

**For Immediate Release**  
November 19, 2024

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### **President Ben Albritton's Organization Session Remarks as Prepared for Delivery**

**Tallahassee**—Senator Ben Albritton (R-Wauchula) was today unanimously elected President of the Florida Senate for the 2024-2026 Legislative Term. President Albritton's remarks, as prepared for delivery, following introductions of his family, are below.

“As I begin this important role, I realize I have big shoes to fill. Kathleen, you've been a great leader for our Chamber. I'm so proud to have you on MY team. I'm looking forward to your valued input. You are the big sister I never had. I have but one thing to say to you, “God save the queen”.

“Governor DeSantis, thank you for being here today. You've led with conviction and your work, in partnership with the Florida Legislature, has made Florida the envy of America. Across our nation, other state leaders are measuring their results against ours. The Free State of Florida is more than a motto. It's who we are. Let's make the next two years the best yet.

“Thank you also for your principled, focused and dedicated leadership in the effort to defeat the Abortion and the Marijuana amendments. We already have a huge number of successes to count toward our legacy, but leading the charge to defeat these two amendments, was incredible. Thank you, sir!

“Commissioner Simpson, it's great to have you back in our Chamber. Thank you for your valued friendship. We share a love for Florida farmers, and I'm looking forward to our continued partnership fighting for Florida Agriculture.

“CFO Patronis and General Moody, thank you for your consistent leadership and for being here today. I appreciate you both and your efforts to make Florida even better.

“Speaker-Designate Perez, soon to be Mr. Speaker, thank you for your genuine friendship and shared common-sense government reform values. I'm confident our time leading together is going to be one for the record books. I'm excited to get started.

“The elections are over. It's clear – by historic margins – that Floridians are pleased with the direction our state's heading. They've entrusted us in this moment to lead, to serve, and to leave our state better than we found it – that's a high calling for each of us.

“Earlier this year, US News and World Report ranked Florida #1 in ‘economy.’ It's easy to see why. Florida balances our budget every single year. Florida pays down debt. Florida saves for the future with significant reserves. Florida government knows that the money we spend isn't ours. It's your tax dollars.

“In Florida, we know private businesses, not government, grow and innovate, creating the jobs that support thriving communities. The strength of our economy impacts the decisions that families and businesses make every, single day. They’re looking for certainty, predictability and consistency in government. Not increased taxes, unchecked spending, or harsh regulations that hurt the bottom line for everyone.

“For the past several years, our balanced budgets and family-friendly tax relief measures passed unanimously. Together, we can continue to lead the fight to keep Florida’s economy #1.

“US News and World Report also ranked Florida #1 in ‘education.’ Year after year our college and university systems have earned our nation’s top ratings for affordability, low student debt, and on-time graduation – preparing young adults to enter the workforce with their best foot forward. In recent years, we’ve made many important, once-in-a-generation, investments to bolster this effort.

“We led the fight for school choice and are now a national model for empowering parents—because we know that Florida families, not government, should determine where their children are educated and what they learn.

“We also led the fight to cut the red tape bogging down our public schools. Now our schools can focus less on bureaucracy and more on academics, the basics of education. Together, we can continue to lead the fight to free our public schools to compete in our new school-choice environment. Our public school teachers deserve it.

“Together, we have led the fight against some big challenges and fended off some serious threats. As we look forward to the next two years, we have more challenges coming our way.

“In the days following Hurricanes Helene and Milton, I spent time with several Senators whose constituents were catastrophically impacted. The devastation is heart breaking. Florida agriculture was heavily impacted. And many of our coastal communities suffered from tornadoes, wind and flooding. What’s worse is that many of these communities were still recovering from Hurricanes Debbie, Idalia and Ian.

“Be assured, together, we are going to recover, and we are going to rebuild. However, we know that when a family loses everything, the first place they’re going to look for help is not the government – it’s their insurance company.

“Floridians have been faithfully paying insurance premiums for years, sometimes decades, and now they expect their insurance company to keep up its end of the bargain. I want to make sure that impacted Floridians and insurance companies hear me loudly and clearly – we are watching. We’ve made changes insurance companies said they needed to improve competition and stabilize rates.

“And, we’ve enacted pro-consumer transparency to protect homeowners. The proof will be in the results. I’m not going to sit idly by if legitimate claims get denied while rates continue to rise. Period.

“I’m a proud son of rural Florida, Florida’s Heartland, six generations deep. Our small, tight-knit, legacy communities are filled with some of the nicest, hardworking people you will ever meet.

“Rural communities look after one another and would give their last dollar and even the shirt off their own back to help a neighbor in need. Our rural communities are full of opportunity. When I travel across the Panhandle, the Big Bend, and the Heartland, I see so much of that unrealized opportunity.

