

The Florida Senate
2012-2014



Message from the President



DON GAETZ
PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

It is a great privilege for me to welcome you to the Florida Senate, a dynamic legislative institution filled with tradition and historical reverence. I encourage you to visit Florida's Capitol buildings and share a piece of our state's past, present, and future by walking the halls and chambers where great leaders have gathered for generations.

Tasked with representing the diverse interests of over 19 million residents, forty talented individuals from across Florida are elected to serve in the Florida Senate. These citizen legislators meet on the Senate floor as equals, each with the opportunity to make public policy decisions that affect Florida's future.

I am honored to serve alongside this dedicated, hardworking group of public servants as the presiding officer of the Florida Senate during the 2012-2014 legislative term. We understand that this is a challenging time in our state's history as Florida families and businesses continue to struggle with day-to-day realities associated with the economic recession. As we look toward economic recovery, my colleagues in the Senate and I will strive to make sound policy choices that will encourage private sector job creation and provide educational opportunities that allow our students to compete and lead in the global economy.

As your elected representatives to the Florida Senate, we understand that you sent us to Tallahassee to ensure your views and objectives are accounted for in the legislative process. However, your input plays a vital role in crafting successful legislation. We encourage you to stay involved by contacting your local Senator with suggestions, ideas, and feedback. Together, we can keep Florida on the road to recovery.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve you in the Florida Senate.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Don Gaetz".

Don Gaetz

The Florida Senate

When the first Senate was convened on January 7, 1839 — six years before Florida became a state — no business could be transacted because only seven of the sixteen Senators were present. There was no quorum of Senators for three of the first four days, and it was not until the fifth day of the first session that Territorial Governor Richard Keith Call addressed the Senate and the House of Representatives in joint session.

Since the beginning days, the Senate has evolved into a highly organized, smoothly functioning legislative body that meets annually to conduct the people's business. The year-round professional staff conducts vital research and prepares for the legislative sessions.



The Florida Senate today has 40 members, each elected from a single-member district and each representing approximately 470,000 Florida citizens. Each Senator is elected for a four-year staggered term. He or she may be elected for more than one term,

but may not seek reelection if he or she has served for eight consecutive years (see Article VI, Section 4, State Constitution). The Constitution of the State of Florida specifies that Senators must be at least 21 years of age, must be registered voters, must be residents of the district from which they are elected, and must have resided in Florida for two years prior to their election.

While members of the other branches of government work full time in public service, the Legislature maintains its identity as the “citizen” branch. Many of the Senators work in a business or profession when they are not carrying out their legislative duties. Their occupations include law, nursing, banking, business, education, agriculture, and real estate. “Once a Senator, always a Senator” is a catchy phrase of good fellowship that conveys something of the philosophy of the Senate.



The 2012-2014 Senate membership includes 28 men and 12 women. There are 26 Republicans and 14 Democrats. The average Senator is about 52 years old, is married, and has children. Thirty-five Senators have college degrees. Thirty-one Senators served in the House of Representatives prior to their election to the Senate. The Senate is presided over by a President elected by the members of the Senate. Also elected is the President Pro Tempore. The President for the 2012-2014 term is Senator Don Gaetz from Niceville. The President Pro Tempore is Senator Garrett Richter from Naples.

Additional information on these officers and the other members of the Senate is contained on the following pages of this handbook. The handbook also further outlines and describes the Senate, its operations, and its relationship to the House of Representatives and the other two branches of Florida government.



President of the Senate

The Senate President is a constitutional officer who leads the Florida Senate for a two-year term. The President, who is elected by members of the Senate, manages the operations of the Senate and presides over its sessions. The President's many duties include: selecting a Majority Leader, appointing Senators to standing Senate committees, appointing committee chairs, and appointing citizens to a variety of boards and commissions.



DON GAETZ
REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 1

Co-founder and Vice Chairman (retired) VITAS Healthcare Corporation **BORN** January 22, 1948, in North Dakota; moved to Florida in 1978 **EDUCATION** Troy State University: M.P.A.; Concordia College: B.A., Religion and Political Science **SPOUSE** Victoria Quertermous of Fort Walton Beach, Florida **CHILDREN** Matt, Erin **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2006, reelected subsequently; Senate President: 2012-2014 **HISTORICAL** Father of State Representative Matt Gaetz **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Lutheran **RECREATION** Upland game and waterfowl hunting, American history, real estate, antiques **EMAIL** gaetz.don.web@flsenate.gov

President Pro Tempore

The role of the President Pro Tempore is defined by the President and the Senate Rules. Additionally, the President Pro Tempore may preside over sessions during the absence of the President.

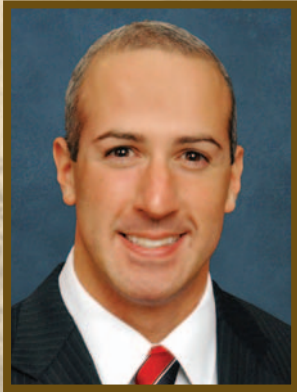


GARRETT RICHTER
REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 23

President, First National Bank of the Gulf Coast **BORN** August 1, 1950, in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; moved to Florida in 1987 **EDUCATION** Graduate School of Banking: Madison, Wisconsin, 1985; University of Pittsburgh: B.S., 1981 **SPOUSE** Diana **CHILDREN** Melissa, Elizabeth, Robert **GRANDCHILDREN** Ian, Leah, Santiago **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2008, reelected subsequently; President Pro Tempore: 2012-2014; House of Representatives: 2006-2008 **HISTORICAL** F. Garrett Richter, father, Pennsylvania General Assembly: 1948 and 1952 **MILITARY SERVICE** U.S. Army, 1969-1971, Vietnam Bronze Star, Combat Infantry Badge; U.S. Air Force Reserves, 1979-1981 **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Presbyterian **RECREATION** Golf **EMAIL** richter.garrett.web@flsenate.gov



