton.ben.web@flsenate.gov



**DENNIS BAXLEY**  
**REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 12**

Funeral Director; Consultant for Hiers-Baxley Funeral Services **BORN** August 22, in Ocala **EDUCATION** Miami-Dade College, A.S., Funeral Services, 1975; Florida State University, B.A., Psychology and Sociology, 1974; College of Central Florida, A.A., 1972 **SPOUSE** Ginette Bégín Baxley of Ocala, Florida **CHILDREN** Micah, Justin, Damon,

Jeffrey, Renee **GRANDCHILDREN** Jacob, Joshua, Makayla, Kate Lynn, Martha, Katherine, Hazel, William **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2016, reelected subsequently; House of Representatives: 2000-2007, 2010-2016 **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Baptist **RECREATION** Fishing, reading  
**EMAIL** baxley.dennis.web@flsenate.gov



## AARON BEAN

REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 4



UF Health Jacksonville, Relationship Development Officer; Licensed Auctioneer  
**BORN** January 25, in Fernandina Beach  
**EDUCATION** Jacksonville University, B.S., Finance, 1989; Fernandina Beach High School, 1985 **SPOUSE** Abby of Green Cove Springs, Florida **CHILDREN** Bradley, Gray, Walker **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2012, reelected subsequently; House of Representatives: 2000-2008 **HISTORICAL** Lewis "Red" Bean, father, Fernandina Beach City Commissioner **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Methodist **RECREATION** Family time **EMAIL** [bean.aaron.web@flsenate.gov](mailto:bean.aaron.web@flsenate.gov)

## LIZBETH BENACQUISTO

REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 27



Corporate Development **BORN** December 23, in Rockville Centre, New York; moved to Florida in 1978 **EDUCATION** Palm Beach Atlantic University, B.A. **SPOUSE** Craig Hansen **CHILDREN** Austin, Gabriella, Jackson, Connor, Brock **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2010, reelected subsequently; Majority (Republican) Leader: 2012-2014; Deputy Majority (Republican) Leader: 2011-2012 **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Catholic **RECREATION** Spending time with family, reading, fishing, gardening **EMAIL** [benacquisto.lizbeth.web@flsenate.gov](mailto:benacquisto.lizbeth.web@flsenate.gov)



## **LORI BERMAN** **DEMOCRAT, DISTRICT 31**

Attorney **BORN** June 27, in New York, New York; moved to Florida in 1958

**EDUCATION** University of Miami Law School, LLM, Estate Planning, 2002; George Washington University Law School, J.D., 1983; Tufts University, B.A., 1980, magna cum laude **SPOUSE**

Jeffrey Ganeles of Plainview, New York

**CHILDREN** Caryn Ganeles, Steven

Ganeles **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate April 10, 2018; House of Representatives: 2010-2018 **RELIGIOUS**

**AFFILIATION** Jewish **RECREATION** Skiing, travel, tennis,

reading **EMAIL** [berman.lori.web@flsenate.gov](mailto:berman.lori.web@flsenate.gov)



## **LAUREN BOOK** **DEMOCRAT, DISTRICT 32**

Founder/CEO Lauren's Kids (501(c)

(3)) **BORN** October 12, in Hollywood

**EDUCATION** University of Miami, B.A., Elementary Education, Creative Writing, 2008; University of Miami, M.S., Education, 2012 **SPOUSE** Blair Jacob

Byrnes of West Bloomfield, Michigan

**CHILDREN** Kennedy Grace Byrnes,

Hudson Lee Byrnes **LEGISLATIVE**

**SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2016, reelected subsequently; Minority (Democratic) Leader Pro Tempore: 2016-2018

**RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Jewish **RECREATION** Spending time with family, reading, watching documentaries, cooking, enjoying the sun and the sand at South Florida's beautiful beaches

**EMAIL** [book.lauren.web@flsenate.gov](mailto:book.lauren.web@flsenate.gov)

## RANDOLPH BRACY

### DEMOCRAT, DISTRICT 11

Business Owner **BORN** April 23, in Jacksonville **EDUCATION** University of Central Florida, M.B.A., 2008; University of Central Florida, M.S., Sports Management, 2008; College of William and Mary, B.S., Psychology, 1999 **CHILDREN** London, Brooklyn **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2016; House of Representatives: 2012-2016 **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Christian **RECREATION** Basketball, music **EMAIL** bracy.randolph.web@flsenate.gov



## ROB BRADLEY

### REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 5

Attorney **BORN** August 24, in Green Cove Springs **EDUCATION** University of Florida, J.D., 1996; University of Florida, B.S., Telecommunication, 1992 **SPOUSE** Jennifer of Metuchen, New Jersey **CHILDREN** Connor, Stephanie, Caroline **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2012, reelected subsequently **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Christian **RECREATION** Outdoor activities with family, golfing, Gator football **EMAIL** bradley.rob.web@flsenate.gov





## JEFF BRANDES

REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 24

Real Estate **BORN** February 12, in St. Petersburg **EDUCATION** Carson Newman College, B.S., Business Administration, 1999; Marion Military Institute, A.A., 1996 **SPOUSE** Natalie of Concord, Massachusetts **CHILDREN** Charlotte "Lottie," Colin, Conor, Lizzie **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2012, reelected subsequently;

House of Representatives: 2010-2012 **MILITARY SERVICE** U.S. Army Reserves, Transportation Officer, 1996-2007; Served in Iraq, 2003-2004 **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Methodist **RECREATION** SCUBA diving, travel **EMAIL** brandes.jeff.web@flsenate.gov



## OSCAR BRAYNON II

DEMOCRAT, DISTRICT 35

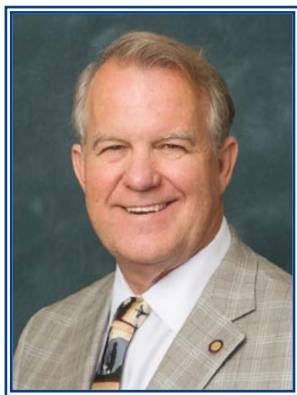
Consultant **BORN** February 1, in Corpus Christi, Texas **EDUCATION** Florida State University, B.S., Political Science, 2000 **SPOUSE** Melissa of Miami, Florida **CHILDREN** Oscar III, Brandon **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate March 1, 2011, reelected subsequently; Minority (Democratic) Leader: 2016-2018;

Minority (Democratic) Leader Pro Tempore: 2014-2016; Minority (Democratic) Whip: 2012-2014; House of Representatives: 2008-2011 **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Episcopal **RECREATION** Basketball, soccer **EMAIL** braynon.oscar.web@flsenate.gov

## DOUG BROXSON

REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 1

Insurance and Real Estate **BORN** March 10, in Pensacola **EDUCATION** Evangel University, B.S.; University of West Florida **SPOUSE** Mary of Shreveport, Louisiana **CHILDREN** Julie, Jason, Judd, Jill **GRANDCHILDREN** Eight grandchildren **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2016; House of Representatives: 2010-2016 **HISTORICAL** John Broxson, brother, Florida Senate, 1966-1972; Clark Broxson, uncle, Florida House of Representatives, 1858-1861 **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Assembly of God **RECREATION** Fishing, golfing, hiking **EMAIL** [broxson.doug.web@flsenate.gov](mailto:broxson.doug.web@flsenate.gov)



## JANET CRUZ

DEMOCRAT, DISTRICT 18

Optician/Healthcare Executive **BORN** July 7, in Tampa **EDUCATION** Opticianry Dispensing, Hillsborough Community College, 1977 **SPOUSE** Dr. Stephen “Steve” Rifkin **CHILDREN** Ana Cruz, Raymond “Nick” Cruz, Stephen Rifkin, Laura McCauley **GRANDCHILDREN** Madison McCauley, Peter McCauley, Teresa McCauley **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2018; House of Representatives: February 23, 2010-2018; Minority Leader, 2016-2018; Democratic Deputy Whip, 2010-2012 **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Catholic **RECREATION** Gourmet cooking, tarpon fishing, watercolor, writing **EMAIL** [cruz.janet.web@flsenate.gov](mailto:cruz.janet.web@flsenate.gov)







## **MANNY DIAZ, JR.** **REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 36**

College Administrator **BORN** March 2, in Hialeah **EDUCATION** Harvard Graduate School of Education, Summer Urban Principal's Institute, 2006; Nova Southeastern University, M.S., Educational Leadership, 1998; St. Thomas University, B.A., Human Resources, 1994 **SPOUSE** Jennifer Diaz of Hialeah, Florida **CHILDREN** Madison,

Grayson, Lexington, Dominic **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2018; House of Representatives: 2012-2018 **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Catholic **RECREATION** Fishing, camping, boating **EMAIL** [diaz.manny.web@flsenate.gov](mailto:diaz.manny.web@flsenate.gov)



## **GARY M. FARMER, JR.** **DEMOCRAT, DISTRICT 34**

Attorney; Founding Partner of Farmer, Jaffe, Weissing, Edwards, Fistos & Lehrman, P.L. **BORN** April 29, in Ft. Lauderdale **EDUCATION** University of Toledo College of Law, J.D., cum laude, 1991, Law Review 1990-1991; Florida State University, B.S., History, 1986 **SPOUSE** Stacey Rogers of Hollywood, Florida **CHILDREN** Hannah Lynn,

Abigail Rose **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2016, reelected subsequently **RECREATION** College football (Florida State Seminoles), hiking, rafting, relaxing in the Smoky Mountains **EMAIL** [farmer.gary.web@flsenate.gov](mailto:farmer.gary.web@flsenate.gov)

## ANITERE FLORES

**REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 39**

**DEPUTY MAJORITY (REPUBLICAN) LEADER**

Attorney; Ace Foundation, Director of Development **BORN** September 8, in Miami **EDUCATION** University of Florida, J.D., 2001; Florida International University, B.A., 1997 **SPOUSE** Dustin Anderson of Sarasota, Florida **CHILDREN** Máximo Monte, Lucas Ignacio **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE**

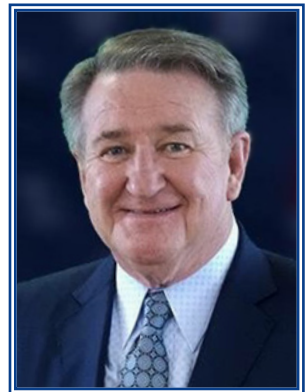
Elected to the Senate in 2010, reelected subsequently; President Pro Tempore: 2016-2018; Majority (Republican) Whip: 2010-2012; House of Representatives: 2004-2010; Deputy Majority (Republican) Leader: 2008-2010 **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Roman Catholic **EMAIL** flores.anitere.web@flsenate.gov



## GEORGE B. GAINER

**REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 2**

Automobile Dealer **BORN** August 26, in Marianna **EDUCATION** Attended Gulf Coast Community College; Bay County High School, 1960 **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2016, reelected subsequently **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Baptist **RECREATION** Antique and classic cars **EMAIL** gainer.george.web@flsenate.gov





