



## Good Morning and Happy Easter!

### Christ Has Risen; He Has Risen Indeed

Next to the birth of Jesus Christ, Easter Sunday is the most important holiday in the Christian faith. We celebrate the resurrection of Jesus on the third day after his crucifixion. Remembering the resurrection of Jesus is a way to renew daily hope that we have victory over sin. It is a time to remember the sacrifices made for us through Jesus's life and death.

"Do not be afraid...for He is risen" (Matthew 28:5-6). Jesus is with us and gives us his ability to overcome any defeat. The true Christian realizes that he, with Christ, rises above every setback, every obstacle and enters into the true meaning of living.

Easter reminds us of the message of hope, the meaning of life, and the importance of faith. I wish all who celebrate a very blessed Easter surrounded by family and friends.

If you will be visiting the State Capitol during the session and need assistance or an appointment, please contact my Tallahassee office.

I consider it a great honor to represent House District 32. Please share this [link](#) with your friends and family so they too, can subscribe to the *Mayfield Minute*.

If you or someone you know needs my assistance, please do not hesitate to contact Will Gooden in my Tallahassee office at 850-717-5032 or Kelli Lane in the district office at 321-497-8200.

My staff and I are here to serve you!

## Bill Action by Governor DeSantis

As of Sunday, April 20th, Governor DeSantis has signed 10 bills into law.

Upon receipt of a bill, the Governor has seven days to sign, veto, or take no action at which point the bill will automatically become law.

Bills signed by the Governor to date include:

- [SB 0036](#) -- Florida Statutes
- [SB 0038](#) -- Florida Statutes
- [SB 0040](#) -- Florida Statutes
- [SB 0042](#) -- Florida Statutes
- [HB 0549](#) -- Gulf of America
- [HB 0575](#) -- The Designation of the Gulf of Mexico
- [HB 0513](#) -- Electronic Transmittal of Court Orders
- [HB 0655](#) -- Pet Insurance and Wellness Programs

- [CS/HB 1313](#) -- Trust Funds/Re-creation/Resilient Florida Trust Fund/DEP
- [CS/HB 0421](#) -- Peer Support for First Responders

## Statewide Update

### 2024 Tax Filing Deadline Extended to May 1, 2025

Don't panic if you have not filed your 2024 federal taxes yet. The IRS has extended the normal April 15th tax deadline to Thursday, May 1st for Florida residents due to hurricane challenges that affected the state.

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The extended deadline applies to (but is not limited to):

- Any individual or business that has a 2024 return normally due during March or April 2025.
- 2024 quarterly estimated tax payments normally due on Jan. 15, 2025, and 2025 estimated tax payments normally due on April 15, 2025.
- Quarterly payroll and excise tax returns normally due on Oct. 31, 2024, Jan. 31, 2025, and April 30, 2025.

IRS rules can be very specific and often confusing. Please click [here](#) for more information pertaining to the May 1st tax filing extension.

### Florida Veterans Foundation Announces New Dental Program for Veterans

Last week, the Florida Veterans Foundation (FVF) held a press conference to introduce the statewide Veterans Dental Program. Senator Danny Burgess joined officials from the Florida Veterans Foundation, Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs, and local Veterans' service organization leaders to launch the statewide Veterans Dental Program.

The program expands access to vital dental care services free of charge for eligible Florida Veterans across Florida.

FVF's network of selected nonprofit organizations can provide routine exams, cleanings, fillings, and other necessary dental procedures for qualifying Veterans.

The Florida Veterans Foundation is dedicated to providing essential services and support to Veterans throughout Florida. Through programs like the Veterans Dental Program, the FVF aims to improve the quality of life for those who have served our nation.

To learn more, check your eligibility or to seek assistance for a loved one who has served our nation, click [here](#).

## **Florida Prepaid College Program Offers Parents of Newborns a Special Incentive to Encourage Saving Early for College**

The Florida Prepaid College program is reminding Florida parents and grandparents that special savings for families with newborns can begin saving for college for just \$29/month during the open enrollment period. The deadline to enroll is Wednesday, April 30th.

The newborn program serves to assist families saving for college stress-free by starting early with affordable, fixed monthly payments.

