

THIS WEEK IN THE FLORIDA SENATE

APRIL 24 - 28, 2017


Senate Unanimously Passes the Dorothy L. Hukill Financial Literacy Education Act

This week, the Senate unanimously passed Senate Bill 392, the “Dorothy L. Hukill Financial Literacy Education Act,” which specifies financial literacy standards and instruction to meet high school graduation requirements. Beginning with students entering the 9th grade during the 2017-2018 school year, high school graduation requirements will include one-half credit in personal financial literacy instruction.

Currently, students are not required to complete a separate course in financial literacy to graduate from high school with a standard diploma, as components of financial literacy are embedded within the economics curricular content.

Senate Bill 392 revises the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards to create requirements for financial literacy, by establishing a separate one-half credit requirement in personal financial literacy.

The financial literacy instruction will include: opening and managing a bank account, balancing a checkbook, basic principles of money management (spending, credit, credit scores, managing debt), completing a loan application, computing federal income taxes, simple contracts, types of savings and investments, and state and federal laws concerning finance. The goal is to increase high school students’ personal financial literacy, enabling them to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to effectively manage personal finances, and better prepare them as they pursue higher education or enter the workforce.



SENATE BILL 392

The Dorothy L. Hukill Financial Literacy Education Act

Preparing Florida's Students to Effectively Manage Personal Finances

Requires high school students to take a course in financial literacy

High school students will learn how to:

- \$ Open and manage a bank account
- \$ Balance a checkbook
- \$ Manage debt
- \$ Complete a loan application
- \$ Compute federal income taxes

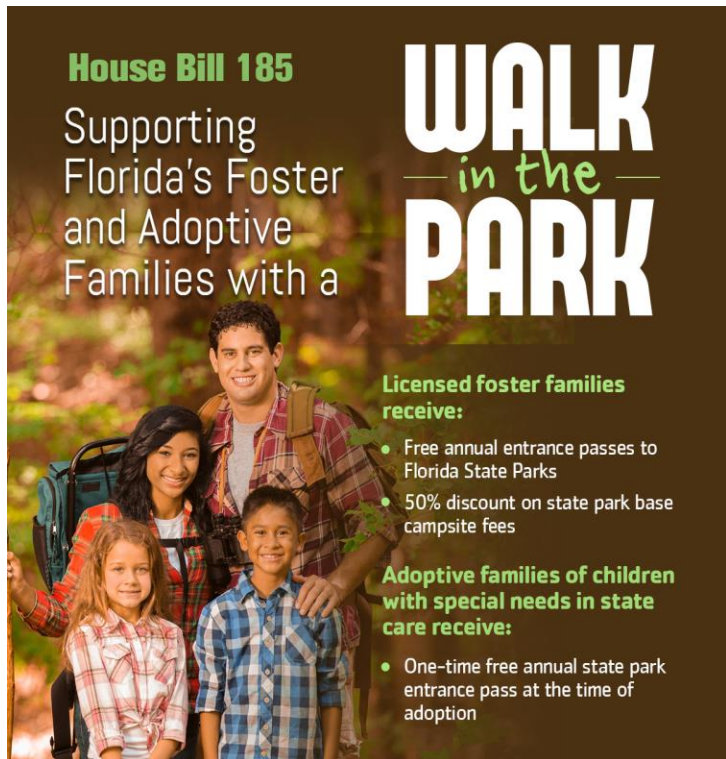
Senate Unanimously Passes “A Walk in the Park” Bill Allowing Foster Families Free Annual Admission to Florida State Parks

The Senate unanimously passed House Bill 185 (Senate Bill 64), State Park Fees, allowing Florida’s foster families free annual admission to our state parks.

The legislation provides that the Division of Recreation and Parks (Division), within the Department of Environmental Protections, to provide free annual state park entrance passes and a 50 percent discount on state park base campsite fees to licensed foster families.

Additionally, the bill directs the Division to provide a one-time free annual state park entrance pass at the time of adoption to families who adopt special needs children from the Department of Children and Families (DCF).

House Bill 185 further specifies that the Division must continue its partnership with DCF to promote fostering and adoption of special needs children with events held each year during National Foster Care Month and National Adoption Month. The legislation encourages foster families and adoptive families to spend quality time at one of Florida’s beautiful state parks, creating wonderful memories with children who have experienced difficult circumstances. This bill ensures that foster families can provide their child the opportunity to have their day for a “walk in the park.”



Legislation Eliminating Taxes on Necessities for Women Advances

The Senate Committee on Appropriations unanimously passed Senate Bill 176, Sales and Use Tax Exemption for Feminine Hygiene Products. The bill creates a sales tax exemption on the sale of essential hygienic products for women, thereby removing the tax associated with the purchase of these necessary items.

Currently, Florida law imposes a sales tax on luxury items such as cosmetics and toiletries, while providing tax exemptions for medical products and other household remedy items used to prevent or treat illness. Senate Bill 176 makes it clear that feminine hygiene products are not luxury items in the same category as toiletries, but rather a necessity for women’s overall health, hygiene, and well-being.

This common sense legislation will address the concerns of the women from all over the state who have been asking for tax relief on these necessary products. Florida stands to join the following states who have passed similar legislation to exempt the sale of feminine hygiene products from sales and use tax: Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, Minnesota, New Jersey, Connecticut, New York, and the District of Columbia.