Dear Constituent and Friend,

The fourth week of session has concluded and we are heading towards getting started on the state budget. Even as we continue to meet in committee meetings discussing policy that impacts our state, the most important meetings for me are those with constituents and stakeholders who come to voice and talk about their concerns and priorities. I am working towards addressing every issue that has been discussed with me through legislation that I find as you will see below. Please don’t hesitate to weigh in on these as well as other policy bills moving their way through the process.

My bills in committee this week:

SB 472: Elder Abuse Fatality Review Teams. As discussed last week the bill authorizes the establishment of elder abuse fatality review teams, composed of volunteer members, in each of the 25 judicial circuits. The teams will review fatal incidents of elder abuse and neglect, and make policy or other recommendations to help prevent future incidents of elder abuse-related fatalities to the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives. The bill now goes to its last committee before the floor for a full Senate vote.

SB 294: Unemployment Compensation. Allows employees who are victims of domestic violence to be eligible for unemployment benefits when they must leave work because of a reasonable fear that they will be the victim of a future act of violence, an untimely death, or, departing from work. Providing this assistance for a limited time, increases protections for victims of domestic violence and allows individuals to seek safer employment either in a different department at their current job or at a new job. The bill passed the committee unanimously.

SB 1436: Closing the Gap Grant Proposal. The bill adds a priority focus area for the “Closing the Gap” grant programs to include Alzheimer’s disease and dementia. The “Closing the Gap” program provides grants for activities designed to reduce care and other disparities. Without unanimous passage SB 1436 heads to its next committee.

SB 1466: Protection for Vulnerable Investors. There is nothing more heartbreaking than losing a senior hero’s life savings because of a broken trust. SB 1466 addresses this type of financial exploitation. The legislation adds financial exploitation,_wire fraud, and investment advice fraud to the list of qualifications persons who must report to the central abuse hotline. Securities dealers and investment advice firms will be able to place a temporary hold on financial transactions when exploitation of a vulnerable adult is suspected and must notify the Office of Financial Regulation of the hold.

Other bills of interest this week:

SB 1156: Cyberharassment by Senator Gayle Harrell-Martin County.

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

Sincerely,

Audrey Gibson
State Senator
District 6

Weeks 4 in the Senate!