Members of the Florida Senate



JOSEPH ABRUZZO
DEMOCRAT, DISTRICT 25

Businessman **BORN** August 14, 1980; moved to Florida in 1999 **EDUCATION** Lynn University: B.A., International Communications, 2003 **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2012; House of Representatives: 2008-2012 **MILITARY SERVICE** United States Coast Guard Reserves, Port Security Specialist, 2005-2013 **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION**

Catholic **EMAIL** abruzzo.joseph.web@flsenate.gov



THAD ALTMAN
REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 16

President, The Astronauts Memorial Foundation **BORN** September 8, 1955, in Macon, Georgia; moved to Florida in 1957 **EDUCATION** Rollins College: B.S.; University of Houston; Brevard Community College: A.A.; Florida Institute of Technology Flight Training; Palm Beach Community College, Architecture Studies **SPOUSE** Mary Pat Altman of Rockledge,

Florida **CHILDREN** Hunter, McKenzie, Sullivan **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2008, reelected subsequently; House of Representatives: 2003-2008 **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Christian **RECREATION** Family activities, biking, hiking, hunting **EMAIL** altman.thad.web@flsenate.gov

AARON BEAN
REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 4



Relationship Development Office; Small Business Owner **BORN** January 25, in Fernandina Beach **EDUCATION** Jacksonville University: B.S., Finance, 1989 **SPOUSE** Abigail "Abby" Bradley of Green Cove Springs, Florida **CHILDREN** Bradley, Gray, Walker **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2012; House of Representatives: 2000-2008 **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Methodist **RECREATION** Exercise, family time, tennis, running, golf **EMAIL** bean.aaron.web@flsenate.gov

LIZBETH BENACQUISTO
REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 30
MAJORITY LEADER



Realtor; Marketing and Special Events Consultant **BORN** December 23, 1967, in Rockville Centre, New York; moved to Florida in 1978 **EDUCATION** Palm Beach Atlantic University: B.A. **SPOUSE** Bruce **CHILDREN** Austin, Gabriella, A.J. **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2010, reelected subsequently; Majority (Republican) Leader: 2012-2014; Deputy Majority (Republican) Leader: 2011-2012 **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Catholic **RECREATION** Spending time with family, reading, golfing, gardening **EMAIL** benacquisto.lizbeth.web@flsenate.gov



ROB BRADLEY
REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 7

Attorney **BORN** August 24, 1970, in Green Cove Springs **EDUCATION** University of Florida: J.D., 1996, B.S., Telecommunications, 1992 **SPOUSE** Jennifer of Metuchen, New Jersey **CHILDREN** Connor, Stephanie, Caroline **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2012 **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Methodist **RECREATION** Camping, outdoor activities with family, golfing, Gator football **EMAIL** bradley.rob.web@flsenate.gov

OSCAR BRAYNON II
DEMOCRAT, DISTRICT 36
MINORITY WHIP



Consultant **BORN** February 1, 1977, in Corpus Christi, Texas **EDUCATION** Florida State University: B.S., Political Science, 2000 **SPOUSE** Melissa of Miami, Florida **CHILDREN** Oscar III, Brandon **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2011, reelected subsequently; House of Representatives: 2008-2011 **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Episcopal **RECREATION** Basketball, soccer **EMAIL** braynon.oscar.web@flsenate.gov



JEFF BRANDES
REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 22

Real Estate **BORN** February 12, 1976, in St. Petersburg **EDUCATION** Carson Newman College: B.S., Business Administration, 1999; Marion Military Institute: A.A., 1996 **SPOUSE** Natalie Jackson of Concord, Massachusetts **CHILDREN** Charlotte, Colin **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2012; House of Representatives: 2010-2012 **MILITARY SERVICE** U.S.

Army Reserves, Transportation Officer: 1996-2007; served in Iraq: 2003-2004 **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Methodist **RECREATION** SCUBA diving, travel, pilot **EMAIL** brandes.jeff.web@flsenate.gov

DWIGHT BULLARD
DEMOCRAT, DISTRICT 39



Teacher **BORN** February 4, 1977, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; moved to Florida in 1981 **EDUCATION** Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University: B.S., History Education, 1999 **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2012; House of Representatives: 2008-2012 **HISTORICAL** Larcenia Bullard, mother, Florida House of Representatives: 1992-2000, Florida Senate: 2002-2012; Edward B. Bullard, father, Florida House of Representatives: 2000-2008 **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Episcopal **RECREATION** Movies, reading, music, sports **EMAIL** bullard.dwight.web@flsenate.gov



JEFF CLEMENS
DEMOCRAT, DISTRICT 27

Energy Conservation **BORN** September 8, 1970, in Detroit, Michigan; moved to Florida in 1997 **EDUCATION** Michigan State University: B.A., Journalism, 1992 **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2012; House of Representatives: 2010-2012 **RECREATION** Playing music, sports, reading **EMAIL** clemens.jeff.web@flsenate.gov



CHARLES S. "CHARLIE" DEAN, SR.
REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 5