**AUDREY GIBSON**  
**DEMOCRAT, DISTRICT 6**  
**MINORITY (DEMOCRATIC) LEADER**

Paralegal and PR Liaison **BORN** March 15, in Jacksonville **EDUCATION** Florida State University, B.S., Criminology; Florida State College at Jacksonville, A.A. **CHILDREN** Two sons, one daughter **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate October 18, 2011, reelected subsequently; House of Representatives:

2002-2010 **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** African Methodist Episcopal **RECREATION** Auto racing, flower gardening  
**EMAIL** gibson.audrey.web@flsenate.gov



**JOE GRUTERS**  
**REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 23**

Certified Public Accountant **BORN** July 6, in Tampa **EDUCATION** University of South Florida, M.B.A., 2003; Florida State University, B.S., 1999 **SPOUSE** Sydney Spence of Citrus Hills, Florida **CHILDREN** Spencer, Jack Ryan, Elle **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2018; House of Representatives: 2016-2018 **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION**

Roman Catholic **RECREATION** College football, mountaineering, heli-skiing, concerts **EMAIL** gruters.joe.web@flsenate.gov

## **GAYLE HARRELL**

**REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 25**

Health Information Technology  
Consultant; CEO Health IT Strategies

**BORN** July 21, in Nashville,  
Tennessee; moved to Florida in 1943

**EDUCATION** University of Florida,  
M.A., Latin American Studies/  
History, 1971; B.A., Spanish, 1964

**CHILDREN** Stephanie, Jennifer,  
Jamie, Melinda **GRANDCHILDREN**

James, Jupiter, Justice, Nicole, Anna, Aaron, Tyler, Nicholas

**LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2018;  
House of Representatives: 2000-2008, 2010-2018 **RELIGIOUS**

**AFFILIATION** Presbyterian **RECREATION** Grandchildren,  
Gator football, travel, politics

**EMAIL** harrell.gayle.web@flsenate.gov



## **ED HOOPER**

**REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 16**

Retired Firefighter; Consus Group, LLC,  
Partner **BORN** August 5, in Statesville,  
North Carolina; moved to Florida in

1972 **EDUCATION** St. Petersburg  
College **SPOUSE** Lee Hooper of

Queens, New York **CHILDREN** Brian,  
Ann **GRANDCHILDREN** Amanda, Arin,  
John, Brianna, Brad **LEGISLATIVE**

**SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2018;  
House of Representatives: 2006-2014 **RECREATION** Golf

**EMAIL** hooper.ed.web@flsenate.gov





## TRAVIS HUTSON

REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 7

Vice President at Hutson Companies

**BORN** October 3, in Jacksonville

**EDUCATION** Lafayette College, B.S., Economics and Business, 2007 **SPOUSE** Tanya Hutson of Easton, Pennsylvania

**CHILDREN** Taylor, Tyler **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate

April 7, 2015, reelected subsequently; House of Representatives: 2012-2015

**HISTORICAL** Malcolm Lawrence Hinson, great grandfather, Florida House of Representatives, 1923 **RECREATION** Fishing, hunting, sports **EMAIL** hutson.travis.web@flsenate.gov



## TOM LEE

REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 20

Sabal Homes of Florida, Vice President and Director; Licensed Real Estate

Salesperson **BORN** January 21, in San Antonio, Texas; moved to Florida in 1969 **EDUCATION** University

of Tampa, B.S., Business, 1984; Hillsborough Community College, A.A., 1982 **CHILDREN** Regan, Brandon, Faith

**LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected

to the Senate in 2012, reelected subsequently; Deputy Majority (Republican) Leader: 2012-2014; Senate: 1996-2006; Senate President: 2004-2006 **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Catholic

**RECREATION** Golf, exercise **EMAIL** lee.tom.web@flsenate.gov



## DEBBIE MAYFIELD

REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 17



Public Servant **BORN** December 2, in Pensacola **EDUCATION** Florida Banking School; Santa Fe Community College; Pensacola High School, 1974 **SPOUSE** Dr. Robert P. Scaringe of Wantagh, New York **CHILDREN** Evan Mayfield, Samuel Mayfield, Coleman Mayfield **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2016; House of Representatives: 2008-2016 **HISTORICAL** Stan Mayfield, late husband, Florida House of Representatives, 2000-2008 **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Catholic **RECREATION** Sailing, boating, fishing **EMAIL** mayfield.debbie.web@flsenate.gov

## BILL MONTFORD

DEMOCRAT, DISTRICT 3  
MINORITY (DEMOCRATIC)  
LEADER PRO TEMPORE



CEO, Florida Association of District School Superintendents **BORN** August 22, in Marianna **EDUCATION** Florida State University, M.S., 1971; Florida State University, B.S., 1969; Chipola Junior College, A.A., 1967 **SPOUSE** Jane Gard Montford of Tallahassee, Florida **CHILDREN** Bill Montford, Katherine Montford Peters **GRANDCHILDREN** Jake, Henry, Wyatt, Ellie Jane, Guy **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2010, reelected subsequently; Minority (Democratic) Policy Chair: 2012-2014; Minority (Democratic) Whip: 2010-2012 **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Baptist **RECREATION** Family activities, sports, reading **EMAIL** montford.bill.web@flsenate.gov



## KATHLEEN PASSIDOMO

**REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 28**  
**MAJORITY (REPUBLICAN) LEADER**

Attorney; Kelly, Passidomo & Alba, LLP **BORN** May 19, in Jersey City, New Jersey; moved to Florida in 1979 **EDUCATION** Trinity University, Washington D.C., B.A., cum laude, 1975; Stetson University College of Law, J.D., 1978 **SPOUSE** John M. Passidomo of Naples, Florida **CHILDREN** Catarina,

Francesca, Gabriella **GRANDCHILDREN** William, Emilio

**LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2016, reelected subsequently; House of Representatives: 2010-2016 **RELIGIOUS**

**AFFILIATION** Roman Catholic **RECREATION** Cooking, opera

**EMAIL** [passidomo.kathleen.web@flsenate.gov](mailto:passidomo.kathleen.web@flsenate.gov)



## KEITH PERRY

**REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 8**

Founder, CEO Perry Roofing Contractors

**BORN** December 3, in Tallahassee

**SPOUSE** Amy Cekander of Champaign, Illinois **CHILDREN** Alexis, Amanda

**LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2016, reelected subsequently; House of Representatives: 2010-2016

**RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Christian

**RECREATION** Gator sports, classic cars,

hiking **EMAIL** [perry.keith.web@flsenate.gov](mailto:perry.keith.web@flsenate.gov)

## JASON W. B. PIZZO

**DEMOCRAT, DISTRICT 38**

Attorney **BORN** May 20, in Somerville, New Jersey; moved to Florida in 2007

**EDUCATION** University of Miami, J.D., 2010; Columbia University, M.S., 2007; New York University, B.A., 1999

**SPOUSE** April of Phillipsburg, New Jersey **CHILDREN** Jack, Julian

**LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2018 **RELIGIOUS**

**AFFILIATION** Roman Catholic

**EMAIL** pizzo.jason.web@flsenate.gov



## BOBBY POWELL

**DEMOCRAT, DISTRICT 30**

Planner and Project Manager, Urban Design Kilday Studios **BORN** In West Palm Beach **EDUCATION** Florida State University, M.S.P., Urban and Regional Planning, 2006; Florida A&M University, B.S., Journalism and Public Relations, magna cum laude, 2003; Leadership Palm Beach County, Graduate, 2011

**LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2016, reelected subsequently; House of Representatives: 2012-2016 **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Methodist; Member of Christian Temple A.M.E. Church, West Palm Beach

**RECREATION** Reading, exercising, spending time with family, participating in activities across the district

**EMAIL** powell.bobby.web@flsenate.gov





## KEVIN J. RADER

DEMOCRAT, DISTRICT 29

Insurance Agent; Business Owner; CKP Insurance, LLC **BORN** October 6, in Detroit, Michigan; moved to Florida in 1972 **EDUCATION** Boston University, B.S.B.A., Accounting, 1990; Lake Brantley High School, 1986 **SPOUSE** Rabbi Amy Leviten Rader of Minneapolis, Minnesota **CHILDREN** Caleb, Ruby, Yael, Ezra **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE**

Elected to the Senate in 2016; House of Representatives: 2008-2010, 2012-2016 **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Jewish **RECREATION** Apiculture (beekeeping), biking, genealogy, listening to Howard Stern, playing with Sunny (my bearded collie), running, spending time with family, travel **EMAIL** rader.kevin.web@flsenate.gov



## JOSÉ JAVIER RODRÍGUEZ

DEMOCRAT, DISTRICT 37

Attorney **BORN** August 8 **EDUCATION** Harvard Law School, J.D., 2006; Brown University, B.A., I.R. Political Economy of Development, 2000 **SPOUSE** Sonia Succar Rodríguez of Miami, Florida **CHILDREN** One child **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2016; House of Representatives: 2012-2016 **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Catholic

**EMAIL** rodriguez.jose.web@flsenate.gov

## DARRYL ERVIN ROUSON

**DEMOCRAT, DISTRICT 19**

Attorney **BORN** July 20, in New Orleans, Louisiana; moved to Florida in 1959

**EDUCATION** University of Florida, J.D., 1980, President, Black Law Students Association; Xavier of New Orleans, B.A., 1977, Drama, Political Science, Urban and Community Involvement; Bishop Barry High School, 1973, Student Council, Track & Field, Key

Club, Drama Club, National Forensic League **SPOUSE** Angela Holmes Rouson of St. Petersburg, Florida **CHILDREN** Sakeisha Winston, Danielle Rouson, Giselle Rouson, Evan Holmes, Daniel Rouson, Emanuel Rouson, Jared Rouson, Aaron Rouson

**LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2016; House of Representatives: 2008-2016 **RECREATION** Reading, public speaking, power walking **EMAIL** rouson.darryl.web@flsenate.gov



## WILTON SIMPSON

**REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 10**

Simpson Environmental Services, Inc.; Simpson Farms, Inc. **BORN** June 28, in Lakeland **EDUCATION** Pasco-Hernando Community College, A.A., 1997 **SPOUSE** Kathy Shotts of Dade City, Florida

**CHILDREN** Lauran Monbarren, Wilton, Jr. **GRANDCHILDREN** Addy, Emy

**LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2012, reelected subsequently; Majority (Republican) Leader 2016-2018

**RELIGIOUS** **AFFILIATION** Christian **RECREATION** College football, boating **EMAIL** simpson.wilton.web@flsenate.gov







## **KELLI STARGEL** **REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 22**

Investment Property Manager **BORN** March 23, in Tampa **EDUCATION** Tallahassee Community College **SPOUSE** John **CHILDREN** Rebekah, Amanda, Robert, Hannah, Laura **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2012, reelected subsequently; Deputy Majority (Republican) Leader: 2016-2018; House of Representatives: 2008-2012

