For Immediate Release
Office of Senator Carlos Guillermo Smith
Contact: Ariel Rivas, Senior Legislative Aide
Phone: (850) 487-5017
Email: Rivas.Ariel@flsenate.gov

Drowning Prevention Bills Sponsored by Senator Carlos Guillermo Smith Unanimously Pass Senate Health Policy Committee

Tallahassee, FL – Yesterday, **Senator Carlos Guillermo Smith** (D–Orlando) won unanimous support (11–0) for **SB 606, Drowning Prevention Education**, in the Senate Committee on Health Policy. The bill strengthens postpartum education by adding lifesaving drowning prevention and safe bathing guidance for new parents, delivered through hospitals, birthing centers, and home birth providers. SB 606 is part of Senator Smith's comprehensive water safety legislative package for the 2026 legislative session.

Following the unanimous vote, Senator Carlos Guillermo Smith offered the following statement:

"In 2025, Florida broke its previous record with 119 fatal child drownings. 100% of these tragedies were preventable. Our bill seeks to empower families with the knowledge and tools they need to keep children safe around water and to save lives. Thanks to the Senators on this committee and the water safety advocates supporting this bill, our drowning prevention legislative package has real momentum in the 2026 legislative session."

Casey McGovern, Executive Director of Every Child a Swimmer, offered the following statement:

"As the mother of a drowning victim and the Executive Director of Every Child a Swimmer, I strongly support SB 606. Educating parents and caregivers at the time a child is born is one of the most critical opportunities we have to save lives. This is a pivotal moment when new parents are eager to learn, and providing water safety education early empowers families with knowledge that can prevent tragedy. SB606 recognizes that prevention starts early, and I am deeply grateful to Senator Smith for his leadership and unwavering dedication to protecting children and strengthening families."

According to DCF, Florida led the nation for the number of fatal child drownings in 2025. and had the highest child drowning rate in the nation based on FDOH data for ages 1-4 and ages 0-9 in a recent multi-year period.

Earlier in the Senate Health Policy Committee, lawmakers also gave SB 428 by Senator Clay Yarborough and co-introduced by Senator Smith unanimous approval. The bill expands eligibility for Florida's current child swimming lessons voucher program to children between ages one and seven.

The bills now head to the Senate Appropriations Committee on Health and Human Services, for consideration.

###