



The Pulse in Tallahassee

Session Week #5
March 29-April 2 2021

Dear Friends,

I would like to wish those of us who celebrate a Happy Easter. Easter is a fantastic time to reflect and connect with family members, and I wish those who celebrate a peaceful, joyous holiday.

The fifth week of session has come to an end, and we are now officially halfway through this legislative session. Our most critical duty, passing the state budget, is starting to come into focus going forward. I am also preparing to hear many of the bills that came through my committees on the Senate floor, as well as bills coming from the House that I have not heard yet.

As always, I will do my best to keep you in the loop on all things happening in Tallahassee and in the Senate.

Regards,

Senator Tina Polsky



Senator Polsky discussing SB 1348, Campaign Financing, in Ethics and Elections Committee



Senator Polsky speaking on the Senate floor

Here are some updates from Session Week five

SB 694-WASTE MANAGEMENT

This week, I was able to amend SB 694, Waste Management, to include my bill, SB 1348, Recyclable Materials. In addition to amending the way that local government's contract solid waste collection the bill will now ask the Department of Environmental Protection to update a 2010 study of the efficiency and necessity of regulations on single-use plastic bags. Much has changed over the last eleven years, and in order for the legislature to make informed decisions on these issues, we need up-to-date and current information. SB 694 heads to its final committee stop, Rules, and I am hopeful to see it again on the Senate Floor with modification.

SB 7070-IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

SB 7070, Impact of COVID-19 on Educational Institutions, was unanimously passed during this last week of Education Committee sessions. This bill includes support for variety of concerns that constituents have written and called about, including standard testing performance and the effect that the testing will have on student retention and teacher evaluations. I believe this is a great piece of legislation that provides the needed leniency and grace to students and schools and I am proud to be a part of the bipartisan effort to pass it.

SB 1836-PUBLIC RECORDS EXEMPTION FOR LOTTERY WINNERS

Another one of my bills, SB 1836, Public Records Exemption for Lottery Winners, passed out of the Committee on Regulated Industries unanimously. This bill allows lottery winners of \$250,000 or more to remain anonymous up to 90 days from the date their prize is claimed. By granting this exemption, we provide winners a more robust opportunity to protect themselves from all that comes with being a big winner. The 90 day exemption would allow sufficient time to responsibly plan their finances, consult with a financial legal expert, and contact family and close friends.

SB 102-MATTERS OF GREAT GOVERNMENTAL CONCERN

This week we saw continued efforts to remove power from local governments. SB 102, Matters of Great Governmental Concern, provides overbearing power to the state Attorney General (AG). The bill would allow the AG to declare certain economic losses as a "matter of great governmental concern". By doing this, the AG would essentially have the ability to override the power of a local government's ability to manage their own lawsuits. I believe that local governments know their citizens better than any state or federal body can, and we must stop this assault on their ability to govern. I voted no on this bill and will continue to fight for home rule.

SB 1946-ANCHORING LIMITATIONS

My bill, SB 1946, Anchoring Limitations, was unanimously passed its second committee stop. As I've previously noted, derelict vessels have become a major problem for the people of our district and the State of Florida as a whole. Derelict vessels present a major hazard to water-goers, boaters, and our environment, while creating an eyesore on our coastlines. Present-day law does not adequately provide the necessary tools to both law enforcement and local communities to deal with this threat to public health and safety, and I believe this bill is a big step forward in accomplishing just that. SB 1946 now heads to the Rules Committee for its third committee stop.



Senator Polsky presenting her bill
SB 1836 in committee



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