**HISTORICAL** Husband, John Stargel, Circuit Judge; Ancestors: Aaron Jernigan, Florida House of Representatives, 1848; James Lane, Sumter County Sheriff, 1897-1905 **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Baptist **RECREATION** Reading, genealogy, family activities **EMAIL** [stargel.kelli.web@flsenate.gov](mailto:stargel.kelli.web@flsenate.gov)



## **LINDA STEWART** **DEMOCRAT, DISTRICT 13**

Former Insurance Agent **BORN** November 23, in Johnstown, Pennsylvania; moved to Florida in 1949 **EDUCATION** Valencia College; European Studies Abroad **SPOUSE** Jerry of Orlando, Florida **CHILDREN** Sam, Amanda, Courtney **GRANDCHILDREN** Leah, Owen, Brenner, Ben, Liza, Molly **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to

the Senate in 2016; House of Representatives: 2012-2014

**RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Methodist **RECREATION** Mysteries and action movies, reading

**EMAIL** [stewart.linda.web@flsenate.gov](mailto:stewart.linda.web@flsenate.gov)

## ANNETTE TADDEO

### DEMOCRAT, DISTRICT 40

Founder and CEO of LanguageSpeak

**BORN** April 7, in Colombia; moved to Florida in 1985 **EDUCATION**

Dartmouth Tuck School of Business, Advanced Executive Education Program, 2004; Dartmouth Tuck School of Business, Executive Education Program, 2003; University of North Alabama, Commercial Spanish, B.A., 1992;

**SPOUSE** Eric Goldstein, Ph.D., of Miami, Florida **CHILDREN**

Sofia Taddeo Goldstein **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate September 26, 2017, reelected subsequently **RELIGIOUS**

**AFFILIATION** Jewish **RECREATION** Spending time with family, reading, volunteer activities, mentoring, playing with my dogs, travel **EMAIL** [taddeo.annette.web@flsenate.gov](mailto:taddeo.annette.web@flsenate.gov)



## PERRY E. THURSTON, JR.

### DEMOCRAT, DISTRICT 33

Attorney **BORN** January 30, in Pompano

Beach **EDUCATION** University of Miami School of Law, J.D., 1987; Morehouse College, School of Business, B.A.,

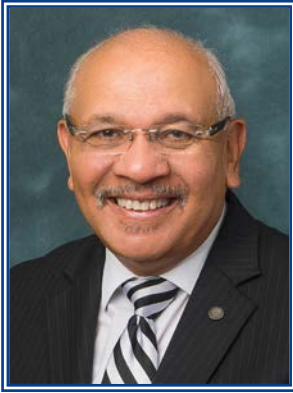
Finance, 1982 **SPOUSE** Dawn Board of Cleveland, Ohio **CHILDREN** Alison Nicole Thurston, Perry E. Thurston III

**LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2016; House of Representatives:

2006-2014; Minority (Democratic) Leader: 2012-2014 **RELIGIOUS**

**AFFILIATION** Baptist **RECREATION** Basketball, football, tennis **EMAIL** [thurston.perry.web@flsenate.gov](mailto:thurston.perry.web@flsenate.gov)





## VICTOR M. TORRES, JR.

DEMOCRAT, DISTRICT 15

NYC Transit Police Detective, retired

**BORN** July 22, in New York, New York;

moved to Florida in 1993 **EDUCATION**

John Jay College; Transit Police Academy, Certificate, 1972, Company Sergeant

**SPOUSE** Carmen L. Rodriguez-Torres of San Juan, Puerto Rico **CHILDREN**

Yvonne Torres, Victor M. Torres III, Justin Torres, Amy Mercado, Melony Marcella

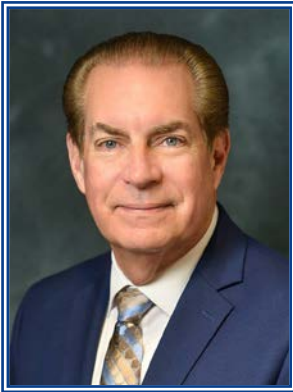
**GRANDCHILDREN** Evan, Eliza, Jeremy, Jaslene, Ivan, Wilfredo, Rebekah, Arielle, Aaron, Carin, Aidan **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE**

Elected to the Senate in 2016; House of Representatives:

2012-2016 **MILITARY SERVICE** U.S. Marine Corps Veteran

**RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Episcopal **RECREATION** Softball

**EMAIL** [torres.victor.web@flsenate.gov](mailto:torres.victor.web@flsenate.gov)



## TOM A. WRIGHT

REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 14

Retired Businessman **BORN** May 16, in Algona, Iowa; moved to Florida in 2004

**EDUCATION** Stewartville Public Schools, High School Diploma, 1970 **SPOUSE**

Cindy L. Copeman of Wykoff, Minnesota

**LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected

to the Senate in 2018 **RELIGIOUS**

**AFFILIATION** Lutheran **RECREATION**

Collecting classic cars

**EMAIL** [wright.tom.web@flsenate.gov](mailto:wright.tom.web@flsenate.gov)

# SENATE COMMITTEES

## STANDING COMMITTEES AND SUBCOMMITTEES

- Agriculture
- Appropriations
  - Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture, Environment, and General Government
  - Appropriations Subcommittee on Criminal and Civil Justice
  - Appropriations Subcommittee on Education
  - Appropriations Subcommittee on Health and Human Services
  - Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation, Tourism, and Economic Development
- Banking and Insurance
- Children, Families, and Elder Affairs
- Commerce and Tourism
- Community Affairs
- Criminal Justice
- Education
- Environment and Natural Resources
- Ethics and Elections
- Finance and Tax
- Governmental Oversight and Accountability
- Health Policy
- Infrastructure and Security
- Innovation, Industry, and Technology
- Judiciary
- Military and Veterans Affairs and Space
- Reapportionment
- Rules

# SECRETARY OF THE SENATE

**A**t its organization session every two years, the Senate elects a Secretary of the Senate pursuant to the Constitution of the State of Florida. This nonmember constitutional officer compiles and publishes the Journal and the calendar, keeps all Senate records, and authenticates each act and resolution passed by the Senate.

Other operations within the Secretary's Office include: bill drafting, bill and amendment filing, duplication and distribution of documents, and other supporting functions. Special chamber computer programs, such as the electronic vote system, are custom designed and operated by the Secretary's Office.

Working with the Office of Legislative Information Technology Services and the Senate Information Technology Director, the Secretary's Office coordinates the development and maintenance of computer applications used by Senate staff. The Secretary's Office maintains Senate information available on the Florida Senate website and on Online Sunshine, the website of the Florida Legislature.

The Secretary speaks to various visiting civic and student groups during the year. The Secretary's Office also hosts numerous mock sessions throughout each year. Staff and facilities are provided for the YMCA Youth in Government, Boys State, Girls State, Florida 4-H, and other youth legislatures.



**DEBBIE BROWN**  
**SECRETARY OF THE SENATE**

**BORN** November 15, in Denver, Colorado; moved to Florida in 1967

**EDUCATION**

Tallahassee Community College: A.A., 2009; A.S., Business Administration and Management, 1991

**SPOUSE**

Larry

**CHILDREN**

Monica, Michael  
**GRANDCHILDREN** Brayden, Maddie  
Grace, Sophie, Hudson

**LEGISLATIVE  
SERVICE**

Elected Secretary of the Senate: January 2012-present; Director: Senate Administration, 2010-2019; Office of the Senate President: 2002-2011; Office of the Senate Secretary: 1993-2002; Florida Constitution Revision Commission Liaison: 1997-1998

**RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION**

Methodist

**RECREATION**

Reading



# SENATE SERGEANT AT ARMS

**T**he incoming Senate President appoints a Sergeant at Arms during each organization session. The Sergeant is responsible for the security and maintenance of the Senate Chamber as well as all Senate offices and property.

The Sergeant at Arms, under the direction of the President, maintains order on the Senate floor and in the public gallery when the Senate sits to do business. The Sergeant at Arms or a member of his staff is also present at each Senate committee meeting and ensures proper order and decorum as required by the Senate Rules.

The Sergeant at Arms also coordinates with the Division of Capitol Police in Tallahassee and local law enforcement throughout the state to ensure Senators, Senate staff, and members of the public can fulfill their responsibilities in a safe and secure manner.

The recorded history of the Office of Sergeant at Arms dates back to the 1400s, though it likely existed well before that because preserving order was essential to the conduct of business in even the earliest legislative chambers. The first Florida Senate Sergeant at Arms was Alfred A. Fisher, who was appointed in 1839 when Florida was still a territory.

## **TIM HAY** **SENATE SERGEANT AT ARMS**

**BORN** June 7, in Hollywood, FL  
**EDUCATION** Florida State University,  
B.S., Criminology; Pat Thomas Law  
Enforcement Academy, Commissioned  
Law Enforcement Officer **SPOUSE**  
Hayley of Miami, Florida **CHILDREN**  
Audrey, Avery **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE**

Sergeant at Arms: 2014-present;  
Assistant Sergeant at Arms: 2011-  
2014; National Legislative Services and Security Association  
(NLSSA): 2014-present; Vice Chairman, Region IV: 2016-present  
**RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Christian **RECREATION** FSU  
football, traveling, biking, hiking, SCUBA diving



# THE SENATE CHAMBER

The Senate Chamber, also known as the “floor,” is the room on the fourth floor of the Capitol where Senators debate the merits of proposed legislation. The current chamber is the fifth used since the first session of the Senate was called to order in 1839. A major renovation occurred in this chamber in 2016, and the renovated chamber was unveiled on November 22, 2016, for the organization session. The chamber now has a timeless design which accommodates modern technology and reflects the design elements of the Florida Historic Capitol.

On the floor above the chamber is the public gallery where visitors may observe the Senate in session. From the gallery, attention is drawn to the rostrum where the President presides. Above the rostrum is the Senate Seal, which was originally adopted in 1972 and revised in 2015 and 2016.

The President occupies the “chair,” pacing the flow of legislation, deciding who will speak, and ruling on parliamentary disputes. The President may call on other Senators to preside while he or she works out the details of legislative proposals.

The portraits hanging below the gallery commemorate past Presidents of the Senate. After each President’s term, a portrait is painted and hung in this area. The portraits are arranged in chronological order with the most recent to the right of the President’s rostrum. Each time a new portrait is added, the oldest one is taken down and moved to the Historic Capitol, keeping 100 years of past Presidents on display in the Senate Chamber.

In front of the President’s rostrum is the Secretary’s desk, which is staffed by the Secretary of the Senate. Legislative business is not properly before the Senate until it is “on the desk.” Clerks at this desk read the bills and amendments and record Senate actions. These actions are published in the Journal, the official record of Senate proceedings.

A Senator who wishes to “approach the well” to make a speech speaks from the Secretary’s desk. Senators have the flexibility to access legislative information from their offices or the chamber by using a custom computer application that is designed to display amendments and bill information.





