



## Good Morning!

As we approach the final weeks of the 2020 Legislative Session, the Florida Senate continues our work to advance important legislation to address the most pressing issues facing our state. One of the most important issues to me is improving water quality in Florida's waterways.

This past week my colleagues and I continued our efforts to protect and restore water quality throughout our state. The Clean Waterways Act, Senate Bill (SB) 712 and House Bill (HB) 1343, have passed all of their assigned committees and are now headed to their respective chambers for final consideration.

This comprehensive legislation will expedite improvements and restoration of Florida's water bodies that are being adversely affected by blue-green algae blooms. The Clean Waterways Act addresses significant sources of nutrient pollution that are contributing to these blooms including onsite sewage treatment and disposal (septic) systems, overflows and discharges from Waste Water Treatment facilities, and stormwater runoff.

I am grateful to Governor Ron DeSantis and Senate President Bill Galvano for their leadership and continued commitment to protect Florida's waters. I look forward to working with my colleagues to get this important legislation to the Governor's desk to ensure the restoration of our most precious natural resource.

I consider it a great honor to represent 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!

The graphic has a blue water background. At the top, it says 'SB 712: Environmental Resource Management'. Below that, there are three bullet points with checkmarks: 'Addresses Water Pollution Sources', 'Incorporates Recommendations from the Blue-Green Algae Task Force', and 'Establishes Matching Grant Program for Local Wastewater Improvements'. At the bottom left is the Florida Senate seal. To the right of the seal, it says 'Passed: Senate Appropriations Committee' and 'Next Stop: Senate Floor'.

**SB 712: Environmental Resource Management**

- ✓ Addresses Water Pollution Sources
- ✓ Incorporates Recommendations from the Blue-Green Algae Task Force
- ✓ Establishes Matching Grant Program for Local Wastewater Improvements

Passed: Senate Appropriations Committee  
Next Stop: Senate Floor

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## Legislation Update

This past week I **presented** the following legislation:

[SB 716: County Boundaries](#) was unanimously approved by the Florida Senate this past week. This bill provides for a boundary line change to property that is located partially in Indian River County and partially in St. Lucie County. This legislation alters the boundary lines, which has the support of the property owners and both Counties involved.

[SB 646: Student Athlete Achievement Act](#) allows student athletes the right to benefit from their own name, image or likeness, just like every other student on their college campus. This legislation was approved by the Senate Rules Committee this past week, and will now go to the Senate Floor for consideration. I look forward to working with my colleagues to pass this bill in support of Florida's 11,000 student athletes in their efforts to participate in the free market.

[SB 1414: Fish and Wildlife Activities](#) increases the number of free fishing days from 4 to 6 days, to allow more anglers to get out and experience our state's natural resources. This legislation also expands the list of Conditional Nonnative species that are prohibited from being bred or sold, except for educational, research or eradication purposes, to include the Green Iguana and Black & White Tegu. This bill was approved by the Senate Rules Committee, and will now go to the Senate Floor for consideration.

[SB 666: FDFC](#) was approved by the Senate Rules Committee this week. This legislation redesigns the board of directors, adds additional annual reporting requirements, and sets a sunset provision for the Florida Development Finance Corporation (FDFC). This legislation will now go to the Senate Floor for consideration.

The following legislation **passed on the Senate Floor**:

[SB 936: Disability Retirement Benefits](#) improves access to benefits for disabled veterans by easing proof of disability requirements for a veteran in the Florida Retirement System who is receiving care at a federal Veterans Health Administration (VHA) facility. Currently, a veteran is required to receive certification of proof of total and permanent disability from physicians licensed in Florida or the state in which the veteran works. This legislation will allow a veteran to obtain proof of disability from a VHA physician regardless of the state that the physician is licensed in.

[HB 73: Environmental Regulation](#) identifies contamination-related details that must be included in recycling contracts between municipalities and haulers or Multi Re-use Facilities (MRFs). Haulers would not be required to transport contaminated materials that violate the definition of acceptable recyclables, and MRFs would not be required to process them.

[HB 61: Adoption Benefits](#) provides incentives for veterans and military members to adopt children from the state's child-welfare system. This legislation expands a program that provides incentives to state employees to adopt children. State employees can receive a one-time benefit of \$10,000 for the adoption of a child with special needs and \$5,000 for adoption of a child without special needs. The bill makes those benefits available to veterans and military members as well.

Governor Ron DeSantis recently **signed** the following legislation into law:

[SB 476: Law Enforcement Vehicles](#) ensures law enforcement have the ability to park their patrol cars at home without fear of penalties from HOAs or condo associations. The bill takes effect immediately.

[HB 1087: Domestic Violence Services](#) Following the recently disclosed information regarding the Florida Coalition Against Domestic Violence's (FCADV) untenable practices over the past several years. This legislation removes the FCADV from statute and allows the Department of Children and Families (DCF) to administer all programs related to domestic violence services so that survivors in need of these services can continue to receive vital care.

Please follow me on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) for live updates from the Capitol.

