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Legislative Session: Week Six

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

Week Six of our 2021 legislative session is now over, completing two-thirds of our annual session. Stay tuned and involved - these final three weeks move quickly and a lot will occur. This week's update is below.

While around 11.4 million doses of the COVID-19 vaccine have been administered to Floridians, and almost 20% of our population are fully vaccinated, it is important to continue practicing social distancing and safety measures such as washing your hands often and wearing masks. Stay well and healthy.

Our Tallahassee line is 850.487.5031 and my email is Berman.Lori.Web@flsenate.gov.

Have a great weekend,



Lori

IMPORTANT COVID-19 UPDATES FROM PALM BEACH COUNTY

**EMERGENCY ORDER 2021-003 ISSUED EXTENDING FACIAL
COVERINGS TO 04/18/21**

***NEW* Interactive vaccination locator map**

Vaccine Information Flyer

Revised Vaccine Eligibility Guidelines for COVID-19 Vaccinations

Executive Order 21-79 revises vaccine guidelines for Florida residents. During this phase of vaccine administration, all providers administering any COVID-19 vaccine shall only vaccinate the following populations:

All Floridians eligible to receive any COVID19 vaccine as prescribed by the Food and Drug Administration. Ages 18 and over for Moderna vaccine and 16 and over for Pfizer vaccine.

Health Care District Opens Online Appointment Scheduling for Pfizer and Moderna COVID-19 Vaccines

The Health Care District of Palm Beach County opened 20,000 first-dose vaccination appointments for scheduling through Saturday, April 17, 2021 at <http://vaccine.hcdpbc.org> [vaccine.hcdpbc.org] for Pfizer and Moderna vaccine. The website lists the available dates, locations, vaccine brand and eligibility requirements at each of the Health Care District's three mass vaccination sites at the South County Civic Center west of Delray Beach, the Burns Road Community Center in Palm Beach Gardens, and the South Florida Fairgrounds in

suburban West Palm Beach. It is essential that individuals follow the state eligibility guidelines when scheduling to avoid being turned away at the sites. Individuals 16 years and 17 years old are eligible to self-schedule appointments for the Pfizer vaccine brand only. A parent or guardian must be present at the appointment of those who are 16 and 17 years old.

***NEW* Emergency Rental Assistance and Utility Assistance**

The Palm Beach County Community Services Department opened its online portal for Emergency Rental Assistance, Relocation Assistance and Utility Assistance on March 10th. For more information, click [here](#).

Vaccines for Homebound Seniors

The Florida Division of Emergency Management (FDEM) recently announced a new way for homebound seniors to sign up to have a COVID-19 vaccine come directly to them. E-mail HomeboundVaccine@em.myflorida.com with your name and phone number to put in your request. Someone from the Florida Division of Emergency Management will contact you within 72 hours to collect more information and schedule your appointment. At this time, FDEM is not accepting phone calls for homebound vaccination appointments.

Vaccine Information

Florida Health [Vaccine Information Page](#)

Florida Health - Palm Beach County [Vaccine Information Page](#)

DOH Appointment Hotline: 866-201-6754

Palm Beach County Health Care District [Vaccine Information Page](#)

Publix Pharmacy [Vaccine Information Page](#)

CVS Pharmacy [Vaccine Information Page](#)

Winn Dixie [Vaccine Information Page](#) (Hypoluxo Rd, Lake Worth only)

Wal-Mart [Vaccine Information Page](#)

Walgreens [Vaccination Information Page](#)

City of Boynton Beach:

The [City of Boynton Beach](#) expects to re-open their vaccine portal on Tuesday,

April 13. Appointments are available for Florida residents 18+. Vaccines will be administered by [Boynton Beach Fire Rescue](#) at the [Ezell Hester, Jr. Comm. Ctr.](#) In the event of appointment cancellations, the City has created a Vaccine Stand-By list. [Learn more and find FAQ.](#) Questions? 561-742-6010.

