

# LORANNE AUSLEY

STATE SENATOR DISTRICT 3



## *The Ausley Update*

— Legislative Update —

### Senate Offices

**-Tallahassee-**  
202 Senate Building  
404 South Monroe Street  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1100  
(850) 487-5003

**-Quincy-**  
20 East Washington Street  
Suite D  
Quincy, FL 32351  
(850) 627-0474

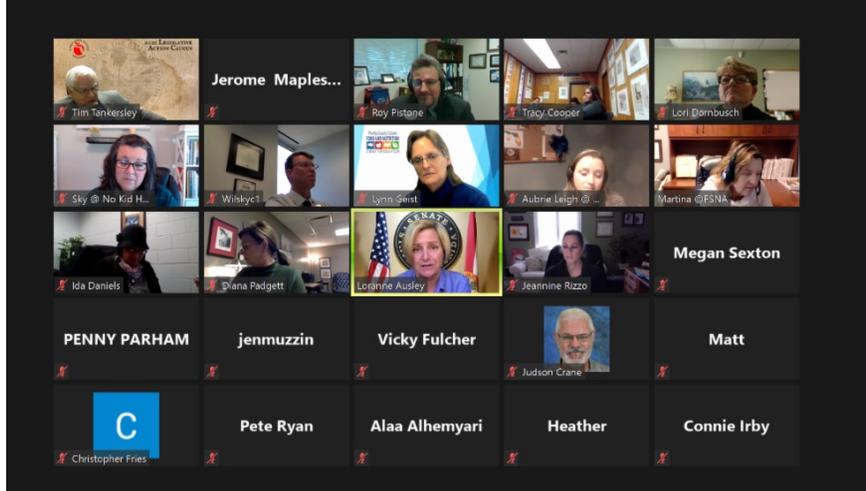
### Dear Constituent and Friend,

The Florida Senate wrapped up five weeks of interim committee meetings and today begins the 2021 annual Legislative Session. This is an exciting day - after 12 opening days spent in the Florida House, I'm looking forward to my first Session as your Senator for District 3. There is much work to be done and I am committed to working every day on your behalf to enact sound public policy and make responsible budget decisions.



Thank you to everyone who has reached out either by phone or email. I would encourage you to please share your thoughts, suggestions, needs and concerns via email at [ausley.loranne.web@flsenate.gov](mailto:ausley.loranne.web@flsenate.gov) or call our office at (850) 487-5003. In this time of COVID-19, we expect Capitol access to remain limited, but we will continue to hold virtual office hours through Zoom.

Nevertheless, even during these unprecedented times, I want to make sure you know that I am available, and I sincerely want to hear from you.



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## Legislation Update:

Today marks the filing deadline for all member legislation and there is always a last day flurry of bills filed. If you want to keep up or track any bills, you can go to either [www.flsenate.gov](http://www.flsenate.gov) or [www.myfloridahouse.gov](http://www.myfloridahouse.gov) to review all current legislation. Below are some highlights of the bills I have either sponsored or cosponsored; please visit [www.flsenate.gov/S3](http://www.flsenate.gov/S3) to see updated information as Session progresses.

### **SB 1560: Broadband Internet Service**

The pandemic has proven beyond a shadow of a doubt that high speed internet is essential for learning, work, health care and economic development; yet, too many Floridians do not have access. There are areas in our urban communities where internet is available yet unaffordable, while many of our rural communities are left behind with no service at all. SB 1560 starts to change that by requiring effective mapping to identify gaps in services and recognizing that all broadband has to be at high enough transmission speeds to create true digital equity. The bill requires the public and private sector to work together to leverage a broad array of funding to bring us into the 21<sup>st</sup> century, ensuring that broadband is available and accessible for everyone.

### **SB 1496: Early Education Scholarship Program**

Quality early learning is expensive, and parents need options. Much like we have Bright Futures for college, the Brighter Futures bill sets up a scholarship program to help families pay for child care. While this already exists through Florida's school readiness program, Brighter Futures will expand these scholarships to more parents and children, putting Florida in a position to be able to take advantage of expected federal investments. Now is the time for an honest discussion about the importance of child care and the need for real investments to ensure that every single kid has the opportunity for the best start in life.

### **SB 1250: Telehealth**

Telehealth has become an important tool in the delivery of health care services, proving to be especially important in the time of COVID-19. While telemedicine isn't new, its growth has been significant and our laws haven't kept up. SB 1250 works to provide insurance uniformity for health care services whether they are in

person or through electronic means.

### **SB 1278: Apalachicola Bay Area of Critical State Concern**

The Apalachicola Bay area is a true treasure, and as with anything valuable, we must do what we can to improve and protect it. Senate Bill 1278 looks to do just that by beginning to provide funding to improve the surface water and groundwater quality for that area.

### **SB 704: Entertainment Industry**

SB 704 creates a rebate program within the Department of Economic Opportunity to once again incentivize film production in Florida. Florida has lost out on so many film projects to neighboring states, losing billions in potential revenues that could support education, health care and broadband expansion. This bill will be a first step towards Florida reclaiming its place as a premier location for the film industry.

### **2021 SESSION DATES**

March 2, 2021: Regular Session convenes

April 30, 2021: 60th day – last day of Regular Session

## **AUSLEY'S HIGHLIGHTS**

Reynolds Donut Shop: Did you know that Senate District 3 has a number of small donut shops that pack a punch? Reynolds is a hidden jewel! If you haven't been to Quincy or lucky enough to be on the receiving end of a box of Reynolds Doughnuts, you have missed out. I love these donuts! If you're ever in Quincy or anywhere close this is a must stop - just be there early, because these donuts go quick!



Delegation Meetings: We completed our 11th and final Delegation meeting in late January. It was a great experience to meet and listen to everyone who came out and shared their thoughts, concerns, issues and opinions. Knowing what is important to you helps me represent you better as your Senator. We have a lot of work to do and I will do all that I can for our district and state.

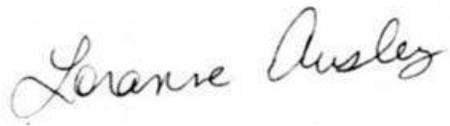


Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) has announced that the application period is now open for homeowners in Hurricane Michael impacted areas for the Rebuild Florida Housing Repair and Replacement Program. The Rebuild Florida Housing Repair and Replacement Program will provide long-term assistance to repair, rebuild, or replace Hurricane Michael-damaged homes that serve as primary residences of eligible

Florida families, as well as eligible rental homes. You can complete the application on the Rebuild Florida app, online by visiting <http://floridajobs.org/rebuildflorida>, or in person at a Rebuild Florida Center. Centers are open 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Monday – Saturday.

*Again, please let me hear from you. It is an honor and pleasure to serve you in the Florida Senate!*

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lorraine Ausley". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "L".

Lorraine Ausley  
Senator District 3

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