“Opportunity in rural Florida doesn’t just mean development. What I see are opportunities to improve our rural quality of life, while preserving the time-honored way-of-life that has been deeply cherished generation after generation after generation. I’m asking you to join me in the fight for a rural renaissance in Florida.

“Rural communities are strong and proud. I can tell you the last place they’ll look for guidance is the government. But, I do believe there are things we can do to help. We can support innovation and help rural Florida invest in new technologies that expand education, health care, commerce, transportation, and support agriculture, and its supply chain.

“Technological advances have led to tremendous economic growth and innovation in other areas of Florida, it’s Rural Florida’s turn. With your support, I want to make certain that Floridians who call our rural communities home, have access to all the opportunities the rest of Florida has to offer.

“An important part of Florida’s Rural Renaissance includes an increased focus on our amazing farmers and the food supply chain in Florida. Farm families have always and continue to play an important role in our state. They serve all of Florida’s families, protect our environment, strengthen our national security, and feed the nation, and our state.

“As a 4<sup>th</sup> generation citrus grower, please join me in the fight to support our Florida farm families, our Florida food supply chain, and to save from extinction our iconic Florida citrus industry.

“We also know the droves of people coming to Florida for freedom and opportunity pose a serious risk to the health and supply of our state’s water. Our water is invaluable. It’s invaluable to our residents, our businesses, our economy, and our precious ecosystems. It’s invaluable to Florida’s DNA. We must continue to develop and advance solutions to rid Florida’s waterways of excessive nutrients from urban areas, septic tanks, wastewater, stormwater, and any other source harmful to nature.

“Few can deny we need more data about water. A renewed, data-driven focus on water will give us a close look at where we actually are, instead of where we think we might be. Fresh, accurate data will drive the solutions we need for the future.

“Efficiency and accountability are important to all of us in our daily lives. This holds true for state government as much as it does for Florida families making tough decisions about their own budgets. Florida has a great framework for accountability and transparency. And, we can leverage data and new technology to achieve even better outcomes; outcomes matter most.

“I believe in continuous improvement. We can always do better.

“Florida families face real challenges each and every day. While government cannot, and should not, try to provide every solution, we should always look to make certain Floridians know they have our support.

“We will continue to stand by our allies in Israel. They’ve been persecuted for centuries, and they are under attack today. They’re our greatest and most loyal ally. Anyone who knows me knows I value loyalty. I choose Israel.

“We’ll continue to honor our military and veterans. We’re blessed to have many here in our Senate Chamber. Including Senators Avila, Burgess, Collins and Truenow – thank you for your service and sacrifice. You’re all American heroes in my heart.

“During my time in the Florida Legislature, I have learned many, many lessons. I’ve been blessed by the opportunity to see a lot of Florida. To see what makes Florida tick. To see what makes Florida work.

“I’ve learned not every city or county is the same as every other. The needs of rural Florida are very different than urban Florida. The diversity of our state is both incredible and powerful. Remember, Key West is not Pensacola, Jacksonville is not Steinhatchee, and Wauchula is not Orlando.

“Probably the most important lesson I’ve learned is that to work together we must overcome talking past each other. Sometimes the noise in our system gets very loud. Naturally we’re all driven by our own perspectives.

“Wisdom tells me that being a great listener holds great value. As we join together to embrace the opportunities and fight the challenges facing the state we love, we can practice the greatest measure of respect to each other, by listening. In this, love prevails.

“A few pieces of wisdom to consider.

1. If you don’t measure it, you can’t manage it – data and outcomes matter.
2. Measure three times before cutting once -take your time – patience matters.

3. Don't take down a fence before you know why it was put up – know what you're doing, why you're doing it, and the consequences of doing it. Focus on the unknown, unknowns.
4. It's easier to fool someone than it is to convince them they were fooled – truth matters, seek it.
5. Experience is a hard teacher because she gives the test first, the lesson after – pay attention all the way through.
6. If you eat, you're involved in agriculture – food matters.
7. You don't have to be cruel to be tough – don't mistake someone's kindness for weakness.

“1 Corinthians 13:13 is very clear to me in my walk of faith... It reads, ‘And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.’

“I believe the majority of Floridians feel the same; to value love. As you begin this new term, I leave you with this. Let your faith guide you, have hope in Florida's future, and love one another. Senators, know this, I value each of you, I respect each of you, and I love each of you. God Bless you all, Thank you for this incredible honor. Now let's get to work!”

For more information, please visit [www.FLSenate.gov](http://www.FLSenate.gov).

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