

## **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

Now that the Legislative Session has come to a close, it has given me more time to get out and about in Senate District 3. I especially wanted to take the time to just say THANK YOU to everyone who has been on the front lines this past year. I visited a number of schools across the district's 11 counties to thank our teachers and support staff, who have worked so hard to make sure our kids didn't miss a beat during a very challenging year.



I continue to be inspired by front-line health care workers who rolled up their sleeves and went to work wherever needed and are still working hard to make sure citizens get vaccinated. We owe them a debt of gratitude for their selfless service, so I take the opportunity to say THANK YOU whenever I can.



Our district has some of the most beautiful coastlines, springs and waterways in the state, and I take every opportunity that I can to get outside and visit! While I have been visiting these special places for most of my life, these official visits help me better understand the interconnectedness of these precious natural resources. As we travel around the district, please let us know about events or special occasions. Even if I can't be



there in-person, I can send staff or greetings. Also, let me know about your favorite spots to eat – we are finding some great North Florida delicacies, but I am always looking for recommendations!

We started this Legislative Session anticipating significant cuts as a result of the pandemic. However, thanks to a recovering economy and the President's American Rescue Plan, the final budget was able to address some critical needs in our district, covering infrastructure, health care, education, transportation, agriculture, broadband, and much more. Through it all, Senate District 3 came away with more than \$38 million in project funding that will make sure our communities are recovering and building back stronger. I have made it to almost every county commission meeting across the district to provide a legislative update and to make sure that all of our cities and counties are in the best position possible to take advantage of state and federal funds. These one-time funds can be a game changer, particularly for rural communities.



Our work on improving internet access continues to move forward with the passage of HB 1239. The bill requires the Office of Broadband to begin work on a statewide mapping project. Accurate maps will reveal unserved areas, and those that are underserved - which are places without enough speed for kids to do homework or parents to work from home. Once we have accurate maps, our communities will be in a better position to access federal resources. Finally, there is agreement at all levels that high-speed internet is essential, and there are state

and federal resources available. I am working with all stakeholders to make sure those resources come to North Florida.

Don't forget to take advantage of the Emergency Broadband Benefit Program. As of this month, eligible households can enroll in the program and receive a monthly discounts of up to \$50 per month on the cost of broadband service from participating providers. It will also provide a one-time discount of up to \$100 on a computer or tablet for eligible households. A household is eligible for the Emergency Broadband Benefit Program if it has an income that is at or below 135% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines or participates in certain assistance programs such as SNAP, Medicaid, or receives Federal Pell Grant. For more information and to signup, visit www.getemergencybroadband.org or call (833) 511-0311 for a mail-in application.

Eligible parents of children under the age of 18 will also be receiving a child tax credit starting next month of up to \$300 per child. If you are eligible and you filed taxes last year, you will automatically receive your monthly check via direct deposit or mail. If you are eligible and not a tax filer, you will need to complete an online form. For more information go to www.childtaxcredit.com. Please help us spread the word about these important benefits, and let our office know if we can help in any way.

We would love to have you join us for our official Quincy office open house on June 28th. Stop by and say hello!



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## **AUSLEY'S HIGHLIGHTS**

Today's County highlight goes to Jefferson County's very own Monticello BBQ &

Burgers and the Tupelo Bakery and Café. These are two great places to both eat and visit, and as you can see from the pictures, I was lucky enough to get the chance to do both!



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

Congratulations to all the 2021 Graduates, and I wish you all the best.

Sincerely,

Lorance Ausley

Loranne Ausley Senator District 3

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