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## Housing Loan Program for Military and Veterans

Governor Ron DeSantis recently announced the “Salute Our Soldiers” Military Loan Program (SOS) that will be offered to veterans and active duty military personnel throughout the state.

*“I’m excited to announce my administration’s newest veteran-focused initiative: the “Salute Our Soldiers” Military Housing Loan Program for veterans and active duty military personnel throughout the state,”* said Governor DeSantis. *“To start, Florida Housing will set aside funds to assist over 1,000 veterans and active duty military members by making the homebuying process easier and more affordable. More veterans calling Florida home is a great thing for all involved and we look forward to the positive impacts this program will have on the lives of our veterans and the communities in which they live.”*

Administered by the Florida Housing Finance Corporation, this program is offering up to \$8 million in a variety of down payment and closing cost assistance, coupled with low-interest rate first mortgages. Importantly, there will be down payment and closing cost assistance options that will be forgivable after five years. The program will be available starting March 2, 2020.

Some of the attributes of the program include:

- Florida Assist down payment assistance: \$7,500 at 0% interest with no payments for 30 years, but due upon sale or refinance;
- Salute Our Soldiers PLUS forgivable down payment assistance: Choice of 3%, 4% or 5% of the purchase price that is forgiven at 20% per year over five years. Active duty military members who receive official orders to relocate will have any remaining balance forgiven upon sale of the home;
- Homebuyer Loan Program (HLP) down payment assistance: \$10,000 at 3% interest over 15 years.
- Reduced costs (no documentary stamp taxes or intangible taxes on the notes and mortgages) and fees to the military homebuyer; and
- Veterans are exempt from the first-time homebuyer requirement. Active duty military members cannot have owned a primary residence in the last three years.

For more information, please visit Florida Housing’s Homebuyer Loan Program Wizard at [www.floridahousing.org](http://www.floridahousing.org).

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## District 17 Highlights

### Marine Resources Council Celebrates IRL Advocates

This past week I was presented with the **Outstanding Service Award** from The Marine Resources Council at their 19th Annual Conservation Awards Banquet. I feel honored to be recognized alongside the following Indian River Lagoon coastal conservation heroes:

- Lifetime Award for Conservation: Dr. Dennis Hanisak, FAU Harbor Branch
- Outstanding Volunteer Service Award: Gayle Ryan
- Outstanding Service by a Government Employee Award: Dianne Hughes
- Project of the Year Award: Indian River Lagoon Clam Restoration Project

Since 1983, the Marine Resources Council has worked to improve water quality and to restore the fish and wildlife resources of the Indian River Lagoon, coastal waters, inshore reefs, and watershed by advocating and using sound science, education and the involvement of the public. For more information on how you can get involved, please visit [SaveTheIRL.org](http://SaveTheIRL.org) or call (321) 725-7775.

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## Keep Indian River Beautiful

Keep Indian River Beautiful (KIRB) recently hosted their 5th Annual Environmental Awards Ceremony at which I was honored to receive their **Environmental Leadership Award**. At the Ceremony the following individuals and businesses were also recognized for their significant contributions to improving the environment in 2019:

- Community Builder: Joe Semkow
- Environmental Champion: Dan Compas
- Recycling Excellence Award: John's Island Club
- Dedicated Service Award: Knights of Columbus #5629
- Exemplary Lagoon Friendly Lawn Award: Vero Beach Country Club
- Environmental Small Business: AKOHO
- Environmental Large Business: Parabel
- Environmental Youth Group: Youth Sailing Foundation
- Environmental Young Hero: Avi Johnson



Keep Indian River Beautiful is a nonprofit organization and local affiliate of Keep America Beautiful. Originally organized in 1998, Keep Indian River Beautiful works to improve the community and environment through education and hands-on volunteer opportunities. To learn more about KIRB or to volunteer, please visit [www.KeepIndianRiverBeautiful.org](http://www.KeepIndianRiverBeautiful.org) or the Upcycle It! store on the corner of Old Dixie Highway and 16th Street in Vero Beach.

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## Brevard Veterans Center Revolutionary War Celebration

On March 10, 1783 the last Naval battle of the Revolutionary War was fought off of Cape Canaveral Florida. USS Captains John Barry and John Green were trying to deliver a shipload of Spanish silver to the Continental Congress, when they were attacked by British battleships off the coast of Cape Canaveral. After a short firefight and assistance from the French ship, Triton, the British were chased into the night.

Captain John Barry continued North and delivered the silver to Newport, Rhode Island. Upon his arrival they learned that the Treaty of Paris had been signed, bringing the Revolution to a close and making this engagement the last naval battle of the Revolution.

The Brevard Veterans Memorial Center will be hosting a celebration of this Last Naval Battle of the Revolutionary War on Saturday, March 7th from 10:00 am - Noon at their facility (400 S Sykes Creek Pkwy, Merritt Island). This event is open to the public and free to attend. For more information, please contact Donn Weaver or Doug Bisset (321) 453-1776 for more information.

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Follow me on Facebook and Twitter, and visit my [Senate website](#)



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