Sheriff (retired); Cattleman; Consultant **BORN** May 31, 1939, in Jacksonville **EDUCATION** Rollins College: M.S., Criminal Justice, 1976; Florida State University: B.S., Criminology-Police Administration, 1963; Central Florida Community College: A.A., 1962 **SPOUSE** Judy Baxter of Columbia, Tennessee **CHILDREN** Shannon Wright, Charles S. Jr. **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2007, reelected subsequently; Majority (Republican) Whip: 2008-2010; House of Representatives: 2002-2007 **HISTORICAL** Charles S. Dean, father, Citrus County Sheriff: 1928-1945; Rema Y. Dean, mother, City Clerk, Inverness, Florida: 1956-1974 **MILITARY SERVICE** U.S. Marine Corps Reserves, 5½ years **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Baptist **RECREATION** Collecting John Deere antique tractors, family farm, fishing, golf, hunting **EMAIL** dean.charles.web@flsenate.gov

NANCY C. DETERT
REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 28



Owner, Primary Creative Solutions **BORN** October 22, 1944, in Chicago, Illinois; moved to Florida in 1978 **EDUCATION** Sienna Heights College **CHILDREN** Mark, Bryan, Jamie **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2008, reelected subsequently; Majority (Republican) Whip: 2008-2010; House of Representatives: 1998-2006 **HISTORICAL** Related to Charles Carroll, signer of the Declaration of Independence **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Catholic **RECREATION** Golf, movies, reading, tennis **EMAIL** detert.nancy.web@flsenate.gov

MIGUEL DIAZ DE LA PORTILLA
REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 40



Attorney **BORN** January 30, 1963, in Miami **EDUCATION** University of Miami: J.D., 1987; B.A., Cum Laude, Philosophy and English Literature, 1984 **SPOUSE** Mari of Miami, Florida **CHILDREN** Michael Alexander, Jon-Christian, Mary Ester **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2010, reelected subsequently **HISTORICAL** Angel Pio de la Portilla, grandfather, mentor, and inspiration for social and political involvement; paternal great-grandfather served in Cuban Senate, while two of his sons served simultaneously in the Cuban House of Representatives; maternal great-grandfather served as Cuban Minister of Justice (Attorney General); long family history of political and civic involvement in Cuba and the United States, including brothers Renier, former member of the Florida House of Representatives and former elected member of the Miami-Dade School Board, and Alex, former member of the Florida House of Representatives and the Florida Senate — Senate Majority Leader: 2008-2010 **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Christian **RECREATION** Martial arts, mountain biking, hiking, reading **EMAIL** portilla.miguel.web@flsenate.gov



GREG EVERS
REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 2

Farmer; Small Businessman **BORN** June 16, 1955, in Milton **EDUCATION** Pensacola Junior College **SPOUSE** Lori **CHILDREN** Stephanie, Jennifer, Rob **GRANDCHILDREN** Alli, Rex **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2010, reelected subsequently; House of Representatives: 2001-2010 **HISTORICAL** John Wilkinson, cousin (Whig), Legislative Council House, Santa Rosa: 1844; House, Santa Rosa: 1848-1850, 1860; John Wilkinson, Jr., cousin (Democrat), House, Santa Rosa: 1885; Senate, District 1: 1889; A. J. Peaden, cousin (Democrat), House, Santa Rosa: 1905, 1907, 1909; R. W. Peaden, cousin (Democrat), House, District 2: 1972-1976; John W. Kennedy, great-uncle, Chair, Okaloosa County Commission; Durell Peaden, Jr., cousin (Republican), Florida Senate, District 2: 2000-2010; Florida House of Representatives, District 1: 1994-2000 **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Southern Baptist **RECREATION** Growing strawberries, farming, spending time with family and friends **EMAIL** evers.greg.web@flsenate.gov



ANITERE FLORES
REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 37

Attorney; President of Doral College **BORN** September 8, 1976, in Miami **EDUCATION** University of Florida: J.D., 2001; Florida International University: B.A., 1997 **SPOUSE** Dustin Anderson of Sarasota, Florida **CHILDREN** Máximo, Lucas **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2010, reelected subsequently; Majority (Republican) Whip: 2010-2012; House of Representatives: 2004-2010; Deputy Majority (Republican) Leader: 2008-2010 **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Roman Catholic **EMAIL** flores.anitere.web@flsenate.gov

BILL GALVANO
REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 26



Attorney **BORN** April 16, 1966, in Liberty, New York; moved to Florida in 1969 **EDUCATION** University of Miami, School of Law: J.D., 1992; University of Florida: B.A., 1989; Manatee Community College: A.A., 1986 **SPOUSE** Julie Forrester of Bradenton, Florida **CHILDREN** Michael, William, Jacqueline **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2012; House of Representatives: 2002-2010 **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Catholic **RECREATION** Golf **EMAIL** galvano.bill.web@flsenate.gov

RENE GARCIA
REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 38



Vice President of Community Relations for Dade Medical College **BORN** July 10, 1974, in Hialeah **EDUCATION** University of Miami: M.B.A., Health Administration and Policy, 2004; Florida International University: B.S., Political Science, 1999 **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2010, reelected subsequently; House of Representatives: 2000-2008 **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Catholic **RECREATION** Boating, travel **EMAIL** garcia.rene.web@flsenate.gov



ANDY GARDINER
REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 13

Vice President, External Affairs and Community Relations, Orlando Health
BORN January 23, 1969, in Orlando
EDUCATION Stetson University: B.S., Political Science and Psychology, 1992
SPOUSE Camille Gardiner of Brooklyn, New York
CHILDREN Andrew, Joanna, Kathryn
LEGISLATIVE SERVICE

