



WEEK SIX

APRIL 7-11, 2014

The sixth week of the 2014 Legislative Session was the last full week of committee meetings and the Senate will not meet during the Passover/Easter weekend (April 14-18). Both the Senate and House have passed their respective budget plans for the upcoming fiscal year. The remaining task is to negotiate the differences between the two, especially in education, where the Senate is proposing spending \$18.7 billion and the House is countering with \$20.7 billion. The negotiations to settle the differences and arrive at a single state budget are expected to begin following the break. Finally, a number of major issues still remain to be resolved before the hanky is dropped May 2nd on the 2014 legislative session.

EQUAL PAY DAY

On Tuesday, April 8, Representative Cruz and I hosted a press conference in recognition of National Equal Pay Day to urge the Republican leadership to raise the minimum wage and ensure equal pay for equal work. Today, women still make a little over 80 cents to every dollar earned by a man, and the pay gap is even wider for women of color. Women make up more than half of the workforce, college graduates, and the electorate, but still face discrimination in pay. On Wednesday, the U.S. Congress failed to pass the Paycheck Fairness Act, a bill that would help close the pay gap between women and men. I have sponsored legislation for several years that will help build an economy that works for everyone. My other measure, **Senate Concurrent Resolution 68: Equal Rights for Men and Women (ERA)** would ratify the proposed amendment to the Constitution of the United States. Currently, 35 of the necessary 38 states have already ratified the ERA.



MY BILLS AND PRIORITIES

In 2000, the FL Legislature created the *Reducing the Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities: Closing the Gap Grant Program*, to increase the development of community and neighborhood-based projects to improve health outcomes of racial and ethnic populations. The Closing the Gap program provides grants for activities designed to reduce racial and ethnic health disparities. My bill, **SB 1412 Closing the Gap Grant Program**, expands the potential focus of Closing the Gap projects to include sickle cell disease. The bill passed unanimously in the Appropriations Subcommittee on Health and Human Services committee. It has since been amended onto **Senate Bill 1066 Department of Health** by Senator Grimsley, which is pending in the Transportation committee. Additionally, my bill **SB 1498-Marriage of Minors** requires a minor seeking a marriage license without the consent of his or her parents to be at least 16 years of age passed unanimously in the Judiciary committee.

BILLS ON WATCH

- **House Bill 5601-Economic Development** creates four temporary "tax holiday" periods where sales of certain goods will be exempt from the sales tax - a "back to school" holiday, a hurricane supplies holiday, a physical fitness admissions holiday, energy efficient products holiday. In addition, the bill creates a permanent sales tax exemption for child restraint systems and booster seats for use in motor vehicles and youth bicycle helmets.
- **Senate Bill 1142-Ticket Sales** by Senator Lee increases the criminal penalties related to counterfeit tickets and sales of "multiuse tickets" to theme parks, cloning a ticket or counterfeiting, forging, altering, cloning, or possessing a card, wristband, or other medium that accesses or is associated with a ticket.
- **Senate Bill 864 - Instructional Materials for K-12 Public Education** by Senator Hays would require school districts to select and provide the instructional materials (textbooks) for K-12 public school students. The bill would eliminate the state-level instructional review, selection and adoption process. It passed by a narrow 21-19 vote in the Senate on Friday.
- **Senate Bill 1472-Personal Identification Information Theft** By Senator Abruzzo would make it a second degree felony for an individual to use the personal identification information of an individual who is 60 years old, disabled adult, public servant, veteran, first responder or a state or federal employee without proper consent.

Three of the "Bills on Watch" from last week continued to move through the Senate this week:

- **Senate Bill 918-Termination of Pregnancies by Senator Flores** passed the Senate Judiciary Committee and is now pending in the Rules Committee;
- **Senate Bill 550-Traveling Across County Lines to Commit a Felony Offense by Senator Hukill** passed the Subcommittee on Criminal and Civil Justice;
- **Senate Bill 1618-Chauffeured Limousines by Senator Brandes** passed the Transportation Committee.

ACTION IN THE SENATE CHAMBERS

Session convened on Friday, April 11, 2014. The Senate took up several bills on Special Order and Third Reading relating to offenses against unborn children, civil liability of farmers, background screening and juvenile sentencing. In 2010, the Supreme Court in *Graham v. Florida* held that a juvenile offender cannot be sentenced to life in prison without the possibility of parole for any offense other than a homicide. In 2012, in *Miller v. Alabama*, the Court held that mandatory life sentences for juvenile offenders who commit homicide in murder cases without the possibility of parole are unconstitutional. Though I have filed legislation for several years in response to these decisions, Senator Bradley is sponsoring **Senate Bill 384 Juvenile Sentencing** in homicide and non-homicide cases. Under the proposed legislation, a juvenile offender who is convicted of capital murder must be sentenced to a minimum of 40 years if he or she actually killed, intended to kill or attempted to kill the victim. If not, the minimum sentence is 20 years and entitled to a sentencing review after 25 years. A juvenile offender who is convicted of non-capital murder is entitled to a sentencing review after either 20 or 25 years, depending on whether or not he or she actually killed, intended to kill or attempted to kill the victim. For non-murder juvenile offenders, they are entitled to a sentencing review after 20 years. In addition, a juvenile murderer is not entitled to a sentence review hearing if he or she has been convicted of another violent crime before the review hearing.

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

VISITORS TO THE CAPITOL



**Residents and Business Owners from Hillsborough County who spoke against SB 1618
Chauffeured Limousines**



(L-R) Commissioner Kevin Beckner and Senator Joyner during Hillsborough County Days at the Capitol



**(L-R) Mary Jane Tina Mortimer, Senator Joyner, Antonisha Warner, and
Emmanuel Brate**

Your Senator,
Arthenia L. Joyner
Serving District 19

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