

[View this email in your browser](#)



Legislative Session: Week Eight

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

With only one week left in session, legislators will be on the floor each day to discuss and debate dozens more bills before week's end. Stay tuned by watching flsenate.gov.

As we close out our annual regular legislative session we will bring you a brief update next week, concluding week nine, and then a more comprehensive end of session newsletter in May.

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

Have a great weekend,



Lori

SPECIAL SESSION ON SEMINOLE GAMING COMPACT

On Friday, Governor DeSantis announced that his administration executed a thirty year gaming Compact with the Seminole Tribe of Florida. The language of the Compact will need to be ratified by the Legislature. President Simpson and Speaker Sprowls will convene a Special Session the week of May 17, 2021.

Some highlights of the new Compact will include:

- A new 30 year term;
- Craps and Roulette;
- Additional facilities on the Tribe's Hollywood reservation;
- Enhanced revenue sharing brackets and;
- Statewide online sports betting in partnership with the pari-mutuels.

Important Palm Beach County Operations Coronavirus Updates

[EMERGENCY ORDER 2021-004](#) ISSUED EXTENDING FACIAL COVERINGS TO 05/18/21

***NEW* [Interactive vaccination locator map](#)**

Vaccine Information [Flyer](#)

JOHNSON AND JOHNSON VACCINE

J&J to resume its vaccine. Read updates [here](#).

***NEW* Health Care District's Pfizer COVID-19 Vaccination
Appointments Available with No Wait Times**

The Health Care District of Palm Beach County encourages individuals 16 years and older to self-schedule their first-dose appointments for the Pfizer vaccine online at <http://vaccine.hcdpbc.org> [vaccine.hcdpbc.org]. After opening over 16,000 first-dose appointments yesterday, there have been no wait times to schedule an appointment today. Appointment dates are available between Wednesday, April 21 through Thursday, May 6, 2021. Individuals 16 years and older are eligible to self-schedule appointments for the Pfizer vaccine brand.

The website <http://vaccine.hcdpbc.org> [vaccine.hcdpbc.org] lists the available dates, times, locations 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. Individuals need to follow the state eligibility guidelines when scheduling to avoid being turned away at the sites. A parent or guardian must be present at the appointment of those who are 16 and 17 years old.

***NEW* Emergency Rental, RELOCATION and Utility Assistance**

Due to the high volume of applications, the Palm Beach County Community Services Department's online portal for Emergency Rental Assistance, Relocation Assistance and Utility Assistance is currently closed. The portal will reopen on May 3, 2021 at 8:00 a.m. For more information, click [here](#).

Ballpark of the Palm Beaches

5100 N. Haverhill Road, West Palm Beach, 33407

Drive-through site

Tuesday through Saturday, 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Any age; with or without symptoms

Testing in the order of arrival; no appointment needed

PCR/Molecular Testing

Rapid Antigen Testing

To preregister with your information for testing go

to: https://ops.patientportalfl.com/s/?language=en_US

Health Care District of PBC (HCD) C. L. Brumback Primary Care Clinic at Lakeside Medical Center

39200 Hooker Hwy, Belle Glade, 33430

Walk-up site, appointments recommended; Monday through Friday; 8 a.m. - Noon

Any age; with or without symptoms

Call 561-642-1000 for an appointment

PCR Molecular Testing and Rapid Antigen Testing

HCD C. L. Brumback Primary Care Clinic Jupiter

411 W. Indiantown Rd., Jupiter, 33458

Appointments only; Monday through Friday; 8 a.m. - 11 a.m.

Any age; with or without symptoms

Call 561-642-1000 for an appointment

PCR Molecular Testing and Rapid Antigen Testing

HCD C. L. Brumback Primary Care Clinic Delray Beach

225 S. Congress Ave, Delray Beach, 33445

Appointments only; Monday through Friday; 8:30 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Any age; with or without symptoms

Call 561-642-1000 for an appointment

PCR Molecular Testing and Rapid Antigen Testing

HCD “Scout” and “Hero” Mobile Clinic Outreach

Walk-up site, any age; with or without symptoms

Varying locations and hours as scheduled

PCR Molecular Testing and Rapid Antigen Testing

FAU Tech Runway at Florida Atlantic University

901 NW 35th Street, Boca Raton, 33431

Walk up site, Tuesday through Saturday from 8 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Any age, with or without symptoms

PCR/Molecular and Rapid Antigen Testing 8 a.m. – 2 p.m. No appointment necessary

To preregister with your information for testing go to: <https://ops.patientportalfl.com/s/>

Town Center at Boca Raton Mall

6000 Glades Rd., Boca Raton, 33431, at the Sears parking lot

Walk up site; every day from 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Any age; with or without symptoms

No appointment necessary.