Elected to the Senate in 2008, reelected subsequently; Majority (Republican) Leader: 2010-2012; Majority (Republican) Whip: 2008-2010; House of Representatives: 2000-2008; Majority (Republican) Leader: 2004-2006; Orange County Legislative Delegation Chair: 2007-2008, 2002-2003
RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION Methodist
RECREATION Baseball, fishing, reading
EMAIL gardiner.andy.web@flsenate.gov

DENISE GRIMSLEY
REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 21



Registered Nurse
BORN September 21, 1959, in Lakeland
EDUCATION University of Miami: M.B.A.; Warner Southern College: B.A., Organizational Management; Polk Community College: A.S., Nursing
CHILDREN Nicole
GRAND-CHILDREN Tyson, Jillian
LEGISLATIVE SERVICE Elected to the Senate in 2012; House of Representatives: 2004-2012
RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION Baptist
EMAIL grimsley.denise.web@flsenate.gov

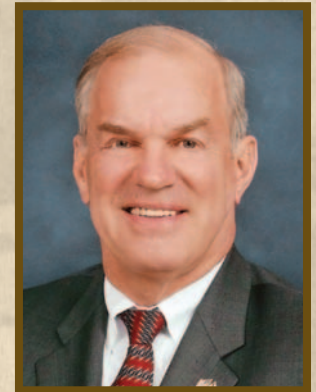
AUDREY GIBSON
DEMOCRAT, DISTRICT 9



Paralegal and PR Liaison
BORN March 15, in Jacksonville
EDUCATION Florida State University: B.S., Criminology; Florida State College at Jacksonville: A.A.
CHILDREN two sons, daughter
LEGISLATIVE SERVICE Elected to the Senate in 2011, reelected subsequently; House of Representatives: 2002-2010
RECREATION Auto racing, flower gardening

EMAIL gibson.audrey.web@flsenate.gov

ALAN HAYS
REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 11



Certified Circuit Court Civil Mediator, Dentist (retired)
BORN March 12, 1946, in Henderson, Kentucky; moved to Florida in 1950
EDUCATION University of Florida College of Dentistry: D.M.D., 1976; Connors State College: A.S., Drafting and Design, 1967
SPOUSE Jeanne Lease Hays of Winter Garden, Florida
CHILDREN JoAnn, Leslie, Nancy
LEGISLATIVE SERVICE Elected to the Senate in 2010, reelected subsequently; House of Representatives: 2004-2010
MILITARY SERVICE U.S. Coast Guard, E-6 Dental Technician, 1967-1970
RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION Baptist
RECREATION Golf, SCUBA, flying, family
EMAIL hays.alan.web@flsenate.gov



DOROTHY L. HUKILL
REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 8

Attorney **BORN** September 20, 1946, in New York City, New York; moved to Florida in 1988 **EDUCATION** St. John's University: J.D., 1978; Columbia University, Teacher's College: M.A., 1970; City University of New York, Hunter College: B.A., 1967 **CHILDREN** Jonathan **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2012; House of Representatives: 2004-2012; Volusia County Legislative Delegation Chair: 2012-2013; Lake County Legislative Delegation Vice Chair: 2012-2013 **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Protestant **RECREATION** Reading, traveling **EMAIL** hukill.dorothy.web@flsenate.gov



ARTHENIA L. JOYNER
DEMOCRAT, DISTRICT 19

Attorney; Public School Teacher, 1964-1965 **BORN** February 3, 1943, in Lakeland **EDUCATION** Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University: J.D., 1968; B.S., Political Science, 1964 **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2006, reelected subsequently; Minority (Democratic) Leader Pro Tempore: 2010-2012; Minority (Democratic) Whip: 2006-2010; House of Representatives: 2000-2006; Democratic Policy Chair: 2004-2006; Democratic Floor Leader: 2002-2004; Democratic Whip: 2000-2002; Appointed by Speaker Bense to NCSL Law and Criminal Justice Committee **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** African Methodist Episcopal **RECREATION** Reading, traveling **EMAIL** joyner.athenia.web@flsenate.gov

JACK LATVALA
REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 20



CEO, GCI Printing Services, Inc. d/b/a Gulf Coast Imprinting **BORN** November 3, 1951, in Oxford, Mississippi; moved to Florida in 1961 **EDUCATION** Stetson University: B.A., 1973 **CHILDREN** Christopher, Stephanie **GRANDCHILDREN** Blake, Sydni **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2010, reelected subsequently; Senate: 1994-2002 **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Baptist **RECREATION** Fishing, baseball **EMAIL** latvala.jack.web@flsenate.gov

TOM LEE
REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 24
DEPUTY MAJORITY LEADER



Sabal Homes of Florida, Vice President and Director; Licensed Real Estate Salesperson **BORN** January 21, 1962, in San Antonio, Texas; moved to Florida in 1969 **EDUCATION** University of Tampa: B.S., Business, 1984; Hillsborough Community College: A.A., 1982 **CHILDREN** Regan, Brandon, Faith **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2012; Deputy Majority (Republican) Leader: 2012-2014; Senate: 1996-2006; Senate President: 2004-2006 **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Catholic **RECREATION** Golf, exercise **EMAIL** lee.tom.web@flsenate.gov



JOHN LEGG
REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 17

Administrator; Educator **BORN** April 29, 1975, in Brooksville **EDUCATION** University of South Florida: M.P.A., 2010; B.A., Social Work, 1995; Pasco-Hernando Community College: A.A., 1993 **SPOUSE** Suzanne **CHILDREN** Rebecca, Dylan, Alexa, Jack, Evangeline **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2012; House of Representatives: 2004-2012;