"When you are navigating those first months as a parent, college might seem far off. But we want families to start saving early because we know this is the most affordable time to do so, and it really reduces financial stress long-term," said Board Chairman John D. Rood. "This year's pricing for newborns reflects our commitment to bringing college within reach for as many Florida families as possible."

While the monthly prepaid plans prices are the lowest when the child is the youngest, the Florida Prepaid College program also has a variety of customized plans for parents to consider for their children of all ages.

Visit the [pricing calculator](#) to determine what is best for your family.

To learn more about the Florida Prepaid program, click [here](#).

## House of Representatives Update

### Bill Increasing Accountability for Derelict Vessels

[CS/HB 1149](#) revises various provisions relating to derelict vessels, vessels at risk of becoming derelict (at-risk vessels), and long-term vessel anchoring. Specifically, the bill:

- Expands the types of individuals considered vessel owners for purposes of boating laws.
- Authorizes a law enforcement officer to immediately require a test of a vessel's effective means of propulsion if the owner or operator is present on the vessel.
- Authorizes the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) to use derelict vessel grant program funds for at-risk vessels.
- Requires vessel owners or operators to obtain a long-term, no-cost anchoring permit when engaging in long-term anchoring.
- Requires a vessel that is the subject of three or more violations of any type related to being an at-risk vessel within a 24-month period to be declared a public nuisance.
- Establishes fines for unpermitted long-term anchoring and specifies that a vessel with three or more violations in a 24-month period must be declared a public nuisance.
- Increases penalties for leaving a derelict vessel in state waters for more than 24 hours.
- Makes it a first-degree misdemeanor to reside on a vessel determined by a court or administrative order to be derelict.

The next stop for CS/HB 1149 is the House Floor.

## **Bill Protecting the Physical and Mental Health of Florida Firefighters**

CS/HB 929 revises the Florida Firefighters Occupational Safety and Health Act to add occupational diseases and suicide to the health and safety risks the Division of State Fire Marshal (Division) within the Department of Financial Services must monitor and develop rules, policies, procedures, and work schedules to address.

The bill also requires the Division to adopt rules related to mental health best practices, educating on chemical hazards, purchasing gear that does not contain hazardous or toxic substances, notifying firefighters if gear does contain hazardous or toxic substances, and encouraging firefighter employers to limit normally scheduled shifts to no more than 42 hours per week.

CS/HB 929 authorizes the Division to consider suicide when identifying high-risk employers and to issue penalties for violations related to injuries and fatalities.

The next stop for CS/HB 929 is the House Floor.

## **Bill Placing Restrictions on Residency and Political Activities of Public Officers and Employees**

CS/HB 1445 establishes citizenship and residency requirements for certain public officers and employees of the state and restricts the political activities of those officers and employees. Specifically, the bill:

- Requires individuals appointed to state office to be both a United States citizen and a Florida resident. This requirement applies to members of commissions, members of licensing boards, heads of state agencies, the board chairs and CEOs of quasi-public entities, and any other person appointed to state office.
- Requires members of a university board of trustees or the Board of Governors of the State University System to be United States citizens and either Florida residents or graduates of the state university that they have been appointed to.
- Requires a state agency head to reside in the county where the agency is headquartered, or within 30 miles of the agency's headquarters.
- Provides a definition for the term "office" for purposes of the State Constitution's prohibition on holding multiple public offices simultaneously.
- Strengthens Florida's mini-Hatch Act by prohibiting state officers and employees, except elected officials, from engaging in certain political activities.

CS/HB 1445 was transmitted in messages for consideration by the Senate.

## **Bill Expanding Insurance Benefit Eligibility for Injured Firefighters**

CS/HB 749 expands employer-paid health insurance benefits to cover firefighters who become totally and permanently disabled during an official training exercise, as well as their spouses and dependent children.

This corrects a current gap in state law where firefighters are not considered "on duty" during training activities, meaning that if a firefighter is injured during training they currently would not receive the same benefits that they would have had they been injured on duty.

The next stop for CS/HB 749 is the House Floor.