Voting boards on each side of the chamber record a Senator's green "yes" or red "no" vote. The amber lights you see next to some names indicate that the Senator wants a page to deliver a message or retrieve a file from his or her office. The voting boards also display the number

of the bill or amendment being debated and other information related to the proceedings. Electronic voting was first used in the Senate in 1966, and now nearly all votes are recorded electronically.

The seating arrangement in the chamber is determined by the President. Telephones at each chamber desk provide direct communication with the Senator's district staff. Only members of the Senate and designated staff are allowed in the chamber while the Senate is in session. Certain present and past state officials and guests invited by the President may also enter the chamber during a session.

The Senate rules decree that a Senator address another Senator by title and district number or title and surname. A Senator is "the Senator from the fifth," for example, but never "the gentleman or lady from the fifth." A Senator must not address or refer to another Senator by his or her first name.



Just above the main entrance is the press gallery, where members of Florida's press corps report Senate actions. The remainder of the gallery is open to the public at all sessions, except that a portion of the gallery is usually reserved for the Senators' families and other sections are often temporarily reserved for visiting students.

Robotic cameras from The Florida Channel are positioned in the chamber to provide live, televised coverage of all Senate sessions. Each weekday evening during the session, The Florida Channel and Florida's public television affiliates broadcast "Capitol Update," a live half-hour news program explaining and analyzing each day's most significant legislative developments. The broadcasts are funded by the Legislature, but all editorial content is determined by the group of professional journalists who produce the programs. Florida's legislative telecasts were used as a model for a similar system installed in 1979 in the U.S. House of Representatives. In addition, live and unedited feeds of some legislative events can be



found at [www.flsenate.gov](http://www.flsenate.gov) and [www.thefloridachannel.org](http://www.thefloridachannel.org).

# THE FLORIDA SENATE 2018-2020



PERRY (R)  
DISTRICT 8  
GAINESVILLE



BRAYNON (D)  
DISTRICT 35  
MIAMI GARDENS



LEE (R)  
DISTRICT 20  
BRANDON



BRANDES (R)  
DISTRICT 24  
ST. PETERSBURG



SIMPSON (R)  
DISTRICT 10  
TRILBY



STEWART (D)  
DISTRICT 13  
ORLANDO



GAINER (R)  
DISTRICT 2  
PANAMA CITY



BAXLEY (R)  
DISTRICT 12  
OCALA



HUTSON (R)  
DISTRICT 7  
ST. AUGUSTINE



GIBSON (D)  
DISTRICT 6  
JACKSONVILLE  
*MINORITY LEADER*



WRIGHT (R)  
DISTRICT 14  
NEW SMYRNA BEACH



GRUTERS (R)  
DISTRICT 23  
SARASOTA



ALBRITTON (R)  
DISTRICT 26  
WAUCHULA



HOOPER (R)  
DISTRICT 16  
CLEARWATER



BOOK (D)  
DISTRICT 32  
PLANTATION



GALVANO (R)  
DISTRICT 21  
BRADENTON  
*PRESIDENT*



PIZZO (D)  
DISTRICT 38  
N. MIAMI BEACH



BERMAN (D)  
DISTRICT 31  
LANTANA



POWELL (D)  
DISTRICT 30  
WEST PALM BEACH

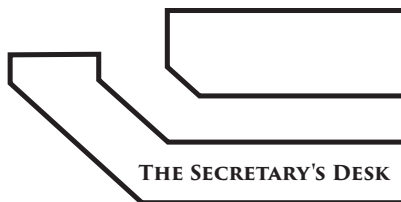


FARMER (D)  
DISTRICT 34  
LIGHTHOUSE POINT

## SECRETARY OF THE SENATE



DEBBIE BROWN



THE SECRETARY'S DESK

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE



**BILL GALVANO**



**SIMMONS (R)**  
DISTRICT 9  
ALTAMONTE SPRINGS  
*PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE*



**PASSIDOMO (R)**  
DISTRICT 28  
NAPLES  
*MAJORITY LEADER*



**BRADLEY (R)**  
DISTRICT 5  
FLEMING ISLAND



**THURSTON (D)**  
DISTRICT 33  
FORT LAUDERDALE



**BENACQUISTO (R)**  
DISTRICT 27  
FORT MYERS  
*RULES CHAIR*



**BEAN (R)**  
DISTRICT 4  
FERNANDINA BEACH



**DIAZ (R)**  
DISTRICT 36  
HIALEAH



**RODRIGUEZ (D)**  
DISTRICT 37  
MIAMI



**FLORES (R)**  
DISTRICT 39  
MIAMI



**STARGEL (R)**  
DISTRICT 22  
LAKELAND



**ROUSON (D)**  
DISTRICT 19  
ST. PETERSBURG



**RADER (D)**  
DISTRICT 29  
DELRAY BEACH



**MONTFORD (D)**  
DISTRICT 3  
TALLAHASSEE



**BROXSON (R)**  
DISTRICT 1  
PENSACOLA



**HARRELL (R)**  
DISTRICT 25  
STUART



**TADDEO (D)**  
DISTRICT 40  
MIAMI



**MAYFIELD (R)**  
DISTRICT 17  
MELBOURNE



**BRACY (D)**  
DISTRICT 11  
OCOCEE



**TORRES (D)**  
DISTRICT 15  
ORLANDO



**CRUZ (D)**  
DISTRICT 18  
TAMPA

**SERGEANT AT ARMS**



**TIM HAY**



# CONTACTING A SENATOR

**S**enators are interested in hearing opinions concerning issues on which the Senate will vote. Below are some tips on how to express those opinions.

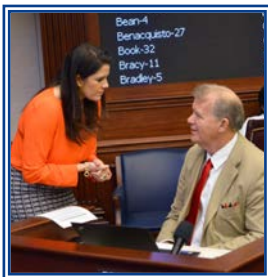


Most people communicate with a Senator by email; however, others communicate by telephone or in person. No matter which method you choose, the same guidelines apply:

- Know the subject matter well.
- Know the full name of the

Senator with whom you wish to communicate and learn the position he or she has taken on the issue.

- Do not use form letters; instead, write the essential points in your own words.
- If representing others from the community formally, or even informally, indicate that to the Senator.
- Be brief in any presentation. Provide supporting documentation with a cover letter.
- Be courteous.
- Be completely fair when presenting the facts.
- Refer to a specific bill by number. This information is available on the Senate website at [www.flsenate.gov](http://www.flsenate.gov). Note that Senate bills are even-numbered and House bills are odd-numbered.
- Always provide contact information so that the Senator or a member of his or her staff can request further data or discussion.
- If meeting personally with a Senator, prepare carefully for the meeting and be on time.
- If the Senator requests more information, be prompt in responding to the request.





# COMMITTEE TESTIMONY

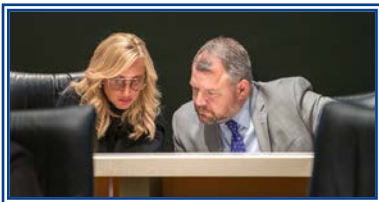
Many Floridians follow bills as they progress through the legislative process. The Senate website provides detailed information on all bill actions through a variety of resources ([www.flsenate.gov](http://www.flsenate.gov)). Senate Tracker is a custom-designed feature that allows the public to track bills, committees, press releases, publications, and more throughout the website; view the latest updates on the Tracker tab; and receive email notifications when those items are updated. Tracker is a free service provided by the Florida Senate and users can sign up for an account online.



Public testimony on issues is an important element of the committee process. A committee appearance record is required by each committee for each speaker on each bill. The form is available at: <http://www.flsenate.gov/UserContent/Committees/CommitteeAppearanceForm.pdf> and in printed form at every committee meeting.

When providing comment on a bill that is scheduled for a public hearing, keep these guidelines in mind:

- Generally, each committee chair follows the order of the bills listed on the agenda.
- Prepare comments in advance and be brief unless asked to elaborate.
- Be specific and to-the-point regarding the bill.
- Be prepared to answer questions from committee members on the position taken on the bill. If you do not know the answer to a question, just say so.



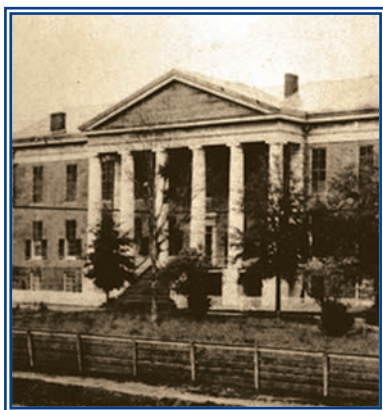
# PRESIDENTS OF THE SENATE



1824 Capitol



1839 Capitol



1845 Capitol

## SESSION PRESIDENT

### Statehood

<b>1845</b>	James A. Berthelot
<b>1846</b>	Dennitt H. Mays
<b>1847</b>	Daniel G. McLean
<b>1848-1849</b>	Erasmus D. Tracy
<b>1850-1853</b>	Robert J. Floyd
<b>1854-1855</b>	Hamlin V. Snell
<b>1856</b>	Philip Dell
<b>1858-1859</b>	John Finlayson
<b>1860-1861</b>	Thomas Jefferson Eppes
<b>1862-1863</b>	Enoch J. Vann
<b>1864</b>	Abraham K. Allison

From 1865 through 1887, the Lt. Governor served as President.

