

LORANNE AUSLEY

STATE SENATOR DISTRICT 3



The Ausley Update — Legislative Update —

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Dear Constituent and Friend,

The 2021 Legislative session has come to an end with the ceremonial drop of the hankie for "Sine Die". We won't be gone for long, as Legislators will be returning to Tallahassee in a few short weeks for a Special Session on gaming.

This was my 13th Legislative Session, and my first as a Member of the Florida Senate, and I can say that it was a session like no other. The COVID pandemic, limited public access, weekly COVID tests and extremely quiet halls was in some ways disconcerting. I really miss the in-person interaction with constituents, lobbyists and advocacy groups visiting the capitol. Zoom and other technologies have kept us connected, but I am really looking forward to spending time talking and visiting with live people out in the district!



I started this session with two major policy priorities – to move Florida forward on early learning and broadband, and we made major progress on both fronts. I was a co-sponsor of the VPK and Early Grades Success bill which will help Florida continue to expand access to high quality child care for kids who need it the most. We also passed HB 1239 that gets Florida one step closer to a real broadband solution that will make high speed internet available and accessible to all Floridians.

In my overall Session update I'll share more about other policy and budget issues that passed and



failed, but this week included two very troubling bills, and I spoke out and voted against both. SB 90 is an unnecessary and draconian elections bill that creates a number of barriers for Supervisors of Elections and makes it harder for citizens to vote. HB 7045 included a huge expansion of vouchers that will undermine our public schools.

The voucher bill also included significant changes to the Gardiner and McKay scholarship programs, which make a real difference for our special needs kids and their families. I spoke out and opposed both of these bills as they are both unnecessary and just more examples of solutions in search of problems.

The only bill the Legislature is required to pass is the annual budget, and this year's General Appropriations Act broke records, surpassing \$100 BILLION. To be honest, \$100 Billion is a number that I have a hard time getting my head around, but it presents a once in a lifetime opportunity to make strategic and important investments, particularly in our fiscally constrained counties. I am pleased to report that Senate District 3 did well with a number of projects receiving funding – pending the Governor's approval. Once the budget was finalized, I made a bunch of "happy calls" to community leaders around the district to share the good news and talk about ways we can leverage these unprecedented state and federal funds.

I thank you for the honor to serve you in the Florida Senate and I look forward to continuing to work on your behalf and bring about positive change in our district and state.

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AUSLEY's HIGHLIGHTS

Great to have visitors back in the Capitol! Thursday we welcomed a group of farmers who were here for the official signing of the Right to Farm bill which I was proud to support. It was great to see my constituent, Mr. Michael Brown of Brown Farms.



Sincerely,

Loranne Ausley

Loranne Ausley
Senator District 3

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