

# The Skidmore Scoop

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## Greetings from Tallahassee

During week seven of the Legislative Session, the Florida House moved quickly through its "Special Order Calendar" of bills, passing dozens of pieces of legislation, some of which will be sent to the Governor for his signature and others that were sent to the Senate chamber for passage. While the Legislature is a partisan body, meaning Republicans and Democrats don't always or typically share policy positions, it is rewarding when we can listen, debate, and vote on bills that have unanimous or near-unanimous support. Two of many such bills we heard on Thursday included **Gail's Law**, named for an Orlando woman who survived a vicious sexual assault but waited 32 years before receiving the results of her rape kit, and would require the Florida Department of Law Enforcement to create and maintain a statewide system for tracking sexual assault evidence kits from the point of collection through the criminal justice process; and **Alzheimer's Disease and Dementia-Related Disorders Education**, which requires the Florida Department of Health, the Department of Elderly Affairs, and the Alzheimer's Association to partner on providing information that creates awareness about Alzheimer's disease and dementia-related disorders to licensed health care providers. As a reminder, you can follow what is happening during Session by watching the Florida Channel or live streaming at [www.myfloridahouse.gov](http://www.myfloridahouse.gov). As we move to the last two weeks of Session, we will be focused on

working through budget negotiations between the House and Senate, which have budgets that are about \$3 billion apart.

On a personal note, I was proud to recognize on the House Floor District 81 residents, Yury Shapshal and his 14-year-old son, Sam , for their heroic efforts last Sunday that saved a boy trapped in a submerged car that had careened into a lake near their home.

### **Homebound Seniors Can Now Request Vaccine Delivery**

The Florida Division of Emergency Management (FDEM) announced in March a new way for homebound seniors to sign up to have a COVID-19 vaccine come directly to them. Interested seniors should e-mail [HomeboundVaccine@em.myflorida.com](mailto:HomeboundVaccine@em.myflorida.com) with their name and phone number to put in a request. Someone from the Florida Division of Emergency Management will reach out within 72 hours to collect more information and schedule an appointment. At this time, FDEM is not accepting phone calls for homebound vaccination appointments. To date, more than 7,000 vaccines have been administered through the statewide homebound vaccination program.

### **Criminal Justice Commission to Host Community Forum on Policing in North Palm Beach**

Join the Palm Beach County Criminal Justice Commission's Community Engagement Task Force on Wednesday, April 21, 2021 from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at Florida Atlantic University, (FAU) located at the John D. MacArthur Campus in Jupiter for the eighth Community Forum on Policing in Palm Beach County. The address is 5353 Parkside Drive, Jupiter FL 33458. This will be an insightful open dialogue of questions and answers with Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office Command Staff for all of the communities in the North County Regional Bureau, which includes District 1 - West Palm

Beach, District 2 - Mangonia Park, District 3 - North County area, District 10 - Lake Park, District 16 - Greenacres, and District 20 - Palm Beach Shores.

In addition, Florida Atlantic Police Department is represented on the panel, the City of Juno Beach Police Department, and the City of Palm Beach Gardens Police Department. The event will be held in person with a maximum of 60 attendees and will be broadcast live on [Channel 20](#). Others may participate virtually via WebEx where questions may also be asked in advance or the day of the broadcast.

Email your questions to [CJC-PublicForums@pbcgov.org](mailto:CJC-PublicForums@pbcgov.org).

### **Florida Education Commissioner says masks should be voluntary in schools this fall**

Florida Education Commissioner Richard Corcoran asked school superintendents to make mask policies voluntary instead of mandatory for the 2021-22 school year. In a letter on Wednesday, Corcoran stated that data proves face-covering policies do not impact the spread of the coronavirus, that families and individuals have the ability to decide for themselves whether to wear a mask and that broad policies serve no use at this point. No data was provided to back these claims, which goes against guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention that mask-wearing in schools—along with social distancing and frequent hand-washing—is essential to stopping the spread.

### **'Freedom Week' Sales Tax Holiday**

Florida House Speaker Chris Sprowls, R-Palm Harbor, and Ways & Means Committee Chair Bobby Payne, R-Palatka, announced "Freedom Week,"

a new tax holiday that would fall on the week of the Fourth of July. The concept rolled out as part of a Proposed Committee Bill (PCB) passed favorably in the Ways & Means Committee today.

The PCB proposes "Freedom Week" to run Thursday, July 1, through Wednesday, July 7, 2021, and it exempts certain purchases on outdoor activities – such as boating, camping and outdoor sporting events – from Florida's standard sales tax.

# Contact Your State Representative

## Committee Assignments

[Health & Human Services Committee](#)

[Government Operations Subcommittee](#)

[Health Care Appropriations Subcommittee](#)

[Professions & Public Health Subcommittee](#)

[Tourism, Infrastructure & Energy Subcommittee](#)

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