



Dear Residents of District 32,

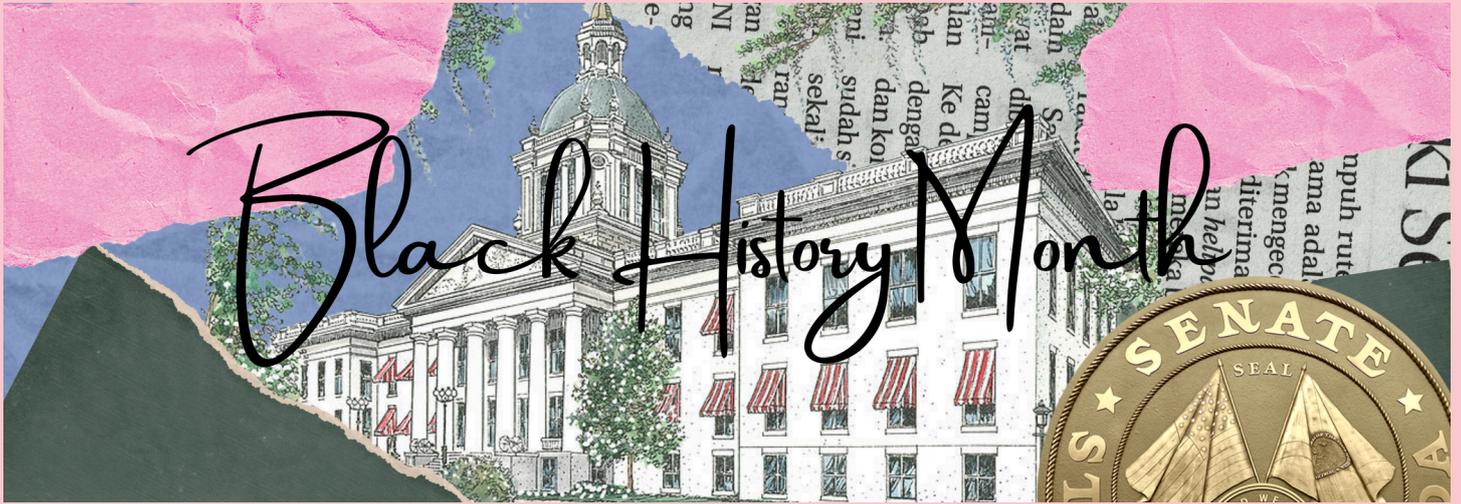
Week Seven of the legislative session is now officially completed, and the pace here in Tallahassee has shifted into high gear. Committees are beginning to wrap up their work as many bills complete their final stops, and we are now spending most of our time on the Senate floor turning bills into law. The focus has moved from committee debate to full floor deliberation, where final votes are taken, and legislation either passes or fails.

This week has been filled with extended floor sessions, final discussions, and decisive votes on measures that will directly impact our communities. As committees conclude their agendas, the responsibility now rests squarely in the Senate Chamber, where every vote carries significant weight.

With Session entering this critical stage, I remain focused on ensuring that the priorities of District 32 are represented in every debate and every decision. Whether discussing education, public safety, economic opportunity, or local concerns, I approach each bill with careful consideration of how it will affect the people I am honored to serve.

The days are long, the conversations are serious, and the work is demanding—but I remain energized by the opportunity to serve you. Your input continues to guide me, and your engagement makes a real difference as we move through these final weeks of Session.

Please continue to reach out with your thoughts and concerns. It is truly an honor to represent District 32, and I am grateful for the trust you place in me.



Last week, I had the honor of joining Governor DeSantis and fellow members of the Florida Senate in St. Augustine to unveil a new statue honoring Frederick Douglass in recognition of Black History Month.

The statue serves as a permanent tribute to Douglass, one of America's most influential abolitionists and statesmen. Its placement in historic St. Augustine underscores the importance of remembering and celebrating the contributions of Black leaders throughout our history.

During the ceremony, the Governor reflected on Douglass's enduring legacy of courage, resilience, and advocacy for equality. Events like this are a meaningful reminder that honoring the past inspires future generations to continue striving for freedom, justice, and opportunity for all.

This new monument stands as a symbol not only of Frederick Douglass's impact but also of Florida's commitment to acknowledging and celebrating the diverse history that shapes our communities.





On the Senate Floor, we voted on **SB 706 - Commercial Service Airports by Senator Mayfield** — a bill that allows the state to name major commercial service airports and renames the airport in West Palm Beach to “President Donald J. Trump International Airport.” I want to share clearly why **I voted no**.

This bill removes local control over the naming of major airports and mandates a new name in statute for the airport currently known as Palm Beach International Airport. While I respect the legislative process and the differing views of my colleagues, I believe decisions about naming public buildings — especially those that represent entire communities — deserve careful consideration and broad consensus.

