

The Dean Document

2012 Legislative Session

Greetings from Tallahassee!

As expected, Week 8 in the Florida Legislature was filled with budget negotiations between the Senate and the House of Representatives. I was extremely pleased to be appointed to the Transportation and Economic Development budget conference committee. We have been working diligently with our House companions to provide proper funding for our transportation systems as well as our future economic development initiatives, which will bring us out of this current economic atmosphere. We will continue working on the budget into next week, but I will be sure to keep you updated as negotiations continue.



Aside from all the budget action, we had a very busy week passing legislation. Monday began with the passage of Senate Bills 406 and 994. Senate Bill 406 directs the Department of Transportation to erect markers designating portions of highways in honor of certain individuals in counties throughout the state. Senate Bill 994, relating to Environmental Permitting, repeals an obsolete reporting requirement by which the Department of Environmental Protection would have to report to the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House when proposing any changes necessary to accomplish consolidation of state and federal wetland permitting programs. These two bills will now go to Governor Rick Scott for his signature as House Bill 7039 and House Bill 4123, respectively.

Senate Bill 1610 passed the Education Pre-K - 12 Committee on Tuesday. This bill streamlines the identification process for contractors working in multiple school districts by directing the Department of Education to develop a statewide, uniform badge to be worn by contractors while on school property. Also on Tuesday, SB 804, relating to Fish and Wildlife Conservation, passed out of the Budget Committee.

As we enter the final week of the 2012 Legislative Session, I ask you to please contact me with any concerns or questions you may have.

Sincerely,



Question and Answer: Breaking Down Senate Bill 820

Question: What is the intention of Senate Bill 820?

Answer: SB 820 will repeal the mandatory statewide septic tank inspection program established in SB 550.

Question: What program will protect the Springs if 550 is repealed?

Answer: The proposed legislation will establish an optional, standard inspection program for all counties and municipalities to be administered by county health departments. The program requires septic systems be inspected every 5 years for structural and operational integrity and be pumped.

Question: Will this be a statewide mandate?

Answer: No, Senate Bill 820 will require counties or municipalities containing a first magnitude spring to adopt the program or opt out of the program before January 1, 2013.

Question: What if a county feels they have addressed the issue of onsite water treatment systems?

Answer: A county or municipality may adopt the program in all or part of its geographic jurisdiction. All counties and municipalities have the ability to opt out of the program.

Question: How will this effect counties with established programs?

Answer: SB 820 grandfathers existing county or municipality programs established prior to July 1, 2011, provided the existing program does not require an evaluation at the point of sale in a real estate transaction.

Seven Rivers Christian School Stopped by The Florida Senate

On Wednesday and Thursday the Seven Rivers Christian School of Lecanto visited Tallahassee. During the two day field trip the 5th Grade class was introduced to the legislative process through first hand experiences. The children took tours of the Capitol and were introduced to members of the Citrus County delegation along with members of the Cabinet.

If you have a class interested in visiting the Capitol, please contact our office to help schedule tours at 850-487-5017.



911 Dispatchers

On Friday, the Senate gave its unanimous approval to Senate Bill 514/House Bill 1227. Sponsored by Senator Dean this bill allows the requirements as a 911 dispatcher to be waived for state-certified law enforcement. The law enforcement officer who acts as a 911 dispatcher must be selected by his or her chief executive, such as a sheriff or police chief, and may only act as a dispatcher on a temporary basis.



The law enforcement officer must also pass the department approved proficiency exam. If the officer fails the exam, they must take a department approved public safety dispatcher training program before retaking the test. The bill also passed the House of Representatives by a unanimous vote and is now awaiting action by Governor Scott. If Governor Scott does not sign or veto the bill within fifteen days of the bill being presented to him, the bill is automatically enacted.

SB 802 Opening the Outdoors to the Citizens of Florida

Senator Dean's Senate Bill 802 was passed by the Budget Subcommittee on General Government Appropriations on Tuesday by a 6-0 vote. Senate Bill 802 provides more opportunities for the public to enjoy outdoor recreational activities and provides limited liability protection to landowners who allow the public onto their lands for this purpose. This bill covers any landowners who makes their land available to any person primarily for hunting, fishing or wildlife viewing. It also covers landowners who enter into a written agreement with the State to use their land for these purposes.

Landowners must meet two qualifications to receive protection. First, they must give notice to those using the lands showing the landowner has limitation of liability. Second, they must not charge or make a profit off of the use the land. Finally, this bill will not relieve landowners of liability for intentional injury to people or property on their land. Senate Bill 802 is ready to be taken to the Senate floor for a vote by the entire Florida Senate. House Bill 313, the companion to SB 802, was passed unanimously by the House of Representatives and is awaiting passage of SB 802 in the Senate.



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Taylor County Development Authority



Severn Rivers Christian School in front of the Senate Chambers

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