Speaker Pro Tempore: 2011-2012; Deputy Majority (Republican) Whip: 2006-2008 **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Christian

RECREATION Spending time with family, reading, traveling

EMAIL legg.john.web@flsenate.gov



GWEN MARGOLIS
DEMOCRAT, DISTRICT 35

Real Estate Broker; Investor **BORN** October 4, 1934, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; moved to Florida in 1960 **EDUCATION** Temple University: 1952-1954 **CHILDREN** Edward, Ira, Karen, Robin **GRANDCHILDREN** Sarah, Jeffrey, Ariel, Jordan, Leah, Daniel, Jared **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2010, reelected subsequently; Senate:

1980-1992; 2002-2008; Senate President: 1990-1992; House of Representatives: 1974-1980 **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Jewish

RECREATION Music, theatre **EMAIL** margolis.gwen.web@flsenate.gov

BILL MONTFORD
DEMOCRAT, DISTRICT 3
DEMOCRATIC CAUCUS POLICY CHAIR



CEO, Florida Association of District School Superintendents **BORN** August 22, 1947, in Marianna **EDUCATION** Florida State University: M.S., 1971; B.S., 1969; Chipola Junior College: A.A., 1967

SPOUSE Jane Gard Montford of Tallahassee, Florida **CHILDREN** Bill, Katherine **GRANDCHILDREN** Jake, Henry, Wyatt, Ellie, Guy **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2010, reelected subsequently; Minority (Democratic) Policy Chair: 2012-2014; Minority (Democratic) Whip: 2010-2012 **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Baptist **RECREATION** Family activities, sports, reading **EMAIL** montford.bill.web@flsenate.gov

JOE NEGRON
REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 32



Attorney **BORN** October 9, 1961, in West Palm Beach **EDUCATION** Emory University School of Law: J.D.; Harvard University: M.P.A.; Stetson University: B.A. **SPOUSE** Rebecca Horton Negron of Hobe Sound, Florida **CHILDREN** David, Jonathan, Becca **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2009, reelected subsequently; House of Representatives: 2000-2006; Appropriations Committee, Chair: 2005-2006; Florida House Taxpayer Protection Caucus, Co-Chair: 2003-2006 **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Protestant **RECREATION** Basketball, softball, golf, courthouse architecture **EMAIL** negron.joe.web@flsenate.gov



JEREMY RING
DEMOCRAT, DISTRICT 29

Entrepreneur **BORN** August 10, 1970, in New Haven, Connecticut; moved to Florida in 2001 **EDUCATION** Syracuse University: 1992 **SPOUSE** Sharon **CHILDREN** Elijah, Levi, Eliana, Galit **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2006; reelected subsequently **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Jewish **RECREATION** Spending time with family, boat-

ing, tennis, 19th Century American history **EMAIL** ring.jeremy.web@flsenate.gov



MARIA LORTS SACHS
DEMOCRAT, DISTRICT 34
MINORITY PRO TEMPORE

Attorney, Constitutional Law **BORN** March 25, 1949, in Battle Creek, Michigan; moved to Florida in 1976 **EDUCATION** University of Miami: J.D.; Boston University: M.A.; University of Maryland: B.A., Cum Laude **SPOUSE** Peter Sachs of Berlin, Germany **CHILDREN** Natasha, Marcello, Taylor **LEGISLATIVE**

SERVICE Elected to the Senate in 2010, reelected subsequently; Minority (Democratic) Leader Pro Tempore: 2012-2014; Minority (Democratic) Whip: 2011-2012; House of Representatives: 2006-2010 **HISTORICAL** Russell F. Lorts, father, decorated combat veteran, U.S. Army Infantry, World War II; mother, Italian war bride, World War II **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Catholic **RECREATION** Autocross, equestrian, biking **EMAIL** sachs.maria.web@flsenate.gov

DAVID SIMMONS
REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 10



Attorney, Financial Managing Partner of de Beaubien, Knight, Simmons, Mantzaris & Neal, LLP **BORN** June 13, 1952, in Nashville, Tennessee; moved to Florida in 1977 **EDUCATION** Vanderbilt University Law School: J.D., 1977; Tennessee Technological University: B.S., with highest distinction, Mathematics, 1974 **CHILDREN** Kryisia, Alicya **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2010, reelected subsequently; Majority (Republican) Whip: 2010-2012; House of Representatives: 2000-2008 **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Catholic **RECREATION** Golf, running, tennis **EMAIL** simmons.david.web@flsenate.gov

WILTON SIMPSON
REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 18



Simpson Environmental Services, Inc.; Simpson Farms, Inc. **BORN** June 28, 1966, in Lakeland **EDUCATION** Pasco-Hernando Community College: A.A., 1997 **SPOUSE** Kathy Shotts of Dade City, Florida **CHILDREN** Lauran Monbarren, Wilton Jr. **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2012 **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Christian **RECREATION** College football **EMAIL** simpson.wilton.web@flsenate.gov



CHRISTOPHER L. SMITH
 DEMOCRAT, DISTRICT 31
 MINORITY LEADER

Attorney **BORN** March 15, 1970, in Fort Lauderdale **EDUCATION** Florida State University: J.D., 1995; Johnson C. Smith University: B.S., Political Science, 1992 **SPOUSE** Desorae Giles-Smith **CHILDREN** Christopher, Christian **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2008, reelected subsequently; Minority (Democratic) Leader: 2012-2014; House of Representatives: 1998-2006; Democratic Leader: 2004-2006 **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Baptist **RECREATION** All sports, playing Bid Whist **EMAIL** smith.chris.web@flsenate.gov



