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Legislative Session: Week Nine

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

The 2021 Legislative Session adjourned "sine die" at 2:40pm yesterday. Each year legislative leaders "drop a hanky" in the Capitol Rotunda to signify the official end of session, as has been tradition for many decades. It was a ceremonious day and I am pleased that we concluded our legislative session without having to extend.

We will be bringing you a comprehensive end-of-session recap in the coming weeks. This will be done in the form of the "good, bad and ugly." We tackled a lot of big issues this session, however, a handful of controversial bills overshadows much of our 60 days spent in Tallahassee. I will also lay out a summary of our \$101.5 billion budget, the largest in Florida's history and outline the \$4.86 million in special projects for the Palm Beach County community our office secured.

Wishing you a nice weekend,



Lori

SB 2500: General Appropriations Act for FY 2021-2022

A full summary the final budget voted on by both the House and Senate is available [here](#). It is now up to the Governor to use line-item veto power if he so chooses.

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

Interactive vaccination locator map

Testing Sites & More

Vaccine Information Flyer

JOHNSON AND JOHNSON VACCINE

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

Health Care District's Pfizer COVID-19 Vaccination Appointments

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 [here](#).

Appointment dates are available through Thursday, May 6, 2021. Individuals 16 years and older are eligible to self-schedule appointments for the Pfizer vaccine brand.

For those without internet access, the Health Care District's helpline at 561-804-4115 is available to assist in English, Spanish and Creole. All appointments are based on vaccine availability. As additional vaccine is received and appointments are opened, the community will be notified that the self-scheduler is open.

This [website](#) 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.

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](#).

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.

ADDITIONAL 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](#)

VACCINE INFO FOR LAKE WORTH BEACH



City of
Lake Worth
Beach
FLORIDA



**FIGHT
THE
VIRUS**



**GET THE
VACCINE!**

**COVID19 VACCINE AVAILABILITY
LAKE WORTH BEACH**



**SINGLE DOSE VACCINE
JOHNSON & JOHNSON**

May 8 | 1515 Wingfield St | 18+
Register: <https://portal.lakeworthbeachfl.gov/vaccine-registration/>
Registration Closes 11:59pm on May 4!



TWO DOSE VACCINE

MODERNA

2330 South Congress Ave
Information: <https://www.foundcare.org/>
561.967.0365

PFIZER

Thursdays | 2000 N D St | 8:30-1pm
Register: 561.770.2370 | 561.572.1339

Berman's Bills Head to Governor DeSantis



SENATOR BERMAN'S BILLS PASSED



SB 184: Purple Alert

Senate Bill 184 passed in both the House and Senate and is now headed to Governor DeSantis. 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 1070: Estates and Trusts

SB 1070 passed unanimously in both the House and Senate and is now headed to Governor DeSantis. 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.

Water Safety as an Amendment to SB 1028

SB 1028 passed in both the House and the Senate this week. The bill included my proposed language about Water Safety which 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.

Specialty License Plates as an Amendment to SB 676

SB 676 passed the House and the Senate this week. The bill included the specialty license plates I introduced this session which creates a new specialty license plate for "Disease Prevention & Early Detection" with proceeds benefiting Miami-based Women's Breast & Heart Initiative.

Sales Tax Exemption as an Amendment to HB 7061

HB 7061 passed the House and Senate this week. The bill included language on a Sales Tax Exemption I proposed for seniors on certain items that encourage independent living, including bed transfer handles, bed rails, grab bars, and shower seats, to improve quality of life and allow our seniors to "age in place".

Inland and Coastal Flood Control Funding Assessment on SB 1954

SB 1954 passed in the House and the Senate. The bill included language I proposed that requires the Office of Economic and Demographic Research to include an assessment and analysis of future expenditures by federal, state, regional, and local governments necessary to improve resilience to inland and coastal flooding associated with sea-level rise, high-tide events, storm surge, flash flood, stormwater runoff, and increased rainfall in its report.

Student Retention on HB 1159

HB 1159 passed in the House and the Senate. The bill included language I proposed that allows parents of K-8 students to retain their children in their grade level if they feel their child has not academically progressed enough and gives parents the flexibility to make the decision in the best interest of their child and provide a statutory option.



