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### **Friends and Neighbors:**

Week Five has concluded, leading us to the "back half" of session. It was a shorter, quieter week with time to travel home to observe Passover and Easter holidays with friends and family. Below is an update on some major legislation passed this week and a brief budget review.

All the best,

A white rectangular box containing a handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Lori Berman'.

**Lori**

**Berman**

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## **Legislative Update**

### [SB 832: Holocaust Remembrance Day](#)

This bill passed through its second committee, [Government Oversight and Accountability](#), unanimously. Now, SB 832 only needs to pass through one more committee (Rules) before being heard on the Senate floor. We are optimistic this bill will cross the finish line to ensure Holocaust Remembrance Day is recognized on January 27th of each year in our public schools.

[SB 2500: General Appropriations Act](#)

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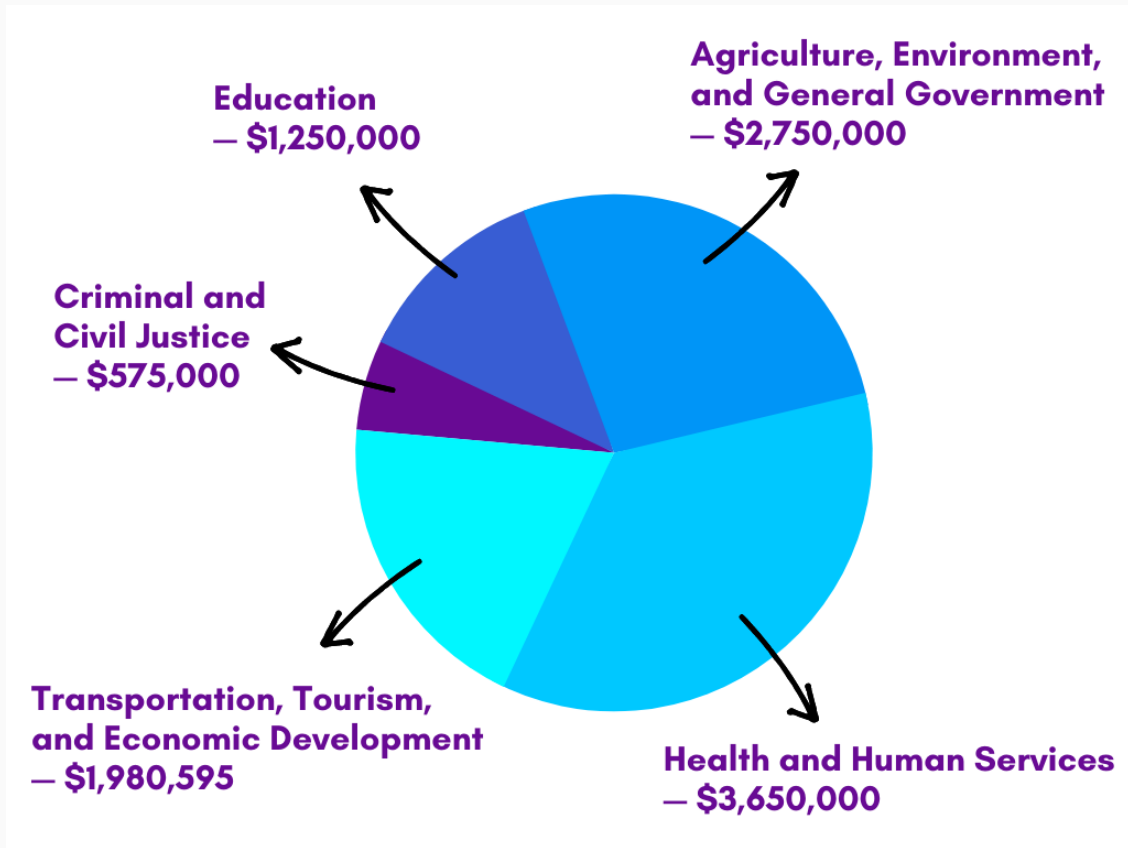
Both Chambers have voted favorably on moving forward with the 2023-24 General Appropriations Act. However, each Chamber differs on line items and allocations. The process known as "conference" will likely occur next weekend, where Members appointed to the conference process negotiate within each silo until both the House and Senate agree on each individual line item. This is a process with much back-and-forth but must be accomplished before the Chambers take a final vote, which occurs after a 72 hour "cooling off" period. This is traditionally done in the waning days of session due to disagreements among budget leaders, but at the rate we are currently going, things would appear to be moving on track for an on-time completion.

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### **Senator Berman's Appropriations Projects**

The Senate's proposed budget includes 24 separate appropriations projects that I sponsored for 2023-2024 fiscal year, totaling over \$10 million. These projects will go far in improving water quality, building lasting infrastructure, and expanding critical social services offered by non-profits within our Palm Beach County community. I will continue to fight to maintain this funding through the budget conference and Governor's veto pen.

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## Additional Bill Updates

### HB 543: Public Safety (aka "Permitless carry")

HB 543 was signed into law by the Governor on Monday morning. In the midst of a gun-violence crisis in this country, with there being 125 mass shootings this year, with 12 in Florida alone, this legislation will only worsen the violence we're seeing. The passage of this bill is beyond disappointing.

### SB 300: Pregnancy and Parenting Support (Six Week Abortion Ban)

Tragically, this bill passed the Senate floor on Monday. While the Senate Democrats did everything we could to stop this bill, it became inevitable. Tensions and emotions were high, so much so that the Senate President had to ask all spectators to leave the viewing gallery, as various individuals shouted at Members begging them to not pass

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this bill. These emotions spilled over when several legislators, including myself, chose to peacefully demonstrate our distain by sitting in a circle and singing uplifting songs outside Tallahassee City Hall later on Monday evening, separate from the day's events. Regretfully, local law enforcement detained and arrested several of these women (I was not arrested). This draconian legislation is going to ruin lives and endanger others. We must continue to fight back and cannot back down. You can watch my closing debate [here](#) (1:50:55).

#### SB 254: Criminalizing Gender Affirming Care

This legislation bans access to evidence-based gender affirming healthcare for transgender Floridians under 18, threatens doctors with jail sentences for providing care and changes custody law to the detriment of supportive parents in custody disputes over their transgender children. This legislation is yet another attack on the state's LGBTQ community and seeks to further divide Floridians.



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*Wishing all who celebrate a Good Friday and Happy Easter!*

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### District Office

2300 High Ridge Road  
Suite 161  
Boynton Beach, FL, 33426  
(561) 292-6014



### Tallahassee Office

216 Senate Office Building  
404 South Monroe Street  
Tallahassee, FL 32399  
(850) 487-5026



### Email

berman.lori.web@flsenate.gov



### Facebook

facebook.com/loribermanfla



### Twitter

@loriberman



### Instagram

@senloriberman

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**CONTACT  
US**  
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