<b>1865-1868</b>	William W. J. Kelly
<b>1868-1870</b>	William H. Gleason
<b>1870</b>	Edmund C. Weeks
<b>1871-1873</b>	Samuel T. Day
<b>1873-1874</b>	Marcellus L. Stearns
<b>1874-1877</b>	A.L. McCaskill* (President Pro Tempore)
<b>1877-1879</b>	Noble A. Hull

\* Presided over the Senate in the absence of Lt. Governor Stearns who became Governor on March 18, 1874, upon the death of Governor O.B. Hart



1891 Capitol



1910 Capitol



1924 Capitol

## SESSION PRESIDENT

<b>1881-1885</b>	L.W. Bethel
<b>1885-1887</b>	Milton Mabry
<b>1889**</b>	Patrick Houstoun
<b>1889</b>	Joseph B. Wall
<b>1891</b>	Jefferson B. Browne
<b>1893</b>	William H. Reynolds
<b>1895</b>	Frederick T. Myers
<b>1897</b>	Charles J. Perrenot
<b>1899</b>	Frank Adams
<b>1901</b>	Thomas Palmer
<b>1903</b>	Frank Adams
<b>1905</b>	Park M. Trammell
<b>1907</b>	W. Hunt Harris
<b>1909</b>	Frederick M. Hudson
<b>1911-1912</b>	Frederick P. Cone
<b>1913</b>	Herbert J. Drane
<b>1915</b>	Charles E. Davis
<b>1917-1918</b>	John B. Johnson
<b>1919</b>	James E. Calkins
<b>1921</b>	William A. MacWilliams
<b>1923</b>	Theodore T. Turnbull
<b>1925</b>	John S. Taylor
<b>1927</b>	Samuel W. Anderson

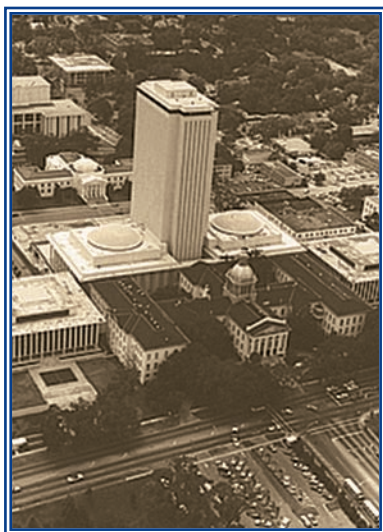
\*\* Extraordinary Session



1936 Capitol



1950 Capitol



1978 Capitol

## SESSION PRESIDENT

<b>1929</b>	Jesse J. Parrish
<b>1931</b>	Patrick C. Whitaker
<b>1933</b>	Truman G. Futch
<b>1935</b>	William C. Hodges
<b>1937</b>	D. Stuart Gillis
<b>1939</b>	J. Turner Butler
<b>1941</b>	John R. Beacham
<b>1943</b>	Philip D. Beall
<b>1945</b>	Walter W. Rose
<b>1947-1948</b>	Scott Dilworth Clarke
<b>1949</b>	Newman C. Brackin
<b>1951</b>	Wallace E. Sturgis
<b>1953</b>	Charley E. Johns
<b>1955-1956</b>	W. Turner Davis
<b>1957</b>	William A. Shands
<b>1959</b>	Dewey M. Johnson
<b>1961-1962</b>	W. Randolph Hodges
<b>1962-1963</b>	F. Wilson Carraway
<b>1965</b>	James E. Connor
<b>1967</b>	Verle A. Pope
<b>1968-1970</b>	John E. Mathews, Jr.
<b>1970-1972</b>	Jerry Thomas
<b>1972-1974</b>	Mallory E. Horne
<b>1974</b>	Louis de la Parte***

\*\*\* As President Pro Tempore, served as Acting President from July 1, 1974, when President Horne resigned until November 6, 1974





1982 Historic Capitol



1989 Capitol



Today's Capitol

## SESSION PRESIDENT

<b>1974-1976</b>	Dempsey J. Barron
<b>1976-1978</b>	Lew Brantley
<b>1978-1980</b>	Philip D. Lewis
<b>1980-1982</b>	W.D. Childers
<b>1982-1984</b>	N. Curtis Peterson, Jr.
<b>1984-1986</b>	Harry A. Johnston II
<b>1986-1988</b>	John W. Vogt
<b>1988-1990</b>	Bob Crawford
<b>1990-1992</b>	Gwen Margolis
<b>1992-1993</b>	Ander Crenshaw
<b>1993-1994</b>	Pat Thomas
<b>1994-1996</b>	James A. Scott
<b>1996-1998</b>	Toni Jennings
<b>1998-2000</b>	Toni Jennings
<b>2000-2002</b>	John M. McKay
<b>2002-2004</b>	James E. "Jim" King, Jr.
<b>2004-2006</b>	Tom Lee
<b>2006-2008</b>	Ken Pruitt
<b>2008-2010</b>	Jeff Atwater
<b>2010-2012</b>	Mike Haridopolos
<b>2012-2014</b>	Don Gaetz
<b>2014-2016</b>	Andy Gardiner
<b>2016-2018</b>	Joe Negron
<b>2018-2020</b>	Bill Galvano

Capitol photos from 1824-1989 courtesy of the Florida State Archives

# SENATE PAGE PROGRAM

**B**e a part of history! The Senate Page Program gives students the rare opportunity to observe and participate in the legislative process.

During a regular session, participating students come to Tallahassee for one week to work in the Senate by distributing materials and delivering messages to Senators and staff. Pages learn about the legislative process through a hands-on approach and experience a “mock session” in which pages role-play as Senators and engage in debating, discussing, and voting on legislation.



Each Senator may sponsor up to two pages (ages 15-18). Professional dress is required. Pages receive a stipend for participating in the program. Students are expected to provide their own transportation, housing, and meals while in Tallahassee. More information regarding this program and the application process may be found on the Senate website at [www.flsenate.gov/About/PageProgram](http://www.flsenate.gov/About/PageProgram).





# OFFICIAL STATE DESIGNATIONS

This is just a sample of the numerous official designations for our state. Other designations range from the state motto and state anthem to the state pie and state horse. A longer list may be found in the Capitol Rotunda between the legislative chambers. A complete listing of the state designations can be found in Chapter 15, Florida Statutes.

Butterfly:  
*Zebra Longwing*



Bird:  
*Mockingbird*



Shell:  
*Horse conch*



Wildflower:  
*Coreopsis*



Animal:  
*Florida panther*



Beverage:  
*Orange juice*



Saltwater mammal:  
*Porpoise*



Marine mammal:  
*Manatee*



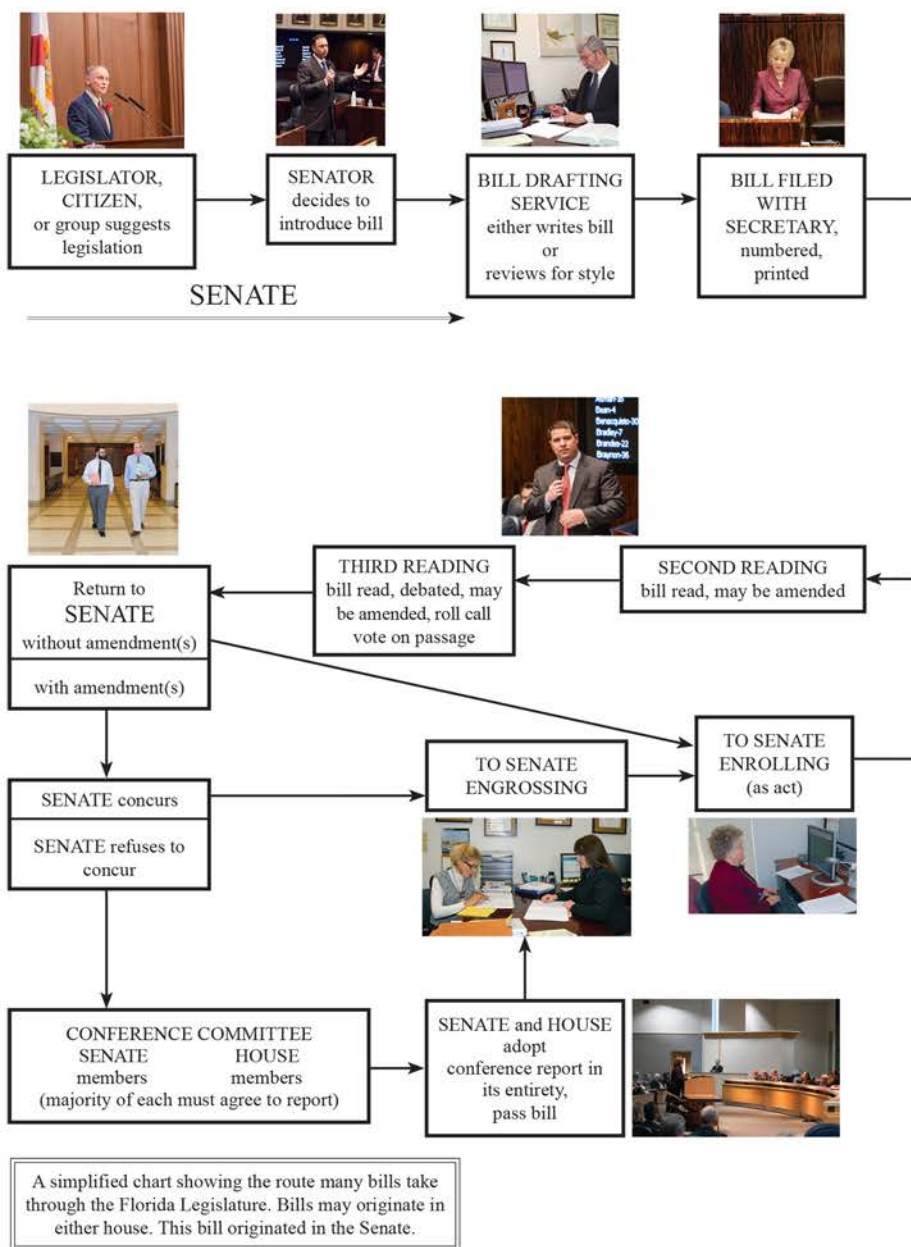
Reptile:  
*American alligator*



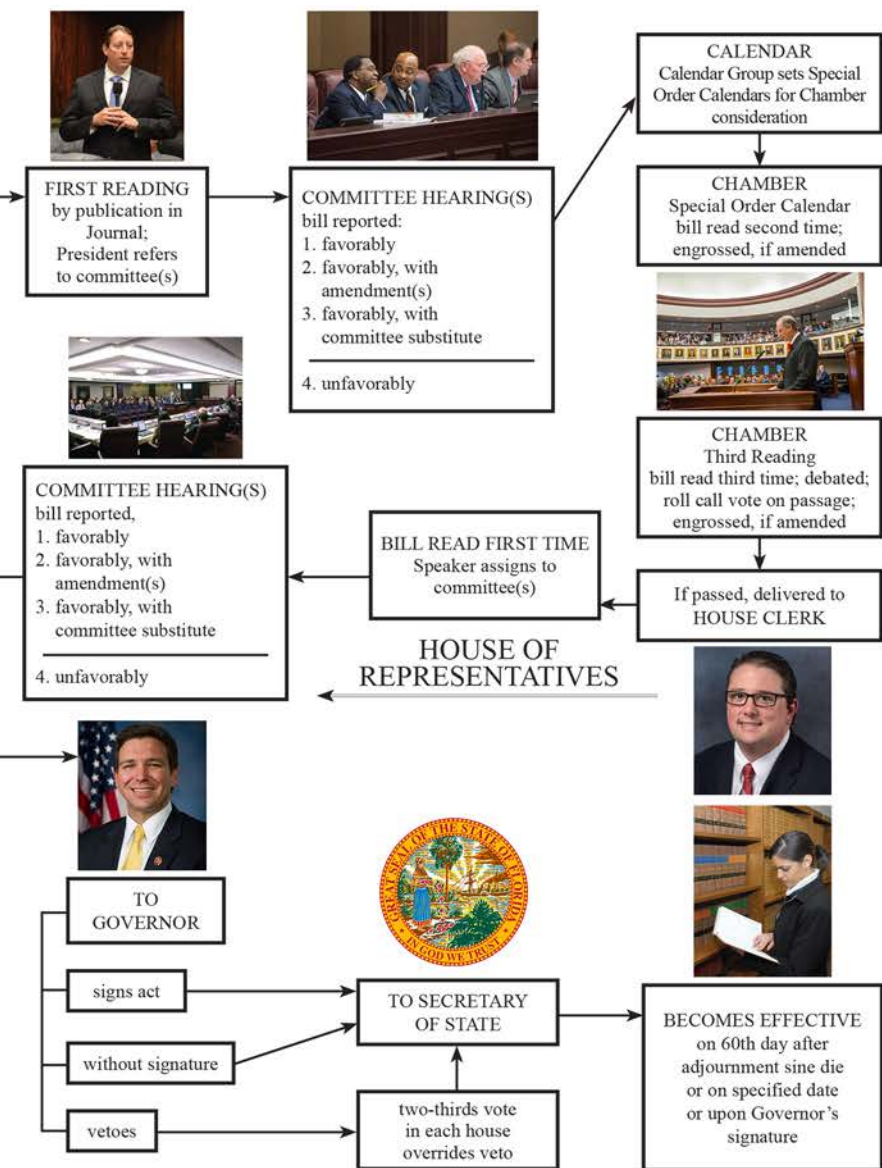
Tree:  
*Sabal Palmetto palm*



# THE FLORIDA SENATE



# HOW AN IDEA BECOMES A LAW



Prepared by the Office of the Secretary of the Senate

# THREE BRANCHES OF GOVERNMENT



**F**lorida's Constitution, in the traditional American pattern of "separation of powers," divides state government into three separate and independent branches. This division of powers creates a system of "checks and balances" ensuring that all three branches properly perform their constitutional duties in the administration of state affairs. Tallahassee is the seat of Florida's state government.

# THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH



Governor Ron DeSantis

**T**he Florida Constitution vests the supreme executive power of the state in the Governor and provides that he or she shall ensure that the laws are faithfully executed. It provides for a Lieutenant Governor to be elected in a joint candidacy with the Governor. The Lieutenant Governor works with the Governor and performs duties as assigned by the Governor, or as otherwise provided by law. The Constitution also provides that the Governor shall be assisted by an elected Cabinet consisting of an Attorney General, a Chief Financial Officer, and a Commissioner of Agriculture.

The Governor, Lieutenant Governor, and members of the Cabinet are elected to four-year terms. They take office on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in January following their election in November of non-presidential election years. The Governor may serve a consecutive term in office unless he or she has served more than six years in two consecutive terms. Cabinet members may not seek reelection if, by the end of their current term, they will have served in that office for eight consecutive years.



# THE JUDICIAL BRANCH



**T**he Judicial Branch interprets the law and applies the Constitution. Florida's court system consists of a series of circuit and county courts, district courts of appeal, and the state Supreme Court.

County courts preside over criminal trials of misdemeanors and some civil cases. They also have the power to issue warrants of arrest. There is one county court located in each of Florida's 67 counties. The number of judges in each county court varies with the population and caseload of the county. County judges are elected to six-year terms.

Circuit courts are located in each of Florida's 20 judicial circuits. Some circuits contain only one county, but most are multi-county. The circuit courts are at the top of the trial system, and they also hear limited appeals from county courts. Circuit judges are elected by the voters of the circuits to serve six-year terms.

The District Courts of Appeal are intermediate appellate courts that receive most of the appeals from trial courts. There are five judicial districts in Florida, with courts located in Tallahassee, Lakeland, Daytona Beach, West Palm Beach, and Miami. Appointed by the Governor to serve in each district court, these judges must be reconfirmed by the voters every six years.

The Supreme Court is at the top of Florida's court system and is the final state court of appeal. The Supreme Court determines the constitutionality of statutes, has the authority to issue advisory opinions to the Governor, and has administrative responsibilities over all lower courts. There are seven Supreme Court justices, each appointed by the Governor and retained by a popular vote every six years.



# THE LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

**T**he Legislative Branch has exclusive lawmaking power and determines the general policies by which the problems of society are to be met. It may delegate limited rulemaking power to some executive agencies.

## **Composition and Organization.**

The Constitution of the State of Florida requires that members of the Legislature be elected at the general election in November of even-numbered years. Florida's Legislature is composed of two houses, the Senate and the House of Representatives. Each house is the sole judge of the qualifications and elections of its members and has the power to choose its own officers and establish its own rules of procedure. All

legislative sessions are open to the public, except when appointments or suspensions of public officials are considered in executive session. Either house of the Legislature may initiate legislation on any subject.



The State Constitution provides that the Legislature shall be apportioned into 30 to 40 senatorial districts, and 80 to 120 representative districts. The 1972 Legislature established 40 Senate districts and 120 House districts. Senators serve four-year terms and representatives serve two-year terms. While a Senator may be elected for more than one term, he or she may not seek reelection if, at the end of the current term, the Senator would have served in that office for eight consecutive years (see Article VI, Section 4, State Constitution).



**Legislative Sessions.** The Florida Constitution provides for the meeting dates for the Legislature. Two weeks after each general election, the Legislature convenes for the exclusive purpose of organization and selection of officers. No legislation is considered during the organization session. During the organization session, each house adopts its rules of



procedure to be followed for the next two years. The rules provide for orderly proceedings and determine how each house will conduct its business.

Regular sessions of the Legislature convene on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in March of each odd-numbered year, and on the second Tuesday after the first Monday in January of each even-numbered year, for a period not to exceed 60 consecutive days. Session may be extended by a three-fifths vote of each house.

Once every 10 years, the Constitution requires the Legislature to reapportion the state's voting districts, convening in January. Special sessions may be called by the Governor, or may be convened by joint proclamation of the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives. Special sessions may not exceed 20 days, unless extended by a three-fifths vote of each house. Each "call" for a special session outlines the business to be considered. Finally, the Senate may resolve itself into executive session to consider appointment to or removal from public office, even when the House of Representatives is not meeting.



**Committees.** A committee functions to consider filed legislation and make recommendations for action to the full body. The Senate and House rules provide for standing committees, subcommittees, and select committees. The presiding officers select the chairs and members of all committees.



Bills are assigned to one or more committees for study. Committees may hold public hearings where committee members hear sponsoring legislators and others who are interested in the bill. The committee may vote to recommend the bill favorably; favorably with a committee substitute; unfavorably; or favorably with amendments to be considered when the

bill is debated on the floor by the respective house.

When the Senate and House are unable to agree on the final content of a bill, it goes to a conference committee. This committee, composed of members of both houses, tries to resolve the differences between the Senate and House versions of a bill.



Other committees commonly used are joint committees, which are composed of members from each house, and select committees, which are usually appointed to make recommendations on special or unique problems.

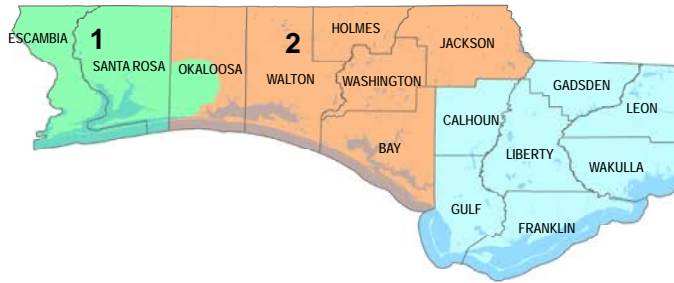
**Lobbying.** A lobbyist is someone who tries to influence decisions made by government. Unless exempted by law or rule, any person who seeks to affect legislation must register with the Lobbyist Registration Office in the Office of Legislative Services before he or she can begin lobbying. Each lobbyist must also state any direct business association or partnership with any current member of the Legislature. Lobbyist firms must make periodic reports on compensation.



**Journals and Calendars.** The Secretary of the Senate and the Clerk of the House each publish daily journals and calendars during the legislative session. Each journal details the proceedings on the floor, committee reports, and related actions of the previous day. Calendars serve as official notification of legislative activities, such as sessions, committee meetings, bills to be considered, schedules, deadlines, and other significant information.

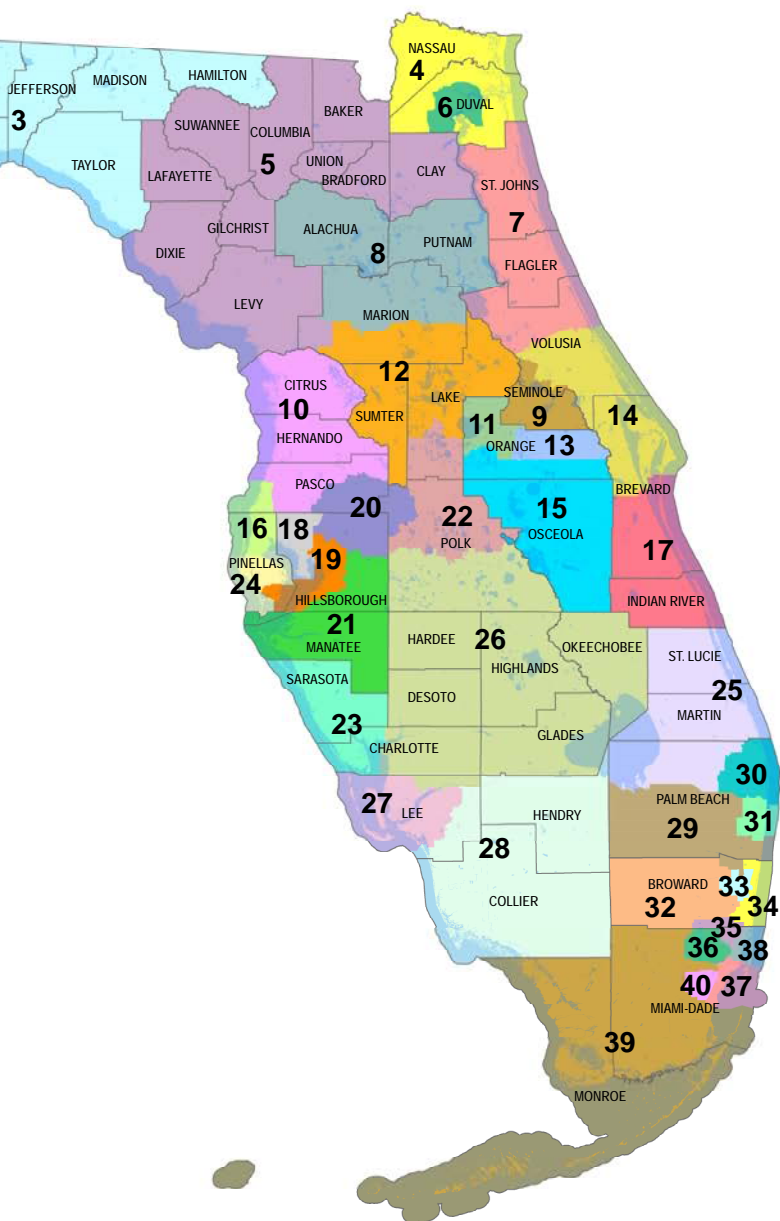
**Forms of Legislation.** Legislative proposals may be in the form of bills, resolutions, concurrent resolutions, joint resolutions, or memorials. A bill is a proposed law, and it may be either a general bill or a local bill. A general bill would have a general impact within the state; a local bill would affect only a particular county, city, or town named in the bill. A majority vote is required to pass a bill, unless otherwise provided in the Constitution. Companion bills are often used as a timesaving device. These are identical bills introduced in both houses, which allow simultaneous committee study in each body. The appropriations bill is one of the most important bills considered by the Legislature. This bill is the state's budget, and it specifies the amount of money available to various state agencies during the next year. The appropriations bill follows the same course as other general bills, but because it is difficult to get both houses to agree on all items in the bill, a conference committee is usually appointed to resolve the differences.