## **Bill Prohibiting Geoengineering and Weather Modification**

CS/HB 477 prohibits geoengineering and weather modification activities. Specifically, the bill prohibits the injection, release, or dispersion, by any means, of a chemical, a chemical compound, a substance, or an apparatus into the atmosphere within the borders of the state for the express purpose of affecting the temperature, weather, climate, or intensity of sunlight.

Any person who violates this prohibition commits a third degree-felony, punishable by up to five years in prison and a fine up to \$200,000.

Additionally, the bill requires the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to establish an e-mail address and an online form for anyone to report observed violations of this prohibition. DEP must investigate any report that warrants further review and refer reports to other specified agencies if appropriate.

The bill also requires an operator of a publicly owned airport to report to the Department of Transportation (DOT) monthly on the presence of any aircraft on public property that may be used for geoengineering or weather modification activities.

Finally, the bill repeals all other weather modification statutes, including DEP's weather modification license program.

The next stop for CS/HB 477 is the House Floor.

## **Bill Expanding Safety of Students**

CS/CS/CS/HB 1403 adds Florida's licensed childcare facilities to the list of entities authorized to participate in the Chris Hixon, Coach Aaron Feis, and Coach Scott Beigel



School Guardian Program and authorizes childcare facilities to employ school security guards.

The bill also aligns the training, certification, and reporting requirements for school security guards with the existing requirements for school guardians. The bill clarifies requirements regarding school perimeter and door security measures implemented by the Legislature in 2024 and creates an exception to the school perimeter and door security measures for Career and Technical Education classrooms.

Finally, the bill requires that each substitute teacher be provided all school safety protocols and procedures prior to his or her first day of substitute teaching.

The next stop for CS/CS/CS/HB 1403 is the House Floor.

## **Bill Requiring Registration of Agents and Organizations Associated with Foreign Countries of Concern**

CS/HB 583 requires an individual or organization acting as an agent of a foreign country of concern—China, Russia, Iran, North Korea, Cuba, Venezuela (Maduro regime), Qatar, or Syria—to register with the Division of Elections (Division) under the Department of State within 10 days after becoming an agent. Registrants must disclose their identity, affiliations, financial transactions, and political activities.

Foreign-supported political organizations must register with the Division by January 1, 2026, and must provide details on leadership, funding, and political expenditures from the past year. All registrations must be updated at least every 90 days. The bill authorizes the Florida Elections Commission to enforce compliance, imposing fines up to \$500 per violation, escalating to \$2,000 for willful or repeated offenses.

The next stop for CS/HB 583 is the House Floor.

## Constituent of The Week



### Steve Wilson

Our Constituent of the Week is Mr. Steve Wilson.

Mr. Wilson was born in DeRidder, Louisiana and grew up in New Orleans and Macon, Georgia. He moved to Brevard County in 1984 and retired from local government as the Community Advocate and Assistant to the City Manager for the City of Rockledge in 2018.

Throughout his career, Mr. Wilson also served over 15 years as a Rockledge Little League volunteer demonstrating his sincere and long-term commitment to local youth and our community.

Mr. Wilson has earned countless awards throughout our community, below are just a few:

- Brevard Public School Jefferson Award
- City of Rockledge Employee of the Year in 2006
- City of Rockledge Quality Public Service Award 2008, 2012, 2017
- Rockledge Kiwanis Citizen of the Year 2012-2013
- Space Coast Sports Hall of Fame – Sportscasting 2015
- Rockledge High School Leadership and Service Award 2016
- Space Coast Sports Hall of Fame – Lifetime Achievement 2020
- Quality Floridian Award – 2022

Mr. Wilson has chaired two fundraisers in support of pediatric cancer through the St. Baldrick's Foundation which have raised over \$25,000.00 in honor of Merritt Island resident, Julie Spurlock.

He has been a partner for the past 26 years with the Friday Night Locker Room, a broadcasting team, that supports first responders and law enforcement personnel, showcases community and charitable events, and promotes youth sports.

Mr. Wilson is also a strong advocate for local non-profits that raise awareness and funding for pediatric cancer including the Mikey Strong Foundation which will be holding their “Golf FORE A Cure” event on Saturday, April 26th at Spessard Holland Golf Course (2374 Oak Street) in Melbourne Beach.

