

The Dean Document

2012 Legislative Session

Greetings from Tallahassee!

Week six of the 2012 Legislative Session flew by with enormous accomplishments. Both Monday and Tuesday were largely focused on the hot-button issue of privatizing 27 South Florida prisons. This provision was inserted through proviso language into the 2012 budget. However, Circuit Judge Jackie Fulford struck the measure down as unconstitutional in September. This year, it was presented as a stand alone bill, Senate Bill 2038. I, along with 20 of my Senate colleagues, managed to defeat this measure 21-19. This was a very tough, emotional vote and I thank all the Department of Corrections officers who made the trip to Tallahassee for their support.



Wednesday was filled with budget discussions as the Senate Budget Committee unanimously passed a \$70.8 billion plan for 2013 fiscal year. I was especially excited to see the panel pass an amendment requiring the Department of Corrections to find \$10.2 million in order to keep Jefferson Correctional Institution open. The amendment will begin the discussion on Correctional Institutional closures and the effect on their local economies.

Thursday rounded out the week with Governor Rick Scott signing SB 2060 / HB 7051 into law. This law supports proposed state water quality rules regarding numeric nutrients which would replace the costly federal rules adopted by the EPA in 2010.

As always, I look forward to bringing you this weeks update. In the meantime, if you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Charles S. Dean



Governor Signs Numeric Nutrient Legislation

This week Governor Rick Scott signed Senate Bill 2060/House Bill 7051, supporting the state's right to direct and establish its own set of scientific criteria for Florida's bodies of water. SB 2060 was sponsored by the Florida Senate's Environmental Preservation and Conservation Committee, chaired by Senator Charlie Dean. The goal of SB 2060 is to support proposed state water quality rules regarding numeric nutrients and would replace controversial federal rules which would be difficult and costly to meet.

Senator Dean thanked Governor Scott for his quick action and continuing the momentum of this successful bill. "Florida is one step closer to replacing unreasonable federal standards with a sanitary, state-run nutrient program designed to protect public health and preserve Florida ecosystems," said Senator Dean. Commissioner Adam Putnam also thanked the Governor "for his swift action to ensure the EPA's costly rules are not implemented, as they could have been detrimental to our state's agriculture industry and business community."

The current standards held by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) hold Florida's drainage canals to the same water quality standards as the state's lakes and rivers. The Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) filed a petition in April with the EPA initiating a rule development for state standards and requesting the EPA to withdraw its federally enforced numeric nutrient criteria and its promulgated criteria. The DEP rules were based on years of research and designed to protect public health and preserve well-balanced Florida ecosystems. These rules, brought on by the DEP, protect Florida water bodies, while the EPA's do so regardless of water body health.

On Thursday, Florida Republican U.S. Senator Marco Rubio announced a companion measure to U.S Representative Steve Southerland's (R-FL) bill forcing the federal EPA to adopt the state's water standards. The bill, entitled the State Water Partnership Act, would ensure the EPA follows the standards passed favorably in the Florida Legislature.

"It's time the EPA stop bullying us into accepting another Washington-contrived mandate which would devastate job creation," said Senator Rubio. He continued, "the EPA needs to step back and realize Florida will not simply stand by as their policies negatively impact Florida's consumers, agriculture producers, municipalities, small businesses, and other job creators."

This legislation would save up to 14,500 Florida agriculture jobs while building upon tremendous success already achieved on the state keep Florida's water clean. Congressman Steve Southerland stated he looks forward to working with Senator Rubio on this legislation, and when it comes to strengthening the health of the waterways, "Floridians comes first."

SB 1610 Protecting Our Children

The Senate Education Pre-k-12 Committee passed Senate Bill 1610 on Tuesday. If signed into law, SB 1610 would require the Department of Education to create a uniform statewide identification badge to be worn by non-instructional contractors who have access to school grounds while students are present.

Under SB 1610, contractors must prove they are a United States citizen or permanent resident alien, at least 18 years of age, and meet the background screening requirements already required by Florida Statutes. A badge would have to be reissued to a contractor every five years. If a contractor becomes disqualified within the five years, they are given two days to return their identification badge to the issuing school district. The next committee stop for SB 1610 before it goes to the Senate Floor for a final vote is the Budget Committee. The companion to SB 1610 has one more committee stop before it goes to the House Floor for a final vote.

Senate Memorial to Honor Vietnam Veterans

Passes on Senate Floor

This week the Senate unanimously passed Senate Memorial 1080. Introduced by Senator Dean, this memorial urges the United States Congress to initiate and support efforts to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the end of the United States' involvement in the Vietnam War, which will take place in 2013. Due to the intense public opposition to the war, there was a lack of a formal "Welcome Home" parade and other traditional celebrations which usually accompany the end of any prolonged war.

Senate Memorial 1080 will encourage national recognition and appreciation for the honorable service and sacrifice of our Vietnam Veterans. When asked about the passing of Senate Memorial 1080 Senator Dean said, "I am glad to see this memorial has passed. As a veteran, this issue has always been very important to me." The Senator added, "This is a victory for all veterans. It is my hope the momentum from this victory will continue on and these men will finally be able to receive the hero's welcome they have always deserved." The companion, House Bill 205, is poised to be heard by the House of Representatives in the near future.

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Correctional Officers from Senate District 3



Florida Coalition for the Homeless