PCR/Molecular and Rapid Antigen Testing

Homebound Resident Testing

Residents eligible include homebound elderly or individuals with disabilities who are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 and cannot leave their homes to access one of the drive-up or walk-up test collection sites. Residents who believe they are eligible for the in-home testing option should call 561-712-6400 for a pre-qualifying assessment. The testing line is open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday.

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](#)

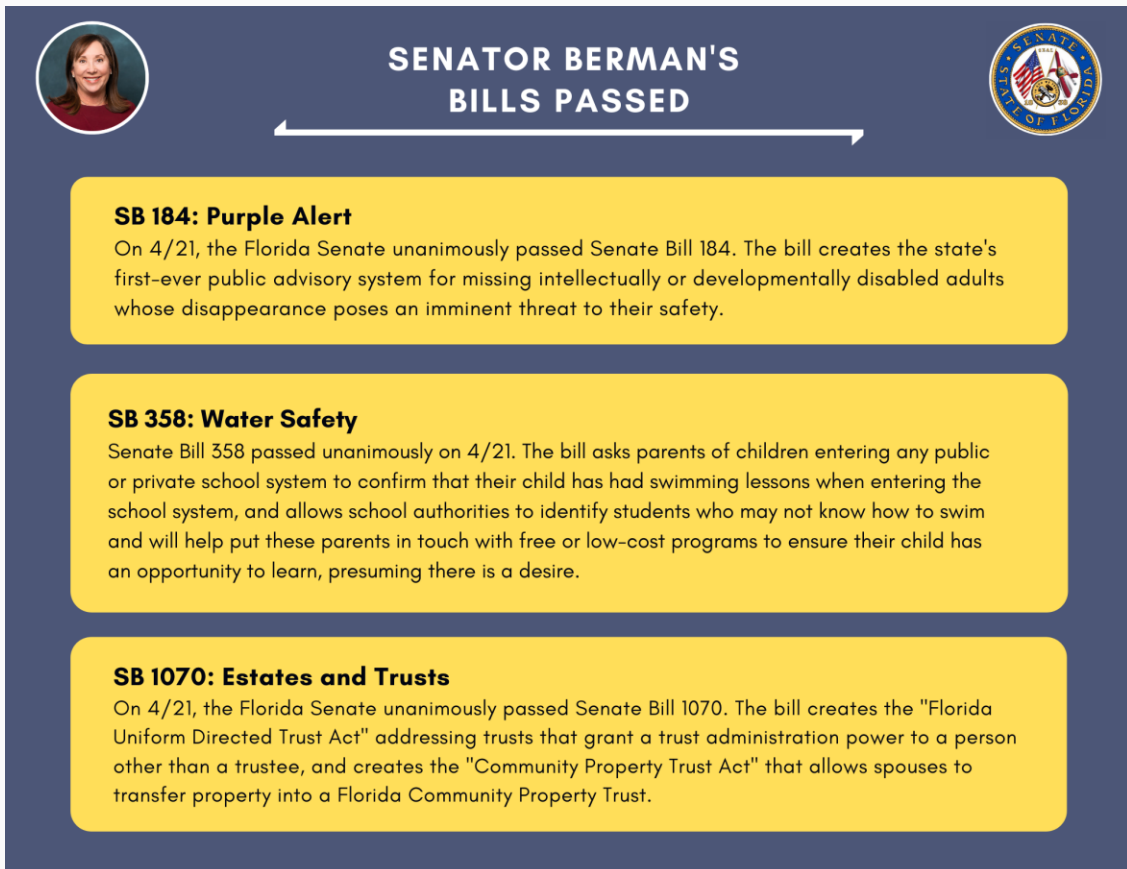
[COVID-19 Funeral Assistance](#)

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



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

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

Berman's Bills Pass the Senate Floor



The graphic features a dark blue background with a white double-headed arrow pointing left and right. On the left is a circular portrait of Senator Berman, and on the right is the Florida Senate seal. Three yellow rounded rectangular boxes are stacked vertically, each containing a bill title and a brief description.

 **SENATOR BERMAN'S
BILLS PASSED** 

SB 184: Purple Alert
On 4/21, the Florida Senate unanimously passed Senate Bill 184. The bill creates the state's first-ever public advisory system for missing intellectually or developmentally disabled adults whose disappearance poses an imminent threat to their safety.

SB 358: Water Safety
Senate Bill 358 passed unanimously on 4/21. The bill asks parents of children entering any public or private school system to confirm that their child has had swimming lessons when entering the school system, and allows school authorities to identify students who may not know how to swim and will help put these parents in touch with free or low-cost programs to ensure their child has an opportunity to learn, presuming there is a desire.

