



FREDERICA S. WILSON
State Senator
District 33

**DEMOCRATIC LEADER
PRO TEMPORE**

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Health and Human
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Oversight & Procedural Policy
and Calendar Committee
Select Committee on Property
Insurance Accountability
Social Responsibility Policy
and Calendar Committee

June 2008

Dear Friends:

I appreciate the opportunity to have served as your Senator in the Florida Legislature since 2002. My commitment to the 33rd Senate District is clear. I respond to your needs in Florida by voicing your concerns in Tallahassee. As your State Senator, I work extremely hard each and every day to improve the quality of life for all residents, families, and businesses within our Legislative District.

As Democratic Leader Pro Tempore, I assisted leadership in mobilizing the party vote on important legislation, and coordinated strategies within the Democratic Caucus that would protect health benefits for our elderly and disabled, help nursing homes and assisted living facilities, and ensure a quality education for all of our children. I will continue to sponsor and support legislation that reduces crime, creates jobs and opportunities.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to serve you. I continually seek to benefit the people of District 33, by helping to bring opportunity, security, and prosperity to all. I remain

Your dedicated Senator for a better Florida,

Frederica S. Wilson

2008 Budget Accomplishments

Obtained funding for Miami-Dade County Health Department Building
Maintained funding for First Generation Matching Grant Scholarships
Maintained funding for Miami-Dade County Public Schools (MDCPS) to defray losses from changes to the District Cost Differential (DCD) calculation
Maintained assistance to Low Performing Schools
Maintained funding for Historically Black Universities and Colleges
Obtained funding for Haitian Heritage Museum
Maintained funding for KidCare Program Outreach
Maintained funding for Community Smiles
Maintained Medicaid payment for Adult Vision Services
Maintained Medicaid payment for Adult Hearing Services
Maintained funding for Camillus Behavioral Treatment Services
Maintained funding for New Horizons Children & Family Center
Maintained funding for HIV/AIDS Insurance Continuation Program
Maintained funding for Alzheimer's Services
Maintained funding for HIV/AIDS Testing Programs in Jails
Maintained funding for Jessie Trice Center
Obtained funding for Adoption Benefits Program
Ingram Park – Opa-locka FRDAP

Funding for District 33 Water Projects:

El Portal Stormwater Drainage Improvements Project Phase III
Miami Gardens NW 167th -175th Street / NW 11th -17th Avenue
Drainage Improvements
North Miami Sanitary Sewer Force Main Improvements
North Miami Beach 172nd Street Drainage Improvements
Opa-locka 143rd Street Stormwater Drainage and Street Improvements
Opa-locka Cairo Lane Stormwater Drainage and Street Improvements

Inmate Medicaid Assistance

Thousands of ill or disabled inmates incarcerated across the state automatically lose their Medicaid benefits. This translates into higher costs for the state and a gap in services once the individual is released. Senate Bill 1456 addressed this critical issue. This good bill passed which means that Medicaid eligibility will be suspended rather than the current practice of terminating eligibility for any individual who is an inmate in the state's correctional system, county or municipal detention facility and who was eligible for and received Medicaid benefits prior to being incarcerated. Furthermore, it provides that an individual shall continue to be eligible for Medicaid benefits until such time as the person is determined to be no longer eligible. This legislation requires that, to the extent permitted under federal law, the time during which a person is an inmate shall not be included in any calculation of when the person must recertify their eligibility for medical assistance.

The Department of Corrections is the state's second largest provider of services for the mentally ill. When we release severely mentally ill, addicted, chronically homeless individuals back to the streets without health coverage, it increases the likelihood of recidivism. Thanks to Senate Bill 1456, these individuals will be provided a continuum of care which means safer streets for Floridians.

Electing Florida's Next Commissioner of Education

The hue and cry of educational reform has been the need for accountability in public educational institutions. Florida's Commissioner of Education is a position made strictly by political appointment.

As a strong believer in accountability, I sponsored Senate Bill 132. The essence of this bill was later combined to Senate Bill 2308 which I co-sponsored with Senator Carlton. It would place before the people of this state the option to amend our constitution so that the Commissioner of Education could be an elected member of the Cabinet.

Accountability for

education policy would rest squarely in the hands of Florida's voters. Prior to 2003, Florida's Cabinet had six elected members, including a Commissioner of Education, but in 1998, voters approved a ballot initiative that removed the Commissioner of Education from the Cabinet.

Senate Bill 2308 passed the Senate, and all House Committees, however it came to the floor of the Florida House of Representatives during the final days of session where it was retained unheard on the Special Order Calendar.

"We need to return
accountability for Florida's
educational policies back to
the people..."

Recognition for Child Welfare Professionals, Health Awareness and Community Heroes

... *Because You Deserve It*



Pilot Barrington Irving addresses the Florida Senate on April 16, 2008, in observance of Barrington Irving Day at The Capitol. He is joined by Senate President Ken Pruitt.

Grueling hours combined with heavy work loads may lead some Social Service Workers into believing that theirs is a thankless profession, but not any longer.