[Possible Side Effects After Getting a COVID-19 Vaccine](#)

[COVID-19 Funeral Assistance](#)

[West Palm Beach VA is now offering the COVID-19 vaccine to all Veterans, regardless of age, who receive care at VA](#)

[crisis counseling health services](#)

[SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM @ PALM BEACH COUNTY LIBRARY](#)

Palm Beach County Feeding Sites [Interactive Map](#)

Keeping up with Berman's Bills

[SB 1164: Days of Remembrance and Holocaust Remembrance Day](#)

Establishes the week of April 4-11, 2021 as the “Days of Remembrance” and April 8, 2021, as “Holocaust Remembrance Day” in memory of the victims of the Holocaust, in honor of its survivors, and in utmost gratitude for the risks taken by rescuers and liberators. The Resolution was adopted on Wednesday, April 7th, on the floor of the Senate.

[SB 1954: Statewide Flooding and Sea Level Rise Resilience](#)

A multipart plan to deal with rising sea levels caused by climate change passed both the Senate and House Thursday and now heads to the Governor's desk for signature. A bill I filed, [SB 1252](#), was incorporated into this resilience package, requiring the Office of Economic and Demographic Research to analyze future

expenditures by federal, state, regional, and local governments necessary to improve resilience to inland and coastal flooding on a 50-year planning period. SB 1954 will create the Resilient Florida Grant Program, authorizing the Department of Environmental Protection to provide grants to local governments to combat rising sea levels. A rising sea will have major impacts on Florida's real estate, valued at over \$130 billion, on half of our beaches, and on substantial critical infrastructure. Resilience and adaptation are important, but without mitigation strategies, like lowering our greenhouse gas emissions, we'll have done nothing to address the root cause of our changing climate.



Video of Senator Berman leading the Florida Senate in a moment of silence for Yom HaShoah, Holocaust Remembrance Day.

Bills of Significance

their Bright Futures Scholarships for a given year. Bright Futures has been critical in sending Florida's best and brightest students to our public universities at an affordable rate. It will change the “Bright Futures” of our students into “Uncertain Ones,” and they deserve better.

[SB 2512: Documentary Stamp Taxes](#)

This bill has been the subject of recent contention and successfully passed the Senate on Wednesday and the House on Thursday. It is now on its way to the Governor. The bill diverts money away from the Sadowski Fund for affordable housing and reallocates \$111.7 million to sewage projects and \$111.7 million to sea level rise resiliency. While these projects are necessary, the American Rescue Plan is sending \$10 billion to Florida. Nevertheless, the bill included a provision mandating that no more than 50% of the Sadowski Fund may be reallocated to other programs in future years, as it is a common source of funding.

Highlights of the Federal American Rescue Plan

- **Direct Payments to Working Families & Expanding Child Tax Credit** - Providing working families an additional direct payment of \$1,400 per person.
 - **Expanding the Child Tax Credit** - The bill makes the child tax credit fully refundable for 2021 and increases the annual amount from the current \$2,000 per child to \$3,000 per child.
 - **Increase COVID-19 Vaccinations** - Providing over \$20 billion to establish a national COVID-19 vaccination program and improve the administration and distribution of vaccinations.
 - **Scaling up COVID-19 Testing, contact tracing, and mitigation** - \$47.8 billion for testing, contact tracing, and mitigation.
 - **Providing the resources needed to allow schools to safely reopen** - \$130 billion available to states and school districts for immediate and long term relief so they can work with public health experts to safely reopen schools and make up for lost time in the classroom.
-

- **Extending unemployment benefits** - extends the federal supplemental benefit unemployment benefit through September 6, while keeping the benefit at the current \$300 per week.
- **Housing Assistance** - \$22.5 billion for emergency rental and utility assistance to states, territories, counties, and cities to help stabilize renters during the pandemic
- **Food Security** - Extends SNAP maximum benefits by 15% (through September 30, 2021)
- **Ensuring Affordable Child Care** - \$39 billion through the Child Care and Development Block Grant for child care providers
- **Supporting Small Businesses and Non Profits** - Creates a \$28.66 billion Restaurant Revitalization Fund.
- **State and Local Funding** - \$350 billion for states, localities, the U.S. territories, and the Tribal Governments, including to help keep critical workers on the job.