ELEANOR SOBEL
 DEMOCRAT, DISTRICT 33

President, Emrelle Skin Care Ltd.; Civic Activist; Educator **BORN** February 11, 1946, in Brooklyn, New York; moved to Florida in 1976 **EDUCATION** Foreign Policy Institute for State Legislators, 2006; Harvard Executive Leadership Program, 2003; Columbia University: M.A., 1975; City University of New York: M.A., 1968; Brooklyn College: B.A., History, 1967 **SPOUSE** Stuart A. Sobel, M.D., of Brooklyn, New York **CHILDREN** Emily, Rachel **GRANDCHILDREN** Josie, Rosie, Eli **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2008, reelected subsequently; House of Representatives: 1998-2006; Democratic Rules and Calendar Council Lead: 2004-2006 **HISTORICAL** Barry Finegold, nephew, the youngest State Representative in Massachusetts as of 2006 **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Jewish **RECREATION** Attending cultural events, walking her dog, traveling, working out **EMAIL** sobel.eleanor.web@flsenate.gov



DARREN SOTO
 DEMOCRAT, DISTRICT 14
 MINORITY DEPUTY WHIP

Attorney **BORN** February 25, 1978, in Ringwood, New Jersey; moved to Florida in 2001 **EDUCATION** George Washington University Law School: J.D., 2004; Rutgers University: B.A., Economics, 2000 **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2012; Minority (Democratic) Whip: 2012-2014; House of Representatives: 2007-2012 **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Catholic **RECREATION** Music, pastels, creative writing, hiking, canoeing **EMAIL** soto.darren.web@flsenate.gov

KELLI STARGEL
 REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 15

Investment Property Manager **BORN** March 23, 1966, in Tampa **EDUCATION** Tallahassee Community College **SPOUSE** Judge John Stargel **CHILDREN** Rebekah, Amanda, Robert, Hannah, Laura **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2012; House of Representatives: 2008-2012 **HISTORICAL** John Stargel, husband, Circuit Judge; Ancestors: Aaron Jernigan, Florida House of Representatives, 1848; James Lane, Sumter County Sheriff, 1897-1905 **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Baptist **RECREATION** Reading, genealogy, family activities **EMAIL** stargel.kelli.web@flsenate.gov





GERALDINE F. "GERI" THOMPSON
DEMOCRAT, DISTRICT 12

Founder, Museum of African American History, Historical Tours **BORN** November 18, 1948, in New Orleans, Louisiana; moved to Florida in 1955 **EDUCATION** Florida State University: 1973; University of Miami: 1970; Miami-Dade Community College: 1968 **SPOUSE** Judge Emerson R. Thompson, Jr., of Jacksonville, Florida **CHILDREN** Laurise, Emerson, Elizabeth **GRANDCHILDREN** Jasmyne, Imani, Kiara, Symone **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2012; House of Representatives: 2006-2012; Democratic Leader Pro Tempore: 2008-2010 **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Baptist **RECREATION** Cycling, reading **EMAIL** thompson.geraldine.web@flsenate.gov



JOHN THRASHER
REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 6

Attorney **BORN** December 18, 1943, in Columbia, South Carolina; moved to Florida in 1949 **EDUCATION** Florida State University: J.D., 1972; B.S., 1965 **SPOUSE** Jean Moore of Calhoun, Georgia **CHILDREN** Jennifer, Jon, Julie, and eight grandchildren **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2009, re-elected subsequently; House of Representatives: 1992-2000; Speaker of the House: 1998-2000 **MILITARY SERVICE** U.S. Army 1966-1970; served in Germany and the Republic of Vietnam; honorably discharged as Captain; decorations include Bronze Star with Oak Leaf Cluster, Army Commendation Medal, Vietnam Service Medal, and Vietnam Campaign Medal **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Presbyterian **RECREATION** Reading, golf, basketball **EMAIL** thrasher.john.web@flsenate.gov

Senate Organization

SENATE COMMITTEES

Standing Committees and Subcommittees

- Agriculture
- Appropriations
 - Appropriations Subcommittee on Criminal and Civil Justice
 - Appropriations Subcommittee on Education
 - Appropriations Subcommittee on Finance and Tax
 - Appropriations Subcommittee on General Government
 - Appropriations Subcommittee on Health and Human Services
 - Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation, Tourism, and Economic Development
- Banking and Insurance
- Children, Families, and Elder Affairs
- Commerce and Tourism
- Communications, Energy, and Public Utilities
- Community Affairs
- Criminal Justice
- Education
- Environmental Preservation and Conservation
- Ethics and Elections
- Gaming
- Governmental Oversight and Accountability
- Health Policy
- Judiciary
- Military Affairs, Space, and Domestic Security
- Reapportionment
- Regulated Industries
- Rules
- Transportation

Select Committee

- Select Committee on Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act

Secretary of the Senate

At its organization session every two years, the Senate elects a Secretary of the Senate pursuant to the Constitution of the State of Florida. This non-member constitutional officer publishes the Journal and the calendar, keeps all Senate records, and authenticates each act and resolution passed by the Senate.

Other operations within the Secretary's Office include: bill drafting, bill and amendment filing, duplication and distribution of documents, recording of actions taken by the Senate, and the performance of support services for the Senate. Special chamber computer programs, such as the vote system and Session Organizer, are designed and operated by the Secretary's Office.

Working with the Office of Legislative Information Technology Services and the Senate Information Technology Director, the Secretary's Office coordinates the development and maintenance of computer applications used by Senate professional staff. The Secretary's Office maintains Senate information included on the Florida Senate's official website and on the Legislature's Online Sunshine website.

