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Friends and Neighbors:

We have completed week four of session, leaving us approaching the halfway mark. This past week several controversial bills were heard, making for a few long and challenging days. The good news, however, is that we have passed another bill off the floor. This and other updates follow [below](#).

For those who are celebrating Passover this upcoming week, we wish you a joyous holiday. Have [a](#) [great](#) [weekend!](#)



All [the](#) [best,](#)

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

Lori Berman

Legislative Update

SB 226: Support for Dependent Adult Children

This bill codifies common law provisions to ensure the parental support of dependent adult children. In doing so, this community will remain protected and safe. We worked with the Family Law Section of the Florida Bar and are pleased this bill [passed the Senate floor](#) and is now awaiting a final hearing on the House floor.

SB 832: Holocaust Remembrance Day

The bill will officially enshrine Holocaust Remembrance Day in Florida on January 27th each year. Classroom instruction about the Holocaust, anti-Semitism and their harmful impacts on humanity will be provided as part of public educational instruction on this day. The Anti-Defamation League tracked over 50 incidents of antisemitism in Florida in 2022 and reported a 50% increase in anti-Semitic incidents from 2020 to 2021. I am proud this bill passed its first committee, the Pre K-12 Education committee, on which I sit, and is scheduled for a hearing in the [Governmental Accountability & Oversight Committee](#) on Wednesday, April 5th.

SB 1052: Exemptions for Totally and Permanently Disabled Veterans

Working in conjunction with the Property Appraisers Association, this legislation allows for a prorated refund of the ad valorem taxes in the case of a totally and permanently disabled veteran, or his or her surviving spouse. The veteran or surviving spouse would be eligible for a refund for the portion of the year that they own a new homestead property, even if they had not received this exemption on another homestead property in that same year. This bill [passed successfully](#) in another committee in which I sit, Community Affairs, this week, and is next headed to Finance & Tax, where I also am a member.

SB 996: Driver License, Identification Card, and Motor Vehicle Registration Applications

This legislation would allow Floridians applying for the first time, or renewing their driver's license/ID and/or motor vehicle registration, to "opt in" for a \$1 voluntary contribution to [Best Buddies International](#), an international nonprofit organization dedicated to establishing a global volunteer movement that creates opportunities for friendships, integrated employment and leadership development for those with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). Currently, there are 21 other organizations in statute that

have the option for motor vehicle registration and 20 for driver's license application and renewal/replacement and they're all at \$1. This bill passed the Transportation Committee on Monday.

SB _____ 144: _____ Lactation _____ Spaces

After a few years of sponsoring this bill, I am proud to see it pass today off the House floor by my House sponsor, [Representative Ashley Gantt](#). This bill will now head to the Governor's desk!

Additional bill updates:

[SJR 94: Partisan Election of Members of District School Boards](#)

In the Education PreK-12 committee, we heard a bill that has been heard in previous legislative sessions; that is, to create partisan school board elections. I believe school board races have become overly politicized as it is and this bill would remove some of the focus of what's important: our children and their education. I voted against this bill in committee and will do so if it reaches the Senate floor.

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

This bill is extremely similar to the infamous "heartbeat bill" we saw in Texas this past year, banning abortion after six weeks with very few exceptions. I am actively working against this dangerous bill. Unfortunately, it passed through its second committee this past Tuesday and was immediately placed onto the Senate's Special Order Calendar on Thursday. We spent over four hours offering amendments to improve this catastrophic bill and asking questions of the sponsor. You can watch any portion of the segment [here](#), which begins at the 2:32:00 timeframe.

[HB 543: Public Safety \(aka "permitless carry"\)](#)

After a long discussion and debate, this bill is now heading to the Governor's desk. You can hear my closing speech on this bill [here](#) (starting at 56:14). I offered amendments to reinsert the training piece back into the bill as well as close the "gun show loophole," which would require a background check for all sales, including those done

privately. Disappointingly, these amendments, and many others proposed by the Democrats, fell on party line votes.

HB 1: Education

Below is my response to this bill being signed by the Governor:
“Every member of the Legislature who voted for universal private school vouchers voted for millions of dollars in cuts to their school districts’ budgets. Florida has limited resources, it is a zero-sum game. We already rank 49th in per-pupil spending in our K-12 schools. Pouring \$4 billion into a voucher program with no income eligibility caps isn’t the answer to improve education opportunities for our students.”

Back Home in Palm Beach County

Runoff Election

Last week we gave updates regarding the City of Boynton Beach District 2 runoff election between current Commissioner Woodrow Hay and former Commissioner Mack McCray. After the runoff, which took place this past Tuesday, once again, [the margin between the votes](#) was below .5%, meaning that an automatic recount and potentially a manual recount will occur. Hopefully we'll know our winner soon!





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