Bills of Significance

Some of the highlights this week include the passage of the following bills:

[SB 90: Election Administration](#)

This bill unnecessarily makes it more difficult for individuals to vote and creates additional burdens for Supervisors of Elections, who are by and large opposed to the legislation. It makes changes to vote by mail ballots, revises the no-solicitation zones, and limits the use of drop boxes among other things. A new section changing the "resign to run" laws were also made, including giving sole power to the Governor to appoint empty seats. No one official should hold this much authority. This bill follows a trend seen around the country within GOP-controlled legislatures in limiting access to the ballot box and adding barriers to voting. We should be encouraging people to vote, not making to more difficult for people to cast their ballots. SB 90 passed in both the House and the Senate and was sent to Governor DeSantis.

[HB 7045: School Choice](#)

This bill expands private school vouchers and allows families to use the money for tutoring, tuition and transportation costs to/from these private schools. HB 7045 would take Florida down the continued path of unconstitutionally funding private school education with taxpayer dollars. The COVID-19 pandemic had an

unprecedented impact on school districts, teachers, parents and students. Our focus should be on prioritizing public education, and public taxpayer dollars should not be used without proper public oversight and transparency. The bill passed both the House and the Senate and was sent to Governor DeSantis.

[SB 2012: Promoting Equality of Athletic Opportunity](#)

Although this bill did not pass through the Senate Rules Committee, the main language of the bill was added onto another bill that passed this week. The amendment would ban transgender girls and women from participating on girls sports teams, by restricting female teams to individuals identified as female on their birth certificates. This bill blatantly discriminates against trans youth and targets young girls who just want to fit in and play sports. Other states that have passed laws similar to this have faced push back from the NCAA, who warned that it might move sports championships out of those states. Not only is this bill discriminatory, it could have a severe economic impact on Florida. The bill passed this week and was sent to Governor DeSantis.

Mortgage Assistance Available to Homeowners in Palm Beach County

The Palm Beach County Department of Housing and Economic Sustainability announces the availability of the Community Development Block Grant Coronavirus (CDBG-CV) Mortgage Assistance funds. This program will provide emergency financial assistance to <80% (or less) AMI homeowners who suffered adverse financial impact from COVID-19, and are delinquent in their first mortgage and escrow payments (PITI). Additionally, providing the homeowner is delinquent, funding may assist with second mortgages, late fees, condominium and homeowners' association payments, special assessments, and other mortgage associated costs related to COVID-19.

Up to 6 months of assistance (*not to exceed \$10,000*) will be provided to income eligible households who are at least one-month delinquent (after February 29,

2020) in their home mortgage, escrow payments (PITI) and/or condominium and homeowners' association payments. Assistance cannot be used to cover payments already made; and will be provided as a grant or a forgivable loan.

All requests for assistance will be reviewed based on approved criteria. To qualify, all homeowners must demonstrate that the costs are directly tied to COVID-19. Additional criteria include but is not limited to: income eligibility, residence must be owner occupied, not under contract or listed for sale within the past 60 days, property must be in Palm Beach County, and the assessed value cannot exceed \$331,888.

All applications must be submitted online and will be processed on a first come, first eligible basis. The online application will open on **Friday, May 7, 2021 at 8:00 a.m., and close Monday, June 7, 2021 at 11:59pm.** Applications can be accessed at the County's Department of Housing and Economic Sustainability's website <http://pbcgov.com/hes>

CITY OF BOYNTON BEACH SWIM LESSONS

With summer right around the corner, the [Recreation and Parks Dept.](#) has opened [registration for swim lessons](#) beginning in May at [John H. Denson Pool](#). Classes are available for children ages 6 months and up.

[Denson Pool](#) also offers a Junior Lifeguard Academy for youth ages 10-14. [Learn more & register online.](#)

Questions? 561-742-6645.

Palm Beach County Library System Supports Haitian Heritage Month

The Palm Beach County Library System is proud to honor Haitian culture, history and language during Haitian Heritage Month in May, a month that includes the important holiday of Haitian Flag Day on May 18. This year, we invite you to enjoy a wide variety of online events accessible through Zoom. Register and join us for the live events, or view the recordings on our digital activities page [here](#).

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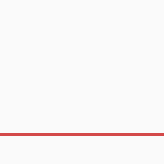
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