Estimates for State and Local Funding

Please note these are only estimates and final amounts may differ

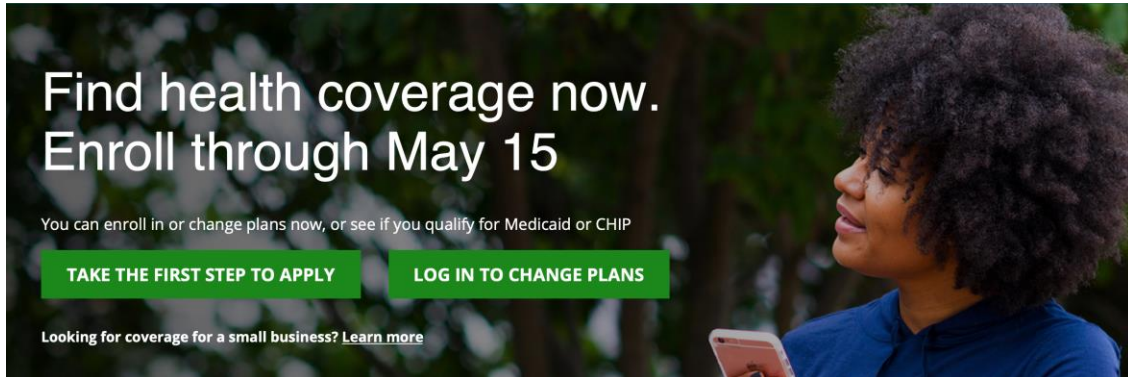
- State of Florida - \$10.2 billion
- Palm Beach County - \$290 million
- Palm Beach County School District - \$400 million

SPB 2500: General Appropriations Act for FY 2021-2022

A full summary of the Florida Senate's proposed spending bill, SPB 2500, has been provided by the Senate Democratic Office. You can access it below:

[**Budget Summary**](#)

Health Insurance Special Enrollment Period

An advertisement for the Health Insurance Special Enrollment Period. It features a woman with dark curly hair looking at her smartphone. The text reads: "Find health coverage now. Enroll through May 15". Below this, it says "You can enroll in or change plans now, or see if you qualify for Medicaid or CHIP". There are two green buttons: "TAKE THE FIRST STEP TO APPLY" and "LOG IN TO CHANGE PLANS". At the bottom, it says "Looking for coverage for a small business? [Learn more](#)".

Find health coverage now.
Enroll through May 15

You can enroll in or change plans now, or see if you qualify for Medicaid or CHIP

TAKE THE FIRST STEP TO APPLY LOG IN TO CHANGE PLANS

Looking for coverage for a small business? [Learn more](#)

On March 10th, Congress passed the American Rescue Plan, which expands access to quality health care. The Biden-Harris Administration opened a special enrollment period for [HealthCare.gov](https://www.healthcare.gov) from February 15 through May 15 for all Americans to provide them with the opportunity to sign up for health insurance during this pandemic. Health care is a right and all Americans should have access to it.

Local Earth Day Event




Join Us for the
**Great American Cleanup & help
 Keep Palm Beach County Beautiful!**

April 17, 2021
From 8:00 AM - Noon
Sago Palm Park

3301 10th Ave Palm Springs, FL 33461
 (Between Davis Rd & Congress Ave on the South Side of 10th Ave)

**REGISTER TODAY BY CONTACTING
 Timothy Crespo, Public Works Supervisor
 (561) 434-5121 or TCrespo@vpsfl.org**



The GREAT AMERICAN CLEANUP, a project of Keep America Beautiful Inc., is coordinated locally by Keep Palm Beach County Beautiful Inc. and the Solid Waste Authority of Palm Beach County (SWA).
 For more information visit www.KeepPBCbeautiful.org or call (561) 686-6646. For any disabilities requiring reasonable accommodations, please contact The Village of Palm Springs (561) 434 - 5121.

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