Public buildings are more than structures. They are symbols. They reflect our shared values and the standards we hold for leadership and service. When we place someone’s name on a public institution, particularly one as visible and important as an international airport, we are making a statement about character and legacy.

People we name buildings after should be individuals who represent the highest character — individuals whose lives and conduct reflect qualities we want future generations to emulate. Before attaching any name to a public building, we should ask ourselves: What does this name represent?

An airport is often the first and last impression of our community. It belongs to everyone. I believe such decisions should unite rather than divide, and should reflect values that bring people together.

For these reasons, I voted no. As your Senator, my responsibility is to vote in a way that I believe best serves our community and upholds the standards we expect of those honored in our public spaces. That is what I did.



This week, we voted on **SB 1062 - Speech and Debate Education by Senator Brodeur** - legislation establishing Florida Speech and Debate Week and formally creating the Florida Debate Initiative, Inc. (FDI) as a statewide organization to support and expand K–20 speech and debate programs. I was proud to vote yes on this bill.

This legislation designates February 1 through February 7 each year as “Florida Speech and Debate Week,” recognizing the academic, civic, and leadership value of competitive speech and debate. It also strengthens statewide coordination of debate programs through FDI in partnership with the Department of Education’s Florida Civics and Debate Initiative.

Debate truly helps students in different areas of their academic work. It strengthens critical thinking, research skills, public speaking, and persuasive writing. Students learn how to analyze complex issues, evaluate evidence, construct logical arguments, and respectfully engage with differing viewpoints. These are not just competition skills — they are life skills that prepare young people for college, careers, and civic leadership.

Debate also builds confidence. It teaches students how to stand before an audience, organize their thoughts under pressure, and defend their ideas with clarity and respect. In a time when civil discourse can feel increasingly strained, debate programs model how to disagree thoughtfully and productively.

I am especially proud to support this effort because Broward County, the county I represent, has one of the largest debate programs in the state. Our students consistently demonstrate excellence in competition and leadership, and our coaches and educators work tirelessly to provide these opportunities. This bill helps ensure that students not only in Broward, but across Florida, have access to high-quality speech and debate programs.

Investing in speech and debate is an investment in civic literacy, leadership development, and academic excellence. I voted yes because I believe empowering students with the tools to think critically, speak confidently, and engage respectfully is one of the best investments we can make in Florida's future.



In the Rules Committee, we voted on **SB 1134 – Official Actions of Local Governments by Senator Yarborough**, and I want to share clearly why I voted no.

This bill eliminates diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives within local governments. It prohibits counties and municipalities from funding or maintaining DEI offices, programs, or policies. I believe removing these initiatives sends the wrong message about who we are and what we stand for as a community.

I believe every person deserves a fair chance — regardless of race, gender, background, or zip code. Efforts that help ensure people are not marginalized or left out of opportunity should not be treated as improper or unlawful. We can stand firmly for fairness and equal access without supporting favoritism — those are not the same thing.

Equal opportunity is about keeping doors open. It is not about lowering standards or giving special treatment. It is about making sure everyone has access to opportunity and that no one is pushed to the margins.

At the same time, I believe the term “DEI” has been hijacked in our public discourse. For some, it has come to mean quotas, political agendas, or preferential treatment. For others, it simply means fairness, nondiscrimination, and equal opportunity. When a term carries such different interpretations, it becomes easy to debate a label rather than the substance of what policies actually do.

We need to come to a clear and specific conclusion about what we mean when we say diversity, equity, and inclusion. If we are talking about ensuring compliance with civil rights laws and making sure opportunity is open to all, that is something worth defending. If we are talking about favoritism or discrimination in any form, that is something we should reject. But we cannot allow a broad and undefined term to substitute for a thoughtful conversation about principles and outcomes.

During the debate, you can hear me voice these concerns. I voted no because I believe it was the right thing to do — to stand up for fairness, dignity, clarity in lawmaking, and the principle that our communities are strongest when everyone has a real chance to succeed.

As your Senator, my responsibility is to vote in a way that I believe best serves our community — and that is what I did.



During the Legislative Session, the Florida Capitol becomes a vibrant gathering place for organizations, community groups, and individuals from across the state who come to advocate for issues that matter most to them and to share their unique perspectives. I am always grateful for the opportunity to welcome these visitors, listen to their concerns, and engage in meaningful conversations about how we can work together to create positive change.

These visits are a powerful reminder of the diverse voices that help shape our state and the importance of remaining closely connected to the communities we serve. I look forward to continuing these conversations and welcoming even more visitors to the Capitol in the weeks ahead.