The Secretary speaks to various visiting civic and student groups during the year. The Secretary's Office hosts numerous mock sessions throughout each year. Staff and facilities are provided for the YMCA Youth Legislature, Boys State, Girls State, Florida 4-H, and others.



DEBBIE BROWN
SECRETARY OF THE SENATE

BORN November 15, 1955, in Denver, Colorado; moved to Florida in 1967 **EDUCATION** Tallahassee Community College: A.A., 2009; A.S., Business Administration and Management, 1991 **SPOUSE** Larry **CHILDREN** Monica, Michael **GRANDCHILDREN** Brayden, Maddie Grace, Sophie, Hudson **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected Secretary of the Senate: January 2012-present; Director: Senate Administration, 2010-present; Office of the Senate President: 2002-2011; Office of the Senate Secretary: 1993-2002; Florida Constitution Revision Commission Liaison: 1997-1998 **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Methodist **RECREATION** Reading

Senate Sergeant at Arms

The President appoints a Sergeant at Arms who attends the Senate during its sessions; maintains order under the direction of the President; executes the commands of and serves Senate process as directed by the President of the Senate and by the Senate; has charge of all property of the Senate to the extent as is delegated to the Sergeant at Arms by the President; has general charge of the security of the chamber, committee rooms, and gallery of the Senate and maintains order therein in cooperation with the Division of Capitol Police; and has general supervision of the doorkeepers and professional maintenance staff.

DONALD SEVERANCE
SENATE SERGEANT AT ARMS



BORN September 24, 1954, in Live Oak **EDUCATION** Pat Thomas Law Enforcement Academy, Commissioned Law Enforcement Officer; Non-commissioned Officer's School, Florida National Guard; U.S. Marshal's State and Local Court; Lively Law Enforcement Academy; Tallahassee Community College **SPOUSE** Sherry Gregg of Tallahassee **CHILD** Chelsey **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Sergeant at Arms: 1999-present; Deputy Sergeant at Arms: 1998-1999; Assistant Sergeant at Arms: 1976-1998; National Legislative Services and Security Association: 1994-present; NLSSA 3rd Trustee: 1999-2008; NLS-SA Chairman, Region 4: 1997-1999 **MILITARY SERVICE** Florida National Guard, Florida National Guard Rifle and Pistol Team, 1972-1994; Desert Storm Veteran **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Baptist **RECREATION** Golf, walking

The Florida Senate

2012-2014

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE



DON GAETZ

THE SECRETARY'S
DESK



EVERS (R)
DISTRICT 2
BAKER



BEAN (R)
DISTRICT 4
FERNANDINA BEACH



DEAN (R)
DISTRICT 5
INVERNESS



MARGOLIS (D)
DISTRICT 35
COCONUT GROVE



GARDINER (R)
DISTRICT 13
ORLANDO



RICHTER (R)
DISTRICT 23
NAPLES



THRASHER (R)
DISTRICT 6
ST. AUGUSTINE
RULES CHAIR



LEE (R)
DISTRICT 24
BRANDON



MONTFORD (D)
DISTRICT 3
TALLAHASSEE



GAETZ (R)
DISTRICT 1
NICEVILLE



HUKILL (R)
DISTRICT 8
PORT ORANGE



SIMMONS (R)
DISTRICT 10
ALTAMONTE SPRINGS



THOMPSON (D)
DISTRICT 12
ORLANDO



SOTO (D)
DISTRICT 14
ORLANDO



SMITH (D)
DISTRICT 31
FT. LAUDERDALE
MINORITY LEADER



BENACQUISTO (R)
DISTRICT 30
FT. MYERS
MAJORITY LEADER



STARGEL (R)
DISTRICT 15
LAKELAND



HAYS (R)
DISTRICT 11
UMATILLA



GIBSON (D)
DISTRICT 9
JACKSONVILLE



BRADLEY (R)
DISTRICT 7
FLEMING ISLAND



ALTMAN (R)
DISTRICT 16
ROCKLEDGE



LEGG (R)
DISTRICT 17
TRINITY



SIMPSON (R)
DISTRICT 18
TRILBY



JOYNER (D)
DISTRICT 19
TAMPA



LATVALA (R)
DISTRICT 20
CLEARWATER



NEGRON (R)
DISTRICT 32
STUART



DETERT (R)
DISTRICT 28
VENICE



GALVANO (R)
DISTRICT 26
BRADENTON



BRANDES (R)
DISTRICT 22
ST. PETERSBURG



GRIMSLEY (R)
DISTRICT 21
SEBRING



DIAZ DE LA PORTILLA (R)
DISTRICT 40
CORAL GABLES



BULLARD (D)
DISTRICT 39
MIAMI



GARCIA (R)
DISTRICT 38
HIALEAH



BRAYNON (D)
DISTRICT 36
MIAMI GARDENS



FLORES (R)
DISTRICT 37
MIAMI



SACHS (D)
DISTRICT 34
DELRAY BEACH



SOBEL (D)
DISTRICT 33
HOLLYWOOD



RING (D)
DISTRICT 29
MARGATE



CLEMENS (D)
DISTRICT 27
LAKE WORTH



ABRUZZO (D)
DISTRICT 25
WELLINGTON

SECRETARY OF THE SENATE



Debbie Brown

SERGEANT AT ARMS



Donald Severance

The Senate Chamber

The Senate Chamber, also known as the “floor,” is the room on the fourth floor of the Capitol where Senators debate the merits of proposed legislation. The current chamber is the fourth used since the first session of the Senate was called to order in 1839. The first session held in this chamber occurred in 1978.

