

State Senator Audrey Gibson

Session in Review - Week 6

April 10-14, 2017



Dear Constituent and Friend,

With just three weeks left in the 2017 legislative session, the Senate voted on our budget and implementing bill, SB 2500 and SB 2502. After questions and debate, we are ready for what is called budget conference, during which we hash out differences between the Senate budget plan and that of the House.

Some examples of funding include:

- Increase in funding for the "Extra Hour Initiative" program by providing an additional hour of reading instruction per day to the Lowest 300 Performing Elementary Schools in the state
- Funding to complete construction of the 7th Veterans' nursing home
- Adding 313 positions to the Department of Corrections including, 209 Correctional Officers and 104 mental health facility positions. A pay increase for Correctional Officers at a certain range is also included
- Expanding prevention programs and providing additional workforce to the Department of Juvenile Justice residential facilities
- Funds for Bright Futures Scholarship Program, at 100% cost for tuition, fees and summer term awards and 81% increase in Need Based Financial Aid.



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Additionally on the Floor:

SB 376: Charter School Funding provides for the sharing of school district funds between charter schools and public schools at the discretion of the school board. These are funds traditionally for public schools to either build schools or use to repair and upgrade our older schools. This bill would make it very difficult to address the need for building of new schools in high growth areas within our school district or make needed repairs to existing buildings.

With potential for negative impact on the Duval County School District and other school districts, I opposed this bill.

As we continue through Session, I will keep you informed of various issues that will come before us. If you have questions or comments please do not hesitate to contact my office.

As always, it is an Honor and a Pleasure to serve you in the Florida Senate!

Sincerely,

Audrey Gibson
State Senator
District 6

Tune into these stations between 6 am-6 pm Mon to Fri to watch legislative action: www.flsenate.gov/offices/minority or WJCT-TV-Comcast channel 212, or WJCT-DT 7.4 or WUFT-TV-Comcast channel 210, Digital Channel 5.2 or Cox 13.

Session snapshots:



Florida Children's Initiative, Parramore Kidz Zone and Miami Children's Initiative members
(Jacksonville New Town Success Zone children previously visited)



Caroline Price, MD and Maria Mahmoodi, MD
Doctors of the Day in the Florida Senate