This session I filed Senate Bill 78 entitled Child Welfare Professionals Recognition Day. Both sides of the aisle agreed that this recognition is long overdue. The second Monday in May is designated as a day to recognize all professionals in the Social Service arena and encourages the Department of Children and Family Services, local governments and other agencies to sponsor events promoting awareness of the child welfare system.

Other recognitions introduced and adopted included Minority Cancer Awareness Week, Stop Day, Barrington Irving Day at The Capitol, AKA Day at The Capitol, Chronic Kidney Disease Awareness Day, Go Red for Women Day, and Grand Parents and Relative Care Giver's Day.

Relief for the Gough Family The long struggle for justice

This session, Senate Bill 40 awarded Marie and Jorge Gough the sum of \$1million for the wrongful death of their son Jaime. In their claim, the Goughs **alleged that their son's death at Southwood Middle School was due in part to the school board's negligent failure to prevent foreseeable violence on school grounds.** Miami-Dade County Public Schools agreed to this claim, and as a result of passage of this bill, they may now offer restitution to **the Gough family for Jamie's tragic death.**

Jaime has become yet another symbol of the cruel and inhumane treatment of black boys in our society. The death of this 14-year-old gifted student outraged compassionate citizens from all over the community and across the state.

Michael Hernandez, Jaime's alleged killer, has not yet come to trial.

The logo for the 2010 United States Census, featuring the text 'United States' in a small font above 'Census' in a large, bold font, with '2010' below it.

My colleagues in both the Senate and House voted to pass Senate Bill 1416 urging Congress to make forms for the U.S. Census available in the Creole language for the Haitian population of Florida. This would **increase the state's ability to draw down federal funds, thus benefiting local programs.**

This legislation would also provide more accessibility to the Haitian populations and allows for responses to questions in Creole. Since a large percentage of Federal dollars flow into states based on census information, it is of crucial importance that Haitian Americans be counted. Dollars received by states are used for education, elderly and youth and other community programs.

As the Senate sponsor of this bill, I am proud that my colleagues passed this important legislation that takes proactive steps towards an accurate 2010 census count.

Council on the Social Status of Black Men & Boys

This year I sponsored Senate Bill 546 which made exciting changes to The Council on the Social Status of Black Men and Boys. The legislation passed and will give the council several tools to enhance their ability to further study both the causes and possible solutions for conditions that negatively affect black men and boys, and allows the council to accept both public and private funding to defray clerical and administrative costs. The bill authorizes the council to develop a strategic program and funding initiatives to establish local Councils on the Social Status of Black Men and Boys, and removes the 2012 sunset date so that the council becomes permanent.

Under the guidelines of this bill, the Department will act as liaison with state agencies, public and private sectors and other state governments on matters that relate to underlying conditions affecting black men and boys in the State of Florida. The department is dually authorized to establish a Direct-Support Organization (DSO) that will form strategic partnerships fostering development of community and private sector resources. The DSO is also directed to develop a strategic program and funding initiative that will ensure the continuation of the council. The assigned goal of Senate Bill 546 is to bring about an environment that promotes the values of learning, family, prosperity, unity, and self-worth.

Road Designations Honor Local Clergy



During the final days of session, the Florida Legislature passed a massive transportation bill that combined language for road and bridge designations. I am pleased to relay that two streets were named in honor of District 33 Ministers.

Reverend Dr. C. P. Preston Jr. Street will be that portion of SR 934 on N.W. 79th Street between 7th Avenue and N.W. 37th Avenue.

Bishop Victor Tyrone Curry Boulevard will be that portion of 135th Street between 7th Avenue and 27th Avenue.

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Important Telephone Numbers

Adoption Information	(800) 962-3678
AIDS Hotline (English)	(800) 352-2437
AIDS Hotline (Spanish)	(800) 545-7432
Alzheimer's Association	(800) 272-3900
Cancer Information	(800) 422-6237
Child Find America	(800) 426-5678
Child Support Hotline	(800) 622-5437
Children/Adult Abuse Hotline	(800) 962-2873
Consumer Product Safety	(800) 638-2772
Dept. of Agriculture & Consumer Services Complaints	(800) 435-7352
Dept. of Revenue(for Taxpayers)	(800) 352-3671
Dept. of Veterans Affairs	(800) 827-1000
Discrimination in Housing / Employment	(800) 342-8170

Division of Blind Services	(800) 342-1828
Elder Helpline	(800) 262-2243
Family Source/Parent Helpline	(800) 352-5683
Financial Services (Formerly the Department of Insurance)	(800) 848-3792
Guardian Ad Litem	(800) 628-3233
Hurricane Help Line	(800) 227-8676
Insurance Hotline	(800) 342-2762
Lifeline Telephone Rates	(800) 540-7039
National Response Center	(800) 424-8802
Organ Donors (The Living Bank)	(800) 528-2971
Poison Information	(800) 222-1222
Public Service Commission	(800) 342-3552
Social Security Hotline	(800) 772-1213
Worker's Compensation Claims	(800) 342-1741