The event raises funds for Diffuse Intrinsic Pontine Glioma (DIPG) brain tumor research and to support those battling the deadly disease. Sadly, there is not a cure for DIPG.

Mikey Goodwin was a 19-year-old student athlete from Brevard County when he was diagnosed with DIPG in February of 2020. He passed away just three months later in May of 2020. The Mikey Strong Foundation has since raised approximately \$300,000 funds for DIPG research.

The "Golf FORE a Cure" tournament after-party will begin at approximately 4:30 p.m. and will feature a closest-to-the-pin contest, raffles, awards, food, beverages, and a helicopter ball drop. There is a \$20 cost to attend the after-party.

The “Chopper FORE a Cure” ball drop will also feature Vivian Sleeth, a nine-year old girl from Rockledge, who is currently battling DIPG. Vivian, her brother, Corbin, and their mom, Brittany, will be in the helicopter to release the golf balls for the “Chopper FORE a Cure” ball drop which will take place at approximately 5:30 p.m.

HD 32 is grateful to Mr. Wilson's long career of civil service at the City of Rockledge. We are equally appreciative of his leadership and advocacy to raise awareness for events such as the "Chopper FORE a Cure" and DIPG research.

## District Highlights

## **EDC of the Space Coast Hosted High-Level Aerospace Delegation from Spain Interested in Investing in Brevard County**

Recently, the Economic Development Commission (EDC) of the Space Coast welcomed aerospace leaders from Spain exploring the strategic growth opportunities, innovation, and technological advancements that the Space Coast is known for internationally.

The visiting delegation was composed of 11 Spanish aerospace firms including Satlantis, Sener, and Idom.

The EDC brought together an elite group of presenters representing NASA, Lockheed Martin, Rogue Valley Microdevices, and Vaya Space.

Topics of discussion included:

- Business Acceleration
- Spaceport Development
- Advanced Manufacturing and Hybrid Launch Solutions
- Public/Private Partnerships Worldwide
- Skilled Talent Pipelines
- Proximity to Key Suppliers
- Florida's Business Friendly Environment

To remain competitive in the local, state, national, and global markets, it is critical to have an effective and proactive EDC. Congratulations to President and CEO, Lynda Weatherman, and her team for securing high-level international interest.

For more information on the EDC, click [here](#).

## **Space Coast League of Cities in Collaboration with Florida League of Cities Announces College Scholarships**

The Florida League of Cities (FLC) Public Service Pathways program is offering up to five \$5,000 scholarships for students considering careers in the civic service and public service sectors.

Recipients will earn financial support and gain exclusive opportunities for career growth, including a job shadow day with city leaders, and access to a network of civic-minded peers.

To qualify, applicants must be enrolled in an accredited bachelor's, master's, or doctorate program administered through a Florida-based campus (including online programs) by spring or summer of 2025, with continued enrollment during the fall of 2025.

Qualifying students must submit a completed application, official transcripts, resume, and two letters of recommendation by Thursday, May 1st at 5:00 p.m.

Applicants must also complete an introductory municipal government e-course, and write an essay on how it impacted them, by the May 1st deadline.

In June, finalists will be invited to attend virtual interviews with the selection committee. Following the virtual interviews, finalists will be notified if they have been chosen.

To view the full eligibility requirements and the selection process, click [here](#).

## **City of Rockledge Announces Reopening of Fire Station 37**

The newly renovated and modernized Fire Station 37, located at 3500 Murrell Road in Rockledge, replaced the former 33-year old building built in 1991. The new station is on the former site and is now built to withstand a Category 5 hurricane.

“It’s absolutely beautiful inside and out,” Rockledge Deputy Fire Chief Jim Wilson said. “It’s hurricane-rated (with) up to 160 mph winds so our firefighters are perfectly safe. It surpasses my hopes and expectations. I’ve got to be honest. It’s absolutely amazing.”

Highlights of the new facility include new bunk, kitchen, and lounge areas to better serve the firefighters who work tirelessly to prevent catastrophes and rapidly respond in emergencies.