On the floor above the chamber is the gallery. Citizens may sit in the gallery to observe the Senate in session. From the gallery, attention is drawn to the rostrum where the President is presiding. Above the rostrum is the Senate seal, which was adopted in 1972.

The President occupies the “chair,” pacing the flow of legislation, deciding who will speak, and ruling on parliamentary disputes. The President may call on other Senators to preside while he or she works out the details of legislative proposals.

The portraits hanging below the gallery commemorate past Presidents of the Senate. After each President’s term, a portrait is painted and hung in this area. The portraits are arranged in chronological order with the most recent one on the presiding officer’s right. Each time the newest one is added, the oldest one is taken down and moved to the Historic Capitol, keeping 100 years of past Presidents on display in the “new” chamber.

In front of the President’s rostrum is the Secretary’s desk, which is staffed by the Secretary of the Senate. Legislative business is not properly before the Senate until it is “on the desk.” Clerks at this desk read the bills and amendments and record Senate actions. These actions are published in the Journal, the official record of Senate proceedings. A Senator who wishes to “approach the well” to make a speech speaks from one of the reading podiums at the Secretary’s desk. Session Organizer, designed to display amendments and information on bills, allows Senators the flexibility of accessing legislative information from their Tallahassee



Senator wants a “page” to deliver a message or retrieve a file from his or her office. The voting boards also display the number of the bill or amendment being debated and other information related to the proceedings. Electronic voting was first used in the Senate in 1966, and now nearly all votes are recorded electronically.

The seating arrangement in the chamber is determined by the President. Telephones at each chamber desk provide direct communication with the Senator’s professional district staff. Only members of the Senate and designated professional staff are allowed in the chamber while the Senate is in session. Certain present and past state officials and guests invited by the President may also enter the chamber during a session.

Senators are addressed by their district number when they are recognized to speak. Custom decrees that a Senator may not be addressed as a “gentleman” or “lady.” He or she is “the Senator from the fifth,” for example, but never “the gentleman or lady from the fifth.” During debate, the members are always formally addressed as “Senator,” not by their given names.



Just above the main entrance is the press gallery, where members of Florida’s press corps report Senate actions. The remainder of the gallery is open to the public at all sessions, except that a portion of the gallery is usually reserved for the Senators’ families and other sections are often temporarily reserved for visiting students.

Robotic cameras from the Florida Channel are positioned in the chamber to provide live, televised coverage of all Senate sessions. Each weekday evening during the session, The Florida Channel and Florida’s public television affiliates broadcast “Capitol Update,” a live half-hour news program explaining and analyzing each day’s most significant legislative developments. The broadcasts are funded by the Legislature, but all editorial content is determined by the group of professional journalists who produce the programs. Florida’s legislative telecasts were used as a model for a similar system installed in 1979 in the U.S. House of Representatives. In addition, live and unedited feeds of some legislative events can be found at www.flsenate.gov and www.wfsu.org.



Contacting Your Senator

Your Senator is interested in hearing your opinions concerning the issues on which he or she will vote. This section will provide you with guidelines on how to approach legislators and how best to express your ideas so that they will be read, or listened to, and understood.



Most people communicate with their Senator by letter (increasingly by email), but you can also try to speak directly with him or her by telephone or even in person. No matter which method you choose, the same guidelines apply:

- Know your subject matter well and have data to back up your point of view.
- Inform yourself about the full name and address of your Senator and about the positions he or she has taken on the issues that concern you.
- Do not use form letters; instead, if you are working from a form letter, rewrite the essential points in your own words.
- If you represent others from your community, formally or even informally, indicate that to the Senator.
- Be brief and to-the-point in your presentation. Attach supporting data or documents and refer to them in your cover letter.
- Be courteous.
- Be completely fair in your presentation of the facts.
- If you are interested in a specific bill, refer to that bill by its number. You can find out this information by accessing the Senate's homepage at www.flsenate.gov or by calling the Division of Law Revision and Information at 1-850-488-4371. Note that Senate Bills are even numbered and House Bills are odd numbered.
- Always provide your address (street or email) and your telephone number so that your Senator or a member of his or her staff can contact you for further data or discussion.
- If you are going to meet personally with your Senator, prepare carefully for the meeting and be on time. If he or she asks you for more information than you have brought with you, be prompt in responding to the request.

You may build an effective relationship with your Senator on a series of issues and make considerable contributions to the process of creating public policy. Your Senator will be grateful for your participation.

Committee Testimony

You may want to keep track of your bills as they proceed through the legislative process. To find out which committees your bills have been assigned to, access the Florida Senate's homepage (www.flsenate.gov), contact your Senator's office, or call the Division of Law Revision and Information (1-850-488-4371).

You may have an opportunity to appear before a committee that is hearing the bill by contacting the committee as soon as the bill has been referred to the committee. The committee chair controls his or her committee's agenda and schedules the bills.



If your bill is scheduled for a public hearing, keep these guidelines in mind:

- When signing up to testify on a bill, the committee may require you to present written testimony for distribution to committee members and professional staff. Written testimony should be submitted to the appropriate office at least 24 hours prior to the scheduled committee hearing. At the meeting, fill out an appearance record form.
- Generally, each committee chair follows the order of the bills listed on the agenda.



- Prepare your oral testimony in advance and be brief unless asked to elaborate.
- Be specific and to-the-point regarding the bill you are testifying on.
- Be prepared to answer questions from committee members on your testimony or on the position you have taken on each bill. If you do not know the answer to a question, just say so.

Presidents of the Senate



1824 Capitol



1839 Capitol



1845 Capitol