

FLORIDA SENATE MAJORITY OFFICE

SENATOR BILL GALVANO, MAJORITY LEADER



This Week in the Florida Senate

February 15-19, 2016

Senate Bill 636, Evidence Collected in Sexual Offense Investigations

In response to the Florida Department of Law Enforcement's report to the legislature that the state housed thousands of backlogged and untested rape kits the Senate Appropriations Committee passed Senate Bill 636. Testing these kits has the opportunity to help thousands of victims and the data collected can assist law enforcement agencies catch rapists and prevent future rapes. This bill seeks to improve the speed in which DNA testing of suspected rape cases are processed and enhances the collection and processing of evidence in sexual offenses. This bill establishes time limits for local agencies to submit sexual assault kits to FDLE for testing and requires testing of rape kits to be completed within 120 days.

Senate Bill 7058, Child Care & Development Block Grants

SB 7058

Improves Early Childhood Development Services for Florida's Children

- Creates Performance Standards/Accountability
- ▲ Improves Health & Safety Standards
- Better Coordination of Available Resources
- Establishes Procedures for Successful Transition to School

#CradleToCareer



To improve early childhood development services for Florida's children, the Senate Appropriations Committee approved Senate Bill 7058. The bill increases health standards, safety precautions, and eligibility for child care and school readiness programs for low-income children. SB 7058 also codifies and improves the Early Steps program which serves children with unique abilities from birth to age 3. The Early Steps program and the early intervention services it provides assist families, who have a child with unique abilities, with the necessary skills to help their child in learning and development. This

legislation increases the availability of effective programs, resources, and services to assist Florida's children in early childhood development in a learning environment that is safe and secure.

Senate Bill 912, Fraudulent Activities Associated with Payment Systems

Fiscal Policy Committee approved Senate Bill 912 to protect Florida consumers by increasing the penalties for criminals who steal financial information from customers at gas stations. This bill is a priority of the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (DACS) which inspects the devices used in selling or distributing petroleum fuel in Florida. In 2015, DACS found more than 170 skimmers, or devices used to steal credit card information from consumers, at gas stations across Florida and found that on average, criminals steal around \$1000 from each victim. SB 912 revises the offense in trafficking fraudulent credit cards to ensure those criminals with more sophisticated schemes to defraud the public will receive a more severe and appropriate punishment. The bill increases the penalties against individuals involved in the theft of fuel and requires gasoline pumps to install advanced security measures to assist in deterring this criminal activity.

Senate Bill 12, Mental Health and Substance Abuse

This week, the Appropriations Committee advanced legislation to improve the delivery of Florida’s mental health and substance abuse services. This bill responds to the comments shared by providers, law enforcement, judges and other concerned Floridians over the last several years on the difficulty individuals with complex and persistent illnesses have experienced when navigating Florida’s behavioral health system. This legislation will help people suffering from mental illness and substance abuse disorders by improving coordination among service providers, increasing access to appropriate care, and reducing repeat hospitalizations. SB 12 re-assesses Florida’s current method of providing and funding mental health services through a more pro-active, comprehensive approach to treatment.

SB 12 clarifies the use of involuntary outpatient services to encourage courts to use outpatient services when appropriate and available rather than more costly inpatient care at the state’s treatment facilities. The bill defines the “No Wrong Door” model of behavioral health services as a way of optimizing patients’ access to care regardless of their point of entry into the behavioral health system. SB 12 updates the duties and responsibilities of the behavioral health managing entities to better serve local communities by coordinating care among a full array of behavior health services. In addition, the legislation directs the Department of Children and Families (DCF) to create performance measures and standards to be used in contracts with managing entities and directs DCF, in coordination with the managing entities, to develop a plan to obtain federal approval for increasing the availability of federal funding for behavioral health care.

Senate Bill 676, Access to Health Care Services

To increase access to health care services, particularly in rural counties throughout Florida, the Senate Appropriations Committee approved Senate Bill 676. This legislation expands prescribing privileges for physician assistants (PAs) and advanced registered nurse practitioners (ARNPs) making medical care more readily available to Floridians who reside in communities where physicians are limited and patients have to travel great distances to receive care.

This bill maintains the high standards of training required to prescribe these medications and authorizes PAs and ARNPs to prescribe controlled substances under current supervisory standards for PAs and protocols for ARNPs beginning January 1, 2017, and creates additional statutory parameters for their controlled substance prescribing. The bill requires PAs and ARNPs to complete biennial continuing education on the safe and effective prescribing of controlled substances.

SB 676: Expands Availability of Quality Medical Care



Allows Practitioners with Advanced Medical Training to Better Meet the Needs of Patients

Senate Bill 1722, Termination of Pregnancies

On Wednesday, the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Health and Human Services passed legislation to further protect Florida’s unborn and expecting mothers by ensuring clinics, and practitioners who perform these procedures, are held to the same medical standards as other facilities where similar outpatient procedures are performed. SB 1722 adds protections for women by ensuring practitioners have the proper protocols in place to provide medical care should complications occur following an abortion. The bill requires clinics to have a transfer agreement or admitting privileges with a local hospital so that all physicians who perform abortions can provide the appropriate medical treatment if needed.

In addition, this bill increases state oversight of abortion facilities by taking the appropriate steps to make sure fetal remains are disposed of properly. The bill extends the current prohibition against the sale and donation of fetal remains from an abortion by specifying limits on any disposal of fetal remains and increases penalties for improper disposal. SB 1722 also restricts state agencies, local governmental entities, and Medicaid managed care plans from contracting with, or expending funds for the benefit of, an organization which owns, operates, or is affiliated with facilities that perform abortions. Under the bill, the Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA) would collect certain data from facilities in which abortions are performed and are required to perform annual licensure inspections of abortion clinics and promptly investigate all credible allegations of unlicensed abortions being performed.