Rockledge Mayor Thomas Price said, “The work done at Fire Station 37 is part of a larger effort in the city.” He added that this facility upgrade is the second station completed in five years with one more station to bring Rockledge fire stations up to the standards of 21st century as well as to code.

## Upcoming Events

### Local Earth Day Events

On Tuesday April 22nd, Earth Day is celebrated worldwide. The environmental movement was established in 1970 and this year's the theme is “Our Power, Our Planet.”

There are several local events taking place throughout the week:

[Marine Resource Council Earth Day Shoreline Cleanup](#) on Tuesday, April 22nd from 7:00 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. at 3275 Dixie Highway Northeast in Palm Bay.

Marine Resource Council Earth Day Volunteer Mangrove Event on Saturday, April 26th from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at 9140 86th Avenue in Vero Beach.

Brevard County Earth Day Lagoon Cleanup will take place on Saturday, April 26th from 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. at six locations (check ins begins at 8:00 a.m. for each cleanup sites):

- **Palm Bay** cleanup site along the Turkey Creek Sanctuary. Check-in is at Paddling Paradise located at 4220 Dixie Highway in Palm Bay.
- **Melbourne** cleanup site along the shores of the 192 Melbourne Causeway. Check-in is at Ernest Koven-Hoven Riverside Park located at 200 North Riverside Drive in Indialantic.
- **Eau Gallie** cleanup site along the shores of the Eau Gallie Causeway (SR-518) boat ramp. Check-in will take place at cleanup site.
- **Cocoa Beach** cleanup site along the shores of the 520 / West Cocoa Beach Causeway. Check-in is at 8:00 a.m. at Florida's Seafood Bar & Grill located at 480 Cocoa Beach Causeway (Hwy 520) in Cocoa Beach.
- **Merritt Island** cleanup along the shores of the 528 / Banana River Bridge A1A Martin Andersen Beachline Expressway. Check-in is at Kelly Park East located at North Banana River Drive in Merritt Island.
- **Titusville** cleanup site along the Max Brewer Bridge and Horeshoe Crab Island. Check-in is at Epic Paddle Adventures located at Parrish Park, 1 A. Max Brewer Memorial Parkway in Titusville.

For more information on the Brevard County events, click [here](#).

## 40th Melbourne Art Festival

The 40th Melbourne Art Festival will take place on Saturday, April 26th 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. and Sunday, April 27th from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at Wickham Park (2500 Parkway Drive) in Melbourne. The annual event draws approximately 30,000 attendees. To avoid parking congestion organizers recommend arriving early or a little later in the day.

What you can expect if attending:

- Parking, admission, the art show, live music entertainment, and children's activities are free of charge.
- Food and beverage will be available for purchase.
- Outside golf carts, coolers, and beverages are prohibited.
- All bags are subject to search.
- Wickham Park is pet friendly.
- For the latest rules, contact 321-255-4307.

For more information including the festival map, click [here](#).

## **Space Coast Biz Fest Expo 2025**

On Tuesday, April 29th, the 2025 Space Coast SCORE BizFest will take place from 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Holiday Inn Express (301 Tucker Lane) in Cocoa. The event is designed to empower entrepreneurs and small business owners with the tools, knowledge, and connections needed to grow their businesses.

The cost is \$10.00 and includes breakfast and lunch.

Organizers list the following benefits of attending:

- Opportunities to learn from industry experts, participate in professional workshops, and seek actionable advice on entrepreneurial topics.
- Expanding your network by connecting with local business leaders, entrepreneurs, and building collaborative professional relationships.
- BizFest serves to help small business start-ups and established businesses looking to scale up and grow their existing corporations.

Seats are very limited and those interested in attending the event are highly encouraged to register early [here](#). \_



For questions about the event, contact Alfonso Bonin at 786-217-2666.

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## **Contact Information**

### **Melbourne Office**

900 East Strawbridge Avenue,

Suite 408,

Melbourne, FL 32901

321-497-8200

### **Tallahassee Office**

400 South Monroe Street,

1401 The Capitol,

Tallahassee, FL 32399-1100

850-717-5032

### **Staff**

[Yvette Campbell](#)

[William Gooden](#)

[Kelli Lane](#)

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