



## Good Morning!

This past week I joined my colleagues, Senator Tom Wright, Rep Tyler Sirois, Rep Rene Placensia, and Rep Thad Altman at the 46th Annual Space Congress to discuss the current climate of Florida's Space Industry, and how we can prepare our workforce to meet the needs of the growing space related companies.

In an effort to help meet their demands and the demands of other industries in Florida, this past session the Florida Legislature expanded educational opportunities for Floridians by passing HB 7071 to promote apprenticeships and increase career opportunities. The Delegation also secured funding for local workforce development programs to help meet the critical demand for high-skilled high-wage labor. This includes \$500,000 for Astronaut High School's New Welding Technology Program; \$100,000 for Cocoa High School's New Construction Program; and \$350,000 for the Space Coast Economic Development Council Talent Asset Pipeline.



The space industry is working hard to return astronauts to space. After 24 successful launches in 2018, the 45th Space Wing expects a record number of launches to take place from Cape Canaveral by the end of 2019. One of which is Boeing's Starliner, the first commercial space craft to be built in Brevard County. The launch of this uncrewed mission to the International Space Station will mark Starliner's first space flight, to be followed later this year by a crewed mission.

This year will not only mark the 50th anniversary of the Apollo 11 moon landing mission, but also the return of American astronauts to space from American soil, in an American spacecraft (Boeing's Starliner). The next few months are a historic time for our community, Florida and our Nation.

I consider it a great honor to represent all of the citizens and visitors of District 17. Please share [this link](#) with your friends and family so that they too can sign up for the [Mayfield Minute](#). If you or someone you know needs my assistance, please don't hesitate to contact my office. My staff and I are here to serve you!

## FL Legislature Fully Funds Gardiner Scholarship Program

Education is essential to our state's success, which is why the Florida Legislature invested nearly \$35 billion in our education system this year. The 2019-2020 budget increased funding for the Gardiner Scholarship Program to a total of \$147.9 million, enough to provide scholarships for the nearly 1,900 students with special needs who are on the wait list.

Every student's needs are different and the Gardiner Scholarship Program empowers students with special needs by allowing them the flexibility to learn in an environment best suited for them. Eligible students can access the scholarship to purchase specialized services or instructional materials in order to design a customized educational program. The program is directly administered by state-approved nonprofit scholarship funding organizations.

Please visit the [Florida Department of Education's website](#) for more information on the Gardiner Scholarship Program.

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## From the Desk of Governor Ron DeSantis

Governor Ron DeSantis held a "Deregathon" earlier this year to identify areas where the state could eliminate fees and harmful regulations on Florida businesses and professionals.

As part of this effort, Governor Ron DeSantis announced this week that the [Florida Real Estate Commission](#) has approved a two-year reduction of biennial license renewal fees for certain active licenses (beginning with the renewal cycle for licenses expiring September 20, 2019.)

Effective July 1, 2019, this temporary fee reduction lowers license renewal fees by 50% for licenses of real estate brokers, real estate sales associates and real estate broker branch offices. This will cover the renewal periods of licenses expiring March 31, 2020, September 30, 2020 and March 31, 2021. This initiative is projected to result in an estimated savings of \$8.8 million dollars for eligible license holders in Florida.

*"I'm proud that our efforts to deregulate Florida's occupational licensing regime are producing real results for the hard-working men and women of our state," said Governor DeSantis. "This new fee reduction means more than 200,000 licensed real estate professionals will be able to keep more of their hard-earned money in their pockets. We have got to stop nickel-and-diming our businesses and professionals and I will continue to be bold in reducing barriers to opportunity for the people of Florida."*

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## District Highlights

### Sebastian Lionfish Festival

Indian River County is hosting the Annual Sebastian Lionfish Festival to educate area residents on how to make delicious dishes from this destructive invasive species. The festival includes a fishing tournament, cook-off, cooking demonstrations and live

entertainment. Teams of 1-4 anglers can compete to harvest the most fish, smallest fish and largest fish along the Treasure Coast.

[2019 Sebastian Lionfish Festival](#)

Sunday, June 23, 2019 from Noon - 4:30 PM

Captain Hiram's Sand Bar

1606 Indian River Drive, Sebastian, Florida

Lionfish are a predatory reef fish that is drastically reducing biodiversity throughout the Western Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico. The species is considered to be one of the top 15 global environmental issues, as this top predator competes with native fish for food and range. Lionfish have no known predators and can produce year-round. Lionfish can tolerate freshwater and have already been found 4 km inshore within the Loxahatchee River. This is especially worrisome since inshore estuaries and watersheds provide nursery habitats to thousands of commercially and ecologically important species.

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission has been working to address the growing Lionfish population since 2012 through regulatory changes, harvesting, outreach and education. The Florida Legislature also recognizes the need to address this predator and has allocated more than \$1.2 million for FY 2019-2020.

For more information about the Sebastian Lionfish Festival contact Kendra Cope at (772) 226-1569 or email [kcope@ircgov.com](mailto:kcope@ircgov.com).

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## **Stormwater and the Indian River Lagoon**

Throughout Brevard there are more than 2,000 stormwater outfalls, which convey untreated stormwater directly into the Indian River Lagoon.

Stormwater is run-off from rain events that flows over impervious surfaces, like pavement, and picks up debris and pollutants. This flow is directed either into a storm sewer system or can go directly into our waterways. Chemicals, yard clippings, metals and trash can contaminate water and poison aquatic wildlife.

In 1978 local regulations were changed to assure that all subdivisions and commercial sites within Brevard County treated stormwater runoff to reduce pollutants to our surface waters and reduce flooding. However much of Brevard was developed prior to this time and had little or no stormwater treatment facilities. In 1990, Brevard County created the Stormwater Program which implements projects to alleviate flooding and provide treatment to stormwater before it reaches the Indian River Lagoon or St. John's River.

The Brevard County Natural Resources Department will be hosting a presentation this week to discuss their efforts to reduce stormwater pollution and how you can help.

[Stormwater Pollution in the Indian River Lagoon](#)

Friday, June 14 at 10:30 AM

Catherine Schweinsberg Rood Central Library

308 Forrest Ave, Cocoa, FL 32922

This event is open to the public and free to attend. For more information contact the department at (321) 633-2016.

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## Summer Surf Fishing Workshop

June is Great Outdoors Month in Florida, and to celebrate Sebastian Inlet State Park is hosting a workshop to prepare anglers for summer success.

### [Summer Surf Fishing](#)

Saturday, June 15th from 1:00 - 3:00 PM  
Sebastian Inlet State Park - Fishing Museum  
14251 North A1A, Vero Beach, FL 32963

This two hour workshop is designed to inform anglers of the challenges of Summer Time Surf Fishing. Anglers can learn the best tides to fish, surf conditions for best results, keeping your baits on the hooks, times to fish, and equipment to use during the summer months.

The workshop is free to attend with the regular park entrance fee. For more information contact Terry O'Toole at [terry.otoole@dep.state.fl.us](mailto:terry.otoole@dep.state.fl.us).

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