



# THE BERMAN BRIEFING



THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF SENATE DISTRICT 26

**June 2023**

## **Friends and Neighbors:**

I hope each of you are well and having a good spring/start to your summer. Since returning from Tallahassee and sharing our comprehensive end of session newsletter, I have provided legislative updates to at least seven municipalities and numerous other organizations around Palm Beach County, sharing information about bills that passed, failed and pre-empted our local governments. I will be heading to several more in the weeks to come.

Additionally, I have attended several functions and awards ceremonies. It's been great reacquainting back to District 26 and seeing many of you! I look forward to continuing my legislative updates and having a restful summer, while also focusing on the needs ahead for the 2024 legislative session. The committee week dates have already been listed ([link here](#)) with the annual session beginning on Tuesday, January 9, 2024.

**Best wishes,**

A handwritten signature in cursive that reads "Lori Berman" followed by a horizontal line.

**Lori Berman**

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**Legislative & Budget Update**

Since our end of session newsletter was e-blasted, two of my bills were signed into law by the Governor and one has been transmitted to the Governor for a signature. Another bill, [SB 1052](#), was absorbed into the tax package, [HB 7063](#), which has also been signed into law.

[SB 144: Lactation Spaces](#)

It was an honor and pleasure to work closely with my House sponsor, Rep. Ashley Gantt, and FAWL, to ensure the passage of SB 144 into law. Nursing women requiring a safe, hygienic and private space to breastfeed or pump will now be able to do so. This is a great bill for Florida women entering and working in our courthouses, whether as judges, attorneys, jurors, personnel, visitors or in any other capacity.

[SB 130: Greyson's Law](#)

Having Greyson's signed into law is by far one of the proudest moments in my 13 year legislative career. The impact of this legislation in protecting, and likely even, saving the lives of children will be long-lasting and far-reaching. There are so many people to thank along the way to ensure this bill was passed and signed. Ultimately, we are grateful to Greyson "Gig's" Mom, Ali, for her tenacity and persistence. Greyson, this is for you.



[HB 7063: Taxation](#)

Each year the Legislature passes a tax package, sometimes enshrining permanent

sales tax holidays and oftentimes, simply including a one-time annual exemption. A frequently occurring tax exemption is on disaster preparedness items, such as generators, flashlights and batteries (certain restrictions apply and more info follows below in the "Hurricane Season 2023" section). The "Freedom Summer" exemption was put into place again, exempting tickets to concerts, sporting events, movies, museums, plays, ballets, musical theater performances, fairs, festivals and other cultural events. For more than 20 years, Floridians have seen the back to school sales tax holiday, which exempts certain computers/laptops, clothing and other school supplies. This year the exemption applies both in the summer (July 24-August 6) and next winter (January 1-14, 2024). The details of all of these sales tax holidays, when they run and what is included can be found on the [Florida Department of Revenue's home page](#).

Within the tax package, I was pleased that the substance of my bill, SB 1052, was retained. In that provision, totally and permanently disabled veterans or their surviving spouses may receive a pro-rated refund of property tax 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.

#### [HB 965: Driver License, Identification Card, and Voter Vehicle Registration Applications - "Best Buddies"](#)

This legislation will provide for 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). The bill was transmitted to the Governor on May 23. The Governor has 15 days (June 7) in which to sign, not sign (still goes into law) or veto.

To follow the Governor's actions, click [here](#).

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## **Hurricane Season 2023**

Hurricane season starts June 1, and now is the time to stock up on the supplies you need to weather any storm that comes our way. Florida's Disaster Preparedness Tax-Free Holiday has been expanded to offer a total of four weeks of savings. The holiday began this past Saturday and goes through Friday, June 9. Another window starts Saturday, August 26 and goes through Friday, September 8.

This year, the list of tax-free items eligible was expanded to include household consumable items. In addition to flashlights, radios, tarps, batteries, coolers and generators, Floridians can now also save on paper towels, toilet paper, dish detergent, dryer sheets and more. The full details can be found [here](#).

