



WEEK THREE

MARCH 17-21, 2014

STAND YOUR GROUND

The second week of the 2014 Legislative Session began with a monumental move by the Criminal Justice Committee. After months of marching, rallying and protesting, Senator Evers placed **Senate Bill 122 - Self Defense** and **Senate Bill 130 - Use of Deadly Force** by Senate Democratic Leader Chris Smith and Republican Senator David Simmons on the agenda. Both bills were combined in October during committee week as a bipartisan effort to work out some of the changes to the Stand Your Ground law. The legislation is moving in the Senate, passed two of its four committees of reference and offers the best chance at addressing critically overdue changes to the Stand Your Ground law.

MY BILLS AND PRIORITIES

On Monday, Planned Parenthood held a press conference urging the Republican-controlled legislature to accept the Affordable Healthcare Act, and place **Senate Bill 710 - Health Care** by Senator Garcia on the agenda to expand Medicaid to one million uninsured Floridians. I joined hundreds of Planned Parenthood supporters as we rallied in the Capitol for increased access to health care, women's health issues, and stopping legislation limiting the right to control our own bodies.



Planned Parenthood Rally

One of my priority bills this session is **Senate Bill 824 - Hepatitis C Testing**. According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the "Hepatitis C virus infection is the most common chronic blood borne infection in the United States and approximately 3.2 million persons are chronically infected." In August 2012, the CDC published [*Recommendations for the Identification of Chronic Hepatitis C Virus Infection Among Persons Born During 1945-1965*](#). My bill would require certain health care practitioners to offer Hepatitis C screening tests to certain individuals, especially Baby Boomers who have higher infection rates.

BILLS ON WATCH

- **Senate Bill 1620 - Tax Credit Scholarship Programs** - Senator Galvano, the sponsor of the highly controversial corporate voucher bill, on Thursday abruptly pulled his legislation from consideration in Senate committees. Unlike the House version, the Senate proposal would have imposed standardized testing and accountability measures as part of a massive expansion of corporate vouchers for students attending private schools. Proponents of the corporate vouchers have been opposed to such requirements. With the bill's withdrawal by the Senate sponsor, the chances of any voucher expansion, which I have steadfastly opposed because it dramatically drains funding from our public school system - appear to be slim this year.
- **Senate Bill 670 - Nursing Home Litigation** by Senator Thrasher changes legal provisions relating to lawsuits against nursing homes. This bill would prevent investors from being named in a lawsuit unless a court determines they have had an active role. But the legislation would allow low-level nursing home

employees - like those who empty bed pans and clean the rooms - to be named as defendants, a provision I strongly oppose. With our population aging, I believe stronger measures need to be in place to ensure the quality of care nursing home residents receive, and this bill, in my opinion, disproportionately protects those at the top responsible for the operations of the facilities.

- **Senate Bill 144 - Traffic Infraction Detectors** by Senator Brandes would repeal a law allowing red light cameras in Florida. The bill was temporarily postponed in the Transportation committee.
- **Senate Bill 1400 - Postsecondary Student Tuition** by Senator Latvala would do away with the automatic annual tuition increases at college and universities and allow certain undocumented students who grew up in Florida to receive in-state tuition rates.
- **SB 220 - Florida Civil Rights Act** - by Senator Thompson, would extend protections against discrimination to pregnant women in the workplace. This bill, which I am cosponsoring, is poised for a full vote of the Florida Senate.
- **Senate Bill 852 - Education** would require school districts to implement non-testing periods before and after required statewide assessments.

ACTION IN THE SENATE CHAMBERS

Session convened on Tuesday, March 18 and Thursday, March 20. The Senate took up several bills this week relating to posting embarrassing, explicit images on the internet of another individual, juvenile sentencing, spiny lobster, and telephone solicitation. In addition, my sisters of the Links Organization joined me in the Senate for a special recognition. I was honored to sponsor a resolution recognizing March 20, 2014, as **"The Links, Incorporated, Day at the Capitol"** and applaud my organization's efforts to create a better quality of life for the residents of this state.



Tampa Links and Senator Joyner

REMEMBERING GOVERNOR REUBIN ASKEW

Reflecting on the life and legacy of Reubin Askew, I offered

the following statement as the family returned Florida's 37th Governor to his final resting place this week:

"As a student, and, later, as a young lawyer no one would hire me because of the color of my skin, Governor Askew was the wrecking ball to tear down the walls of separation. His determined belief in equality was stronger than the prejudices of those times, and he summoned Floridians to believe with him that character mattered above any color. By appointing the first black justice to the Florida Supreme Court, Governor Askew gave me, and gave many like me, a reason to believe that with hard work and true convictions, all things were possible. He changed the color of the judiciary in Florida. A man of his word, and a man of integrity, he remains a testament to the good government can do under courageous leadership, and a reminder of the obligations government owes to the people it was created to serve. As his family says its final goodbye, I hope they remember that we remain in their debt. Their husband, father, and grandfather left us a legacy to inspire us now and generations to come, because he taught, by example, what true service for the people is all about."

VISITORS TO THE CAPITOL



Members of the Florida Chiropractor Association Pinellas Chapter and Senator Joyner



Members of Equality Florida and Senator Joyner

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



Members of the Hillsborough County Farm Bureau and Senator Joyner



Tampa constituents (L-R) Yvette Lewis, Natasha Goodley, and Ella Coffee met with Senator Joyner.



I was honored to sponsor Dr. Neelam Uppal, MD, MBBS, BS for the Florida Senate Doctor of the Day Program. Dr. Uppal specializes in infectious diseases.

Your Senator,
Arthenia L. Joyner
Serving District 19

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