SB 1070: Estates and Trusts
On 4/21, the Florida Senate unanimously passed Senate Bill 1070. The bill creates the "Florida Uniform Directed Trust Act" addressing trusts that grant a trust administration power to a person other than a trustee, and creates the "Community Property Trust Act" that allows spouses to transfer property into a Florida Community Property Trust.

Bills of Significance

CS/CS/CS/SB 90: Election Administration

SB 90 was heard on Thursday in the Senate and a robust amendatory and questioning process took place. The bill follows a trend seen around the country within GOP-controlled legislatures. Huge Democratic gains in vote-by-mail ballots in the previous presidential election likely served as the catalyst to what can only be referred to as a concerted effort to suppress the vote. This bill unnecessarily makes it more difficult for individuals to vote and creates additional, unnecessary work for Supervisors of Elections, who are by and large opposed to the legislation (Democrat and Republican alike). SB 90 has been placed on third reading for debate on Monday. The bill makes the following major changes to election administration:

Vote by Mail Ballots:

- Reduces the number of elections for which one request for a VBM ballot is sufficient to all elections through the end of the calendar year of the next regularly scheduled general election (requests in existence before the effective date of the bill are grandfathered in under current law).
- Prohibits a governmental entity from mailing or otherwise providing a VBM ballot without a request.

No-Solicitation Zone:

- Revises the no-solicitation zone for seeking votes, distributing campaign material, etc., to also prohibit giving or attempting to give any item to a voter (including water).

Drop Boxes:

- Limits use of drop boxes to a county's early voting hours of operation and requires drop boxes at all locations to be monitored in person.

Additional Measures:

- Requires that a voter's signature be verified against a signature within the preceding 4 years or the most recent signature on record.
- Requires additional identification for certain registration changes and for requests of VBM ballots.
- Allows observers from each political party and political candidate during the signature verification process and other processes.
- Prohibits ANYONE from merely possessing a VBM ballot, regardless of the reason, unless authorized by law.

CS/CS/SB 1906: Reemployment Assistance

SB 1906 pass unanimously in the Senate on Thursday, 4/22. The bill increases the weekly benefit amount for unemployment, raising the new maximum benefit to \$375 from \$275 and the minimum benefit to \$100 from \$32. It removes the requirement that a claimant must include the phone number of each prospective employer contacted for each week of unemployment and clarifies that the “address” is either the website address, a physical address, or e-mail address of the prospective employer contacted. The bill reduces the number of prospective employers that reemployment assistant claimants must contact each week from 5 to 2 and provides that this requirement can also be met by submitting a resume through an online job search service. The bill also allows the use of an alternative base period to calculate and applicant’s eligibility for benefits. Finally, the bill clarifies that a pregnant claimant cannot be denied benefits solely because of the pregnancy. The Florida Department of Economic Opportunity found that Florida’s unemployment rate in March 2021 was 4.7%. The COVID-19 pandemic had a direct impact on the unemployment rate and has shined light on the inefficiencies in the current unemployment benefits system. Governor DeSantis recently spoke out against increasing the maximum unemployment benefit by \$100. However increasing the benefits while clarifying the requirements for those on unemployment is a step in the right direction towards help the people who need it most.

This bill is another political reaction by Republicans in the Legislature to come to the defense of former President Trump at the expense of our first amendment rights. SB 7072 prohibits social media platforms from "deplatforming" a candidate for political office. This legislation is likely unconstitutional and is another attempt at political retribution in light of the 2020 elections with no rooted need.

[HB 529: Moment of Silence in Public Schools](#)

Often put in uncomfortable situations as one of few Jewish children in the Broward County public school system growing up, I voted against this bill as I believe it could have detrimental effects on other students. This bill would require all first-period teachers to be directed to institute a one to two minute moment of silence at the beginning of each school day. In doing so, students, unlike adults, would be unable to leave the room. This could inadvertently subject students to other students' religious viewpoints in an uncomfortable manner. I do not believe the sponsor of this legislation took into account other dynamics and precedents this could establish, further blurring the lines between church and state.

You can watch my brief speech [here](#) (starts at about 11:45 minute mark).

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](#)



District Office

2300 High Ridge Road
Suite 161
Boynton Beach, FL, 33426
(516) 292-6014



Tallahassee Office

218 Senate Office Building
404 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399
(850) 487-5031



Email

berman.lori.web@flsenate.gov

CONTACT US



Facebook

facebook.com/loribermanfla



Twitter

@loriberman



Instagram

@senloriberman

