

LORANNE AUSLEY

STATE SENATOR DISTRICT 3



— *The Ausley Update* —

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Wow, July is coming to a close, and we are quickly moving towards the 2022 Legislative Session. While the summer is usually a slower time for the legislature, I have spent most of it working hard getting across the state and around the district. My staff has also been out in the district attending education meetings, tele-health discussions and everything in between. I traveled to Orlando for the Florida Association of Counties (FAC) meeting which gave me the opportunity to meet with County Commissioners from across Senate District 3. We started early with the Small County Coalition breakfast, where I was honored to receive their "Outstanding Leadership" award for my work on rural broadband. Later in the day, I served on a panel for FAC's Access 67: Expanding Broadband Access in Florida. As you can see from the photo below, there is a LOT of interest in this subject and we had a great conversation about how to keep moving forward to make sure that every Floridian has access to high-speed internet.



FLORIDA ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES
ACCESS 67
 Sponsored by **Florida Internet & Television** and **inspired**

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 30
ACCESS 67: Expanding Broadband Access in Florida
 1:45 pm – 3:15 pm | Orlando, FL

The ACCESS 67 Initiative of the Florida Association of Counties (FAC) is focused on policy solutions to assist rural and urban communities deliver effective public safety, healthcare, economic development and education. The COVID-19 pandemic further illustrated the digital divide leaving unserved and underserved communities disconnected from distance learning, remote work, and telehealth opportunities.

The ACCESS 67 panel will offer local, state, and federal perspectives on the challenges of closing the digital divide through public policy. Recent state legislative developments will be discussed highlighting the efforts of the Florida Legislature through the Department of Economic Opportunity's Office of Broadband. Industry and policy leaders will discuss solutions to address the impacts of the lack of ACCESS to critical telecommunication and information technology resources in Florida communities.

Policy topics to be covered include: general/state of access in Florida's counties, Broadband federal recovery funding, local solutions (county initiatives), state legislative/executive/DEO developments, challenges/opportunities of expansion, mapping, and infrastructure.

Moderator: Okechobee County Commissioner Terry Burroughs

Panelists:

- NACo President Gary Moore, Judge/Executive, Boone County, Kentucky
- Senator Lorraine Ausley, Florida Senate District 3
- Brad Swanson, President of Florida Internet and Television
- Zack Dunlap, Vice President of Business Development, Inspired Technologies, Inc.

2021 ANNUAL CONFERENCE & EDUCATIONAL EXPOSITION Presented by **Q&C**

Speaking of broadband, I have the privilege of serving as co-chair of the NewDEAL Forum's National Broadband Task Force, which met for the first time this month. The mission of the Task Force is to identify barriers limiting access and affordability of high-speed internet. As you are aware, Florida's rural broadband limitations are neither new nor unique. But more than a year into a pandemic that's made the deficiencies all the more apparent, many remote Florida communities are still without reliable internet access. I am looking forward to the work of this Task Force to continue moving forward on this critical issue.

QUICK REMINDERS

The American Rescue Plan included the largest Child Tax Credit ever and historic relief to most working families. Many families received their first round of payments on July 15th and will continue to receive payments of \$250 or \$300 per child on the 15th of each month (August will be the



13th since the 15th falls on a weekend). Please visit www.ChildTaxCredit.gov for more information.



Hurricane Season, June 1 – Nov. 30: We have had our first hurricane of the season and I want to encourage you to stay ready. My office will continue to be available and work with all state and local officials during these storms. Remember to pack your hurricane kit!

Saturday is the start of the 2021 Back-to-School Sales Tax Holiday, which runs from July 31 – August 9, 2021. Qualifying items will be exempt from tax, including certain school supplies, clothing, footwear, and certain accessories selling for \$60 or less per item, and the first \$1,000 of the sales price of personal computers and certain computer-related accessories. You can visit <https://floridarevenue.com/backtoschool> for a complete list of items.



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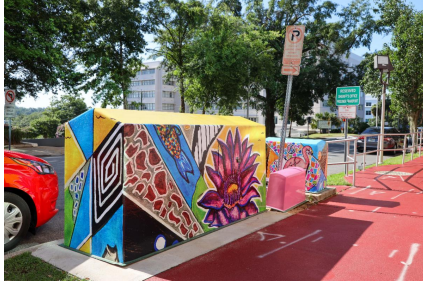


AUSLEY'S HIGHLIGHTS

Today's highlight goes to Carol Barfield and the Tally Mac Shack. I appreciate your dedication to finding ways to help our youth. THANK YOU BOTH!! For the full Tally Mac Shack story, [click here](#).



There's also some great artwork going up around Tallahassee! Knight Creative Communities Institute (KCCI), Leon County Government and partners have transformed graffiti-covered boxes into local art through their recent Art of the Box (AoB) installments. A walking and driving tour guide and other information on this program can be found at www.ArtofTheBox.org.



Thank you for the honor to serve you in the Florida Senate, I look forward to continuing to work on your behalf and hope to see you in my travels around the district!

Sincerely,

Lorraine Ausley
Senator, District 3

Sign up to stay connected!