## SENATE DISTRICTS 2018-2020

DISTRICT	SENATOR	DISTRICT	SENATOR
1	Broxson (R)	21	Galvano (R)
2	Gainer (R)	22	Stargel (R)
3	Montford (D)	23	Gruters (R)
4	Bean (R)	24	Brandes (R)
5	Bradley (R)	25	Harrell (R)
6	Gibson (D)	26	Albritton (R)
7	Hutson (R)	27	Benacquisto (R)
8	Perry (R)	28	Passidomo (R)
9	Simmons (R)	29	Rader (D)
10	Simpson (R)	30	Powell (D)
11	Bracy (D)	31	Berman (D)
12	Baxley (R)	32	Book (D)
13	Stewart (D)	33	Thurston (D)
14	Wright (R)	34	Farmer (D)
15	Torres (D)	35	Braynon (D)
16	Hooper (R)	36	Diaz (R)
17	Mayfield (R)	37	Rodriguez (D)
18	Cruz (D)	38	Pizzo (D)
19	Rouson (D)	39	Flores (R)
20	Lee (R)	40	Taddeo (D)



# GLOSSARY OF LEGISLATIVE TERMS

**Act** – A bill passed by the legislature.

**Adjourn** – To end a committee meeting or a day's legislative sitting.

**Adopt** – To vote to accept.

**Amendment** – A proposal to change the original terms of a bill.

**Bicameral** – Consisting of two houses. All states have bicameral legislatures except Nebraska, which has only one house (unicameral).

**Bill** – A proposed law.

**Budget** – A bill that states how much money will be spent on government programs and services.

**Calendar** – A publication containing legislative activities or a list of bills awaiting action.

**Chair** – A legislator who presides over a committee meeting or a session.

**Chamber** – Also known as the “floor,” it is the room in which the Senate or the House of Representatives meets.

**Clerk of the House of Representatives** – The person designated by the House of Representatives to assist the members of the House in the detailed processes of enacting laws and to record that history.

**Committee** – A group of Senators or Representatives appointed by the presiding officer to consider important issues and to report its recommendations for action by the body that originated it.

**Constituent** – A citizen who resides in the district of a legislator.

**Constitution** – The written instrument, embodying the fundamental principles of the state, that establishes power and duties of the government and guarantees certain rights to the people.

**Convene** – To meet in formal legislative session.

**Debate** – To argue the merits of a bill, for and against.

**Decorum** – Appropriate behavior and conduct.

**District** – The area from which a legislator, state or federal, is elected.

**Gallery** – The seating area for visitors located above each chamber (on the fifth floor of the Capitol).

**Governor** – The chief executive of the State.

**Journal** – The official record of the proceedings of the Senate or the House of Representatives.

**Law** – The final product of the legislative process. It is the end result of the introduction of a bill, its passage by both houses, its approval by the Governor (or the overriding of his veto by the legislature), and its recording by the Secretary of State.

**Majority party** – The political party having more than half of the seats in a house.



**Minority party** – The political party having fewer than a majority of seats in a house.

**Motion** – A proposal, usually oral, made to the presiding officer and relating to procedure or action before a legislative body.

**Oath of Office** – An oath or vow taken by a public official prior to taking up his or her official duties.

**Order of Business** – The defined routine of procedure in the legislative body each day. It can be deviated from only by waiver of the rules.

**Passage** – Favorable action on a measure before the legislature.

**President of the Senate** – The presiding officer of the Senate. He or she is designated as President by the majority party in caucus and then elected by the full membership of the Senate for a term of two years.

**President Pro Tempore of the Senate** – Literally, president “for a time.” Elected by the Senate, he or she performs specified duties as prescribed by the Senate Rules or the Senate President.

**Quorum** – The number of members required for the conduct of business.

**Repeal** – The removal of a provision from the law.

**Roll call** – To determine a vote on a question by the taking of names in favor of and opposed to.

**Rules** – Provisions for the procedure, organization, officers, and committees of each house of the legislature.

**Secretary of the Senate** – The person designated by the Senate to assist Senate officers, members, and staff in the detailed processes of enacting laws and to record that history.

**Sergeant at Arms** – The person in each house who is responsible for the security of the legislative house and the maintenance of that house’s property.

**Session** – The period during which the legislature meets.

**Sine Die** – Refers to final adjournment of a legislative session. The term is sometimes used to denote the ceremony involving the dropping of white handkerchiefs, which symbolizes the end of a regular session.

**Speaker of the House of Representatives** – The presiding officer of the House of Representatives. He or she is designated as Speaker by the majority party in caucus and then elected by the full membership of the House for a term of two years.

**Veto** – Return by the Governor to the legislature of a bill without his or her signature; the veto message from the Governor usually explains why he or she thinks the bill should not become a law.

**Vote** – A decision on a question, either affirmative or negative.

# FLORIDA IN THE 116TH CONGRESS



Longworth House Office Building

Washington, D.C. is the seat of the nation's government. The names and addresses of Florida's representatives in the legislative branch may be found online. Further information on each member of Congress may be found at the official websites for The United States Senate ([www.senate.gov](http://www.senate.gov)) and The United States House of Representatives ([www.house.gov](http://www.house.gov)).

## UNITED STATES SENATE



View of the Capitol

The Senate is composed of 100 members, two from each state, elected by the people pursuant to the 17th Amendment to the United States Constitution. A Senator must be at least 30 years of age, have been a citizen of the United States for nine years, and, when elected, be a resident of the state from which the Senator is chosen. The term of office is six years, and one-third of the total membership of the Senate is elected every second year. The terms of both Senators from a particular state are so arranged that they do not terminate at the same time. Of the two Senators from a state serving at the same time, the one who was elected first (or if both were elected at the same time, the one elected for a full term) is referred to as the "senior" Senator from that state. The other is referred to as the "junior" Senator. Senators Marco Rubio and Rick Scott represent Florida in Washington, D.C.



# UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES



**T**he House of Representatives is composed of 435 members elected every two years from among the 50 states, apportioned according to their total populations.

A Representative must be at least 25 years of age, have been a citizen of the United States for seven years, and, when elected, be a resident of the state in which the Representative is chosen.

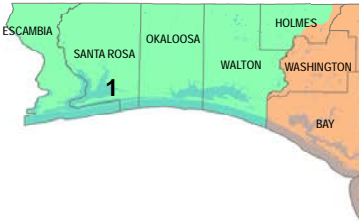
In addition to the Representatives from each of the states, there is a Resident Commissioner from the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico and Delegates from the District of Columbia, American Samoa, Guam, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. The Resident Commissioner and the Delegates have most of the prerogatives of Representatives, with the important exception of the right to vote on matters before the House.

Under the provisions of Section 2 of the 20th Amendment to the United States Constitution, Congress must assemble at least once every year, at noon on the third day of January, unless by law it appoints a different day. A Congress lasts for two years, commencing in January of the year following the biennial election of members, and is divided into two sessions.

Unlike some other parliamentary bodies, both the Senate and the House of Representatives have equal legislative functions and powers (except that only the House of Representatives may initiate revenue bills), and the designation of one as the “upper” house and the other as the “lower” house is not appropriate.

The United States Constitution authorizes each house to determine the rules of its proceedings. Pursuant to that authority, the House of Representatives adopts its rules on the opening day of each Congress. The Senate, which considers itself a continuing body, operates under standing rules that it amends from time to time.

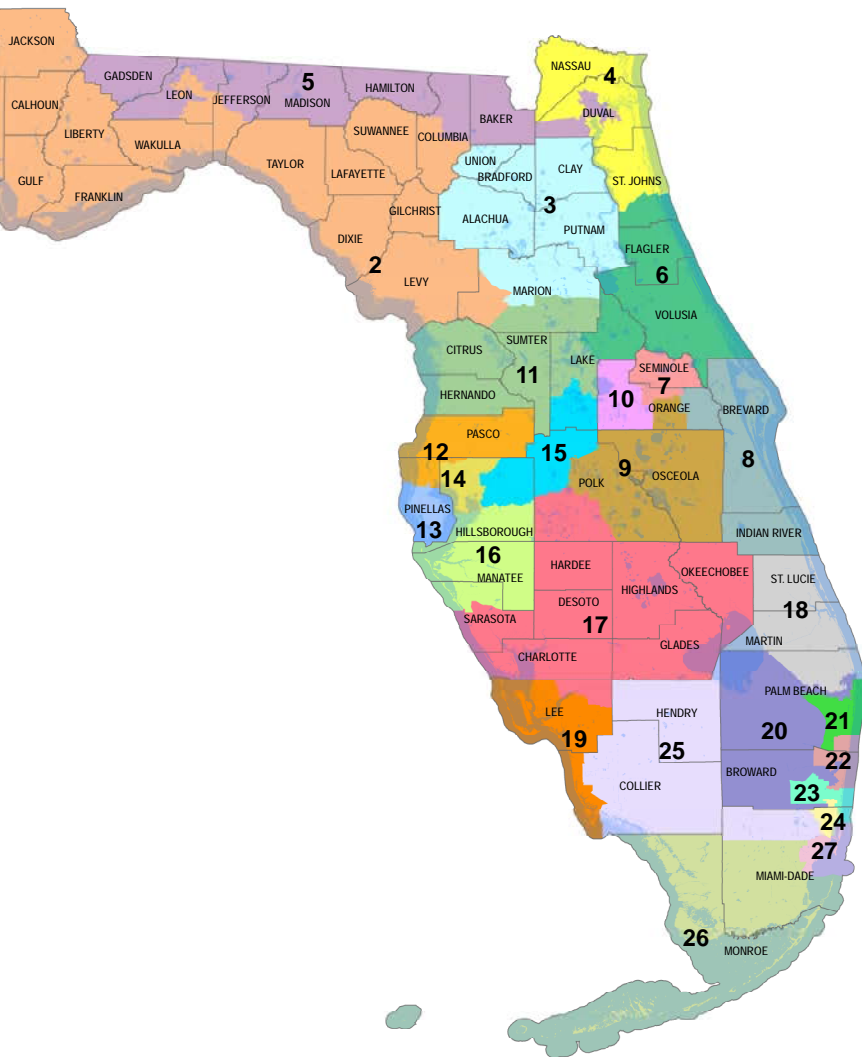
The chief function of Congress is the making of laws. In addition, the Senate has the function of advising and consenting to treaties and to certain nominations by the President. In the matter of impeachments, the House of Representatives presents the charges – a function similar to that of a grand jury – and the Senate sits as a court to try the impeachment. Following a presidential election, both houses meet in joint session on the sixth day of January, unless by law they appoint a different day, to count the electoral votes.



# CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICTS

## 2018-2020

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1. Matt Gaetz (R), Ft. Walton Beach       | 15. Ross Spano (R), Dover                |
| 2. Neal Dunn (R), Panama City             | 16. Vern Buchanan (R), Longboat Key      |
| 3. Ted Yoho (R), Gainesville              | 17. Greg Steube (R), Sarasota            |
| 4. John Rutherford (R), Jacksonville      | 18. Brian Mast (R), Hutchinson Island    |
| 5. Al Lawson (D), Tallahassee             | 19. Francis Rooney (R), Naples           |
| 6. Michael Waltz (R), St. Augustine Beach | 20. Alcee Hastings (D), Miramar          |
| 7. Stephanie Murphy (D), Winter Park      | 21. Lois Frankel (D), West Palm Beach    |
| 8. Bill Posey (R), Rockledge              | 22. Ted Deutch (D), Boca Raton           |
| 9. Darren Soto (D), Orlando               | 23. Debbie Wasserman Schultz (D), Weston |
| 10. Val Demings (D), Orlando              | 24. Frederica Wilson (D), Miami Gardens  |
| 11. Daniel Webster (R), Winter Garden     | 25. Mario Diaz-Balart (R), Miami         |
| 12. Gus Bilirakis (R), Palm Harbor        | 26. Debbie Mucarsel-Powell (D), Miami    |
| 13. Charlie Crist (D), St. Petersburg     | 27. Donna Shalala (D), Coral Gables      |
| 14. Kathy Castor (D), Tampa               |  |





# DID YOU KNOW...



- Florida has had six Constitutions since it became a state. The first Constitution was drafted in St. Joseph, now known as Port St. Joe. Presently, Florida is governed by the Constitution of 1968, as subsequently amended.

- Florida's first Legislative Council, which was supposed to meet in Pensacola on June 10, 1822, did not meet until 44 days later due to hazardous and time-consuming travel.

- Tallahassee was named the state capital in 1824 by Florida's first territorial governor, William P. DuVal.

- The total land area of Florida is 53,625 square miles. The total water area is 12,133 square miles.



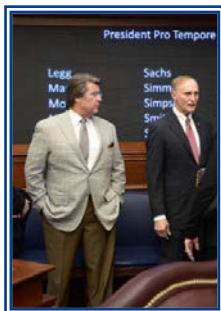
- In 1824, three log cabins were erected in Tallahassee to accommodate the Legislative Council. This was Florida's first Capitol.

- In the 1890s, several efforts were made to move the state capital from Tallahassee. Choices included Jacksonville, Ocala, and St. Augustine.

- Florida's fourth and present Capitol was officially opened on March 31, 1978, by Governor Reubin Askew.



- Construction of Florida's present Capitol required 3,700 tons of structural steel and 2,800 tons of reinforcing steel. The Capitol contains 25,000 cubic yards of concrete, the equivalent of 16 football fields, each one foot thick.



- Florida has been home to such famed writers as Ernest Hemingway, Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings, and Tennessee Williams.
- In 1990, Senator Gwen Margolis of Miami became the first woman in Florida's history to be elected to serve as President of the Senate.
- Toni Jennings was the first Senator in Florida to be elected President of the Senate for two consecutive terms, presiding from 1996-2000. In 2003, she was chosen by Governor Jeb Bush to become Florida's first female Lieutenant Governor following the resignation of Frank Brogan.



- The word "Tallahassee" is of Creek derivation and is frequently translated as "old town" or "old fields." The name may have been taken from the Seminole Indians who occupied the area.
- Juan Ponce de Leon came ashore on the northeast coast of Florida sometime between April 2 and April 8, 1513. He called the area la Florida, in honor of Pascua Florida (feast of the flowers), a popular celebration held in Spain around Easter.

- A prior Constitution in 1868 provided that the Seminole Tribe was entitled to a member in the Florida Senate and House.
- St. Augustine is the oldest continuously inhabited European settlement in North America.



- Snow fell in Dade County on January 20, 1977.
- Dr. John Gorrie of Apalachicola patented the process of making ice artificially in 1851.
- The St. Johns River is one of the few rivers that flows north instead of south, and at 273 miles in length, it is Florida's longest river.



- Founded in 1973 by Rhea Chiles as Florida's "embassy" in our nation's capital, Florida House is owned by the people of the State of Florida. Florida is the only state to have such a facility. It enjoys approximately 10,000 visitors a year. Florida House serves as "home base" for tourists as well as the business community ([www.floridaembassy.com](http://www.floridaembassy.com)).



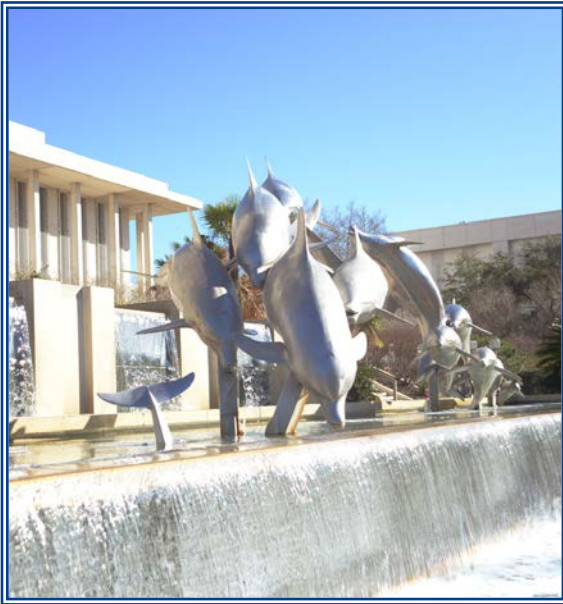
Sidewalk view of the Florida House

- The Buckman Act of 1905 consolidated the state's public institutions of higher learning into three: the University of Florida at Gainesville, the Florida State College for Women at Tallahassee, and the Florida Agricultural and Mechanical College for Negroes at Tallahassee. Florida is now home to 12 state universities and 28 state colleges.
- Florida boasts over 4,500 islands or "keys" ten acres or larger.
- In 1937, Amelia Earhart took off from Miami for an around-the-world flight and was never seen again.
- The first commercial airline service between two U.S. cities was established between St. Petersburg and Tampa in 1914.
- Eight student athletes from Florida universities have won the Heisman Trophy from 1966 to the present.



Officer Down Law Enforcement Memorial,  
Florida Capitol Courtyard

- The unified government of Florida was established March 30, 1822, when President Monroe signed into law the act which provided for a Governor and a Legislative Council of 13 citizens. Florida was the 27th state to be admitted to the United States (March 3, 1845).
- DeFuniak Springs is home to one of the two naturally round lakes in the world.
- Ft. Lauderdale is known as the Venice of America because it has 165 miles of local waterways.
- In anticipation of statehood, 56 commissioners elected from Florida's 20 counties gathered at St. Joseph (Port St. Joe) to draft a constitution. The convention lasted from December 3, 1838, until January 11, 1839.
- Florida's highest natural point is 345 feet, located near Lakewood in Walton County.



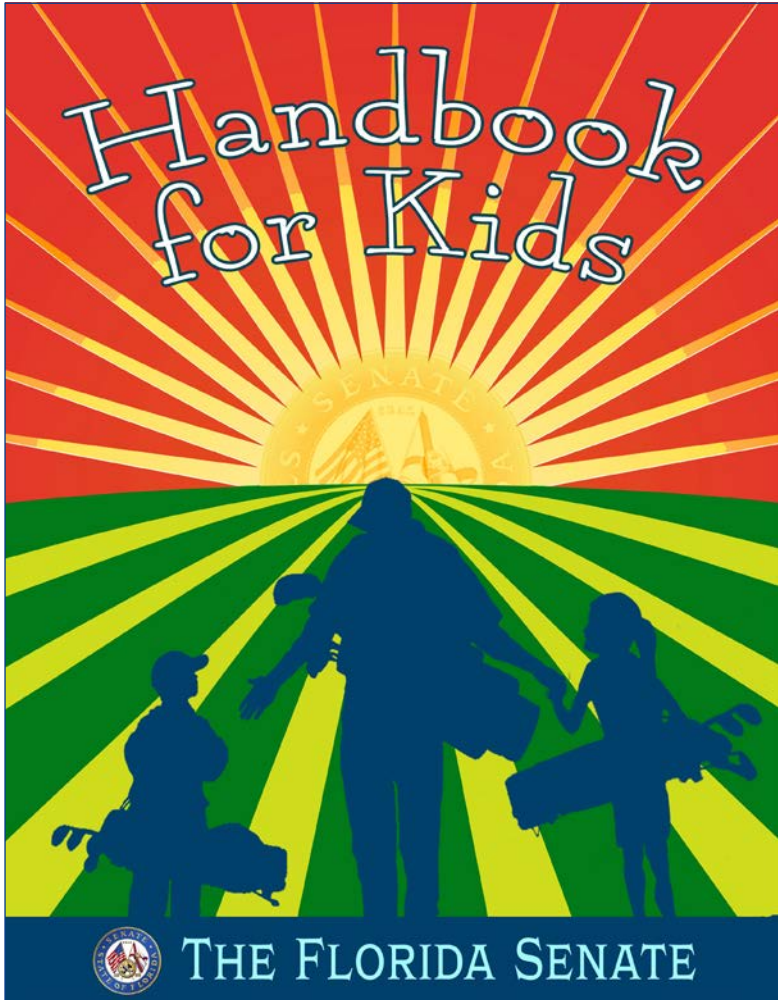
- “Stormsong,” the 50-foot long pod of leaping dolphins in front of the Capitol, is made of stainless steel and recycled aluminum and weighs five tons.
- The Florida quarter was released by the U.S. Mint as part of its 50 State Quarters Program in 2004.
- The first Cuban-American to serve as Senate President Pro Tempore was Senator Roberto Casas, 1996-1998.
- Senator Arthenia L. Joyner was the first African-American woman to serve as Minority (Democratic) Leader, 2014-2016.

Some items were taken from The Florida Handbook (34th ed. 2014), available at <http://www.myfloridahouse.gov/contentViewer.aspx?Category=PublicGuide&File=FloridaHandbook.html>

# Hey Kids, visit us on the web!

We have games, puzzles, fun facts,  
and more about our state.

[www.flsenate.gov/senatekids](http://www.flsenate.gov/senatekids)







This Florida Senate Handbook is published by the Senate. It is distributed free of charge to Capitol visitors and other interested Floridians to enhance their knowledge and understanding of Florida's government, and particularly, the Florida Senate.

Visit the Florida Senate homepage:  
[www.flsenate.gov](http://www.flsenate.gov)



**BILL GALVANO**  
PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE