



WEEK TWO

MARCH 10-14, 2014

### MORAL MONDAY MARCH

The second week of the 2014 Legislative Session began with songs, chants, and powerful speeches echoing from the front steps of the Florida Capitol. Reverend Al Sharpton, Congresswoman Corrine Brown, Democratic members of the Florida legislature and community leaders rallied in front of the Florida Capitol urging the Republican-controlled legislature to amend Stand Your Ground. They were joined in the march by hundreds of Floridians, as well as the parents of Trayvon Martin Jordan Davis, Kendrick Johnson, and Michael Giles along with the family members of Marissa Alexander and Emmett Till. Following the march, victims of the Stand Your Ground law testified before the Criminal Justice Committee pleading with the Chair, Senator Evers, to place **Senate Bill 122 - Self Defense** by Leader Smith on the agenda. This bill will fix some of the major problems with the Stand Your Ground law. For more information about Senator Smith's bill please visit [www.floridastandyourground.org](http://www.floridastandyourground.org)

### IN LOVING MEMORY

On Thursday, March 13, 2014, the great state of Florida lost one of its most revered public servants, Governor Reubin O'Donovan Askew. He served from 1970-1978. Governor Askew played a pivotal role in establishing the corporate income tax, passing the "Sunshine Amendment" as well as appointing the first Black judge to the Florida Supreme Court since reconstruction, Joseph W. Hatchett. Even after leaving office, he continued to serve by teaching at ten of Florida's eleven major public universities. At heart, Governor Askew was a great servant and leader in the Florida but most importantly, he was a compassionate and caring friend. His legacy will forever remain a cornerstone of our state.

### MY BILLS AND PRIORITIES

**Senate Bill 238 - Public Records/Names of Spouses and Children of Public Defenders and Criminal Conflict and Civil Regional Counsel** passed unanimously on the senate floor. My bill will allow the public defender human resources staff, secretaries, or receptionists to decline to provide the name of the child or spouse of an attorney to any unidentified member of the public who may request it.

**Senate Bill 826 - Trusts** will offer much needed liability protection for Florida's financial institutions to act as trustees rather than lose business to other states. My bill passed favorably in the Judiciary Committee.

### BILLS ON WATCH

- **Senate Bill 7068 - Elections** by the Ethics and Elections committee creates an online voter registration system and eliminates remote ballot drop off locations as an option to return absentee/mail ballots.
- **Senate Bill 188 - Education Data Privacy** by Senator Hukill provides for yearly notices to K-12 grade students and parents of their rights relating to education records and prohibit school districts from

collecting bio-metric information, including the characteristics of an individual's fingerprints, hands, eyes and voice. It would affect the Pinellas County district, which currently allows schools to scan student palms instead of accepting cash in the cafeteria and other school systems using fingerprint scanners.

- **Senate Bill 1030 - Medical Grade Marijuana and Cannabis** by Senator Bradley allows for a low usage of medical marijuana for patients who have been treated for six or more months suffering with severe and chronic seizures or muscle spasms.
- **Senate Bill 416 - Sinkhole Coverage** by Senator Simpson would require state-run Citizens Property Insurance Corp. policyholders to choose from company approved contractors to fix sinkhole damage to their homes. I oppose the bill because sinkhole coverage is presently in place and there is no need to reinvent the wheel.
- **Senate Joint Resolution 1188 - Prospective Appointment of Judicial Vacancies** by Senator Lee would amend the State Constitution to require the out-going Governor to fill forthcoming vacancies on the Florida Supreme Court or a district court of appeal. I opposed this resolution because if a vacancy occurs when a new Governor takes office, why should the sitting Governor be allowed to fill the prospective opening at the end of his or her term.

## **ACTION IN THE SENATE CHAMBERS**

Session convened on Tuesday, March 11, 2014. We were joined on the Senate Floor by service men and women who have fought tirelessly to protect us in combat. It was National Guard Day at the Capitol; therefore, it was fitting to pass the Florida GI Bill. House Bill 7015 - Military and Veterans, waives out-of-state fees for honorably discharged veterans and allocates \$1.5 million to fund scholarships and book stipends for National Guard members.

In addition, the Senate took up:

- **Senate Bill 248 - Assisted Living Facilities** by the Children, Families, and Elder Affairs Committee strengthens current regulations for assisted living facilities and requires additional inspection for facilities having significant violations.
- **Senate Bill 224 - Nicotine Dispensing Devices** by Senator Benacquisto bans minors from buying electronic cigarettes.
- **Senate Bill 424 - Discriminatory Insurance Practices** by Senator Lee prevents insurers from discriminating against gun owners.



(L-R) Atty. Ben Crump, Senator Joyner, Rev. Al Sharpton, and Atty. Pat Rosier, President, National Bar Association



(L-R) Phyllis Giles (Mother of Michael Giles), Tracy Martin, Senator Joyner, and Sybrina Fulton (Parents of Trayvon Martin)

## Committee Assignments

Appropriations Subcommittee on Criminal and Civil Justice, Vice Chair;  
Joint Committee on Public Counsel Oversight, Chair; Appropriations;  
Appropriations Subcommittee on General Government; Ethics and Elections;  
Health Policy; Judiciary; Transportation;  
Select Committee on Indian River Lagoon and Lake Okeechobee Basin



My 2014 Senate Pages (L-R) Sydney Stallworth,  
Matthew Johnson, Lavender Johnson and  
Senator Joyner

Your Senator,  
**Arthenia L. Joyner**  
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