### Additional Resources

We also highly encourage you to check out the following resources if you do not already have them downloaded/bookmarked:

[Official Palm Beach County Hurricane Planning Guide](#)

[Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office Emergency Operations Bureau](#)

[Palm Beach County Division of Emergency Management - Facebook](#)

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The banner is divided into two main sections. The top section is green and white, titled '4R Ambassador Program | June 5-9, 2023'. It includes a photo of students in green shirts, a description of the program, and an 'APPLY TODAY' button. The bottom section is blue and white, titled 'ReTeach Waste Program | July 24-28, 2023'. It includes a photo of students outdoors, a description of the program, and an 'APPLY TODAY' button. On the left, a yellow jagged-edged box says 'Summer Programs' with the SWA logo below it. On the right, there are logos for '4R Ambassador' and 're WASTE TEACH'.

## **SWA 4R AMBASSADOR PROGRAM TEACHES KIDS TO BE ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDS THROUGH PROPER WASTE CHOICES**

The Solid Waste Authority (SWA) of Palm Beach County is looking for students to participate in a one-week Reduce, Reuse, Recycle and ReThink (4R) adventure into the world of waste. This year's program will take place June 5-9. During this week, students will engage in hands-on activities and labs focusing on the environment from an integrated solid waste management perspective.

After students learn about the concept of AWAY, they'll graduate as official SWA 4R Ambassadors. With this credential, they're encouraged to teach their family and friends about how their waste can affect our environment. They'll also be able to explain how individuals can Recycle Right and be mindful of their day-to-day choices and actions to reduce, reuse and rethink their waste.

Students will go behind-the-scenes at all SWA facilities, including:

- a Home Chemical and Recycling Center
- the Landfill
- the Recovered Materials Processing (recycling) Facility
- Renewable Energy Facility 2 (the cleanest, greenest, most efficient waste-to-energy plant in the world!)
- a Transfer Station

- Utilities
- the SWA Greenway Trail System (300 acres of natural area with six miles of trails) Students will also visit the Authority's community partners, which include Resource Depot, Loxahatchee River District and Grassy Waters Preserve.

### **Participant Requirements:**

Students interested in the 4R Ambassador Summer Program should meet the following criteria:

- Completed grades 6, 7 or 8
- Membership in a school club (Environmental, SECME, Garden, etc.)
- Science teacher's recommendation in the form of a letter

The "cost" to participate in the 4R Ambassador Summer Program is an old electronic device, which will be recycled.

### **How to Apply:**

Applicants will be reviewed on a first-come, first-served basis.

- Call 561-640-8949 or email [education@swa.org](mailto:education@swa.org).
- Complete an [application \[swa.org\]](#).

Participants will find out if they qualify before the program begins.

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## **Swim Safety**

As the school year comes to a close and children are more likely to be found in the backyard and community swimming pools, we wish to remind you and your family of the importance of drowning prevention.

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The Palm Beach County Drowning Prevention Coalition offers free swim lessons. More information can be found [here](#).

**Live by the ABCDs of Water Safety**

- A** Adult Supervision, **A**lways Swim With **A** Buddy
- B** Bathrooms, **B**ackwards, **B**arriers, **B**each, & **B**oating Safety
- C**lasses: Swim & **C**PR Lessons, **C**anal Safety
- D**rain Safety & **D**riving Safety

**Be Water Smart!**

**Exciting Volunteer Opportunities Available**

**Contact Us**  
Palm Beach County  
Board of County Commissioners  
**Drowning Prevention Coalition  
of Palm Beach County**  
405 Pike Rd., WPB, FL 33411  
(561) 616-7068  
[www.pbcgov.com/dpc](http://www.pbcgov.com/dpc)

Children's Services Council  
Healthy. Safe. Strong.

## Recognizing Important Dates in June

**Pride Month:** Celebrated each year in June, Pride Month honors the 1969 Stonewall Uprising in Manhattan, a tipping point for the Gay Liberation Movement in the United States. As members of the LGBTQ community increasingly come under attack by far-right legislatures across the country, and particularly in Florida, it's critical that we remember we're all human, have a right to express our identities, and have the right to love and marry whomever we wish. Love always wins.

**Juneteenth:** Celebrated on Monday, June 19th, this recently established federal holiday (2021) honors the date when the last Confederate community of enslaved

Americans in Galveston, Texas, received word that they had been freed from bondage. This is an important part of our American history and we choose to honor its meaning. You can read more about the historical background of Juneteenth [here](#).



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