



BOYD'S EYE

View

District 21 Newsletter - April 23, 2021

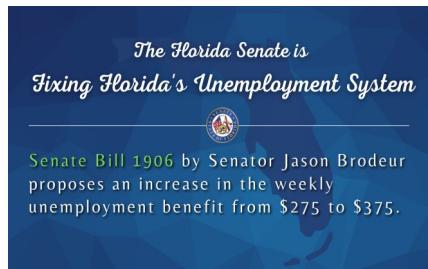
Senator Jim Boyd



COMMITTEES: Banking and Insurance (Chair), Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture, Environment, and General Government, Appropriation's Subcommittee on Transportation, Tourism, and Economic Development, Criminal Justice, Judiciary, Joint Legislative Auditing Committee

Senate Votes to Increase Unemployment Benefits

The COVID-19 Pandemic has shed light on issues within Florida's unemployment system and the Florida Senate is taking the necessary steps to address these challenges. [Senate Bill 1906: Reemployment Assistance](#), by Senator Jason Brodeur, passed the Florida Senate and is headed to the Florida House of Representatives for consideration.



The maximum unemployment benefit amount has not been raised in over two decades, and the cost of living for Floridians has grown substantially since then. The legislation proposes to increase the maximum weekly unemployment benefit from \$275 to \$375, and to increase the minimum weekly benefit from \$32 to \$100, bringing Florida on par with the national average for state unemployment benefits.

It also aims to increase the maximum duration of benefits from 12 weeks to 14 weeks when the unemployment rate is at or below 5%, and from 23 weeks to 25 weeks when the unemployment rate is at or above 10.5%. Additionally, denial of reemployment assistance solely on the basis of pregnancy is prohibited under the legislation.

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Modernizing Florida's Reemployment Assistance

Gaining unanimous support in the Florida Senate, [House Bill 1463: Department of Economic Opportunity](#), presented in the Senate by President Pro Tempore Aaron Bean, will update Florida's antiquated reemployment assistance program. While the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) continues to work tirelessly to ensure benefits are provided to claimants, the state's reemployment assistance program, known as CONNECT, was not built to process the volume of claims received during the pandemic.

House Bill 1463 establishes an Office of Economic Accountability and Transparency within DEO to provide oversight on key agency initiatives. The measure also works to modernize Florida's reemployment assistance program by implementing a cloud-based system that is necessary for an efficient and effective operation, and directs other program and claims-processing changes to promote efficiency and timeliness.



On Thursday, April 22, 2021, much of the world celebrated Earth Day; however, there are still opportunities to enjoy **community events** to mark the occasion. Of course, every day is a chance to take care of our planet.

[Sat., 4/24, Keep Manatee Beautiful Neighborhood Beautification Project.](#)

[Sat./Sun., 4/24-25, Don CeSar Earth Day Events, including sand sculpting.](#)

[Sat., 4/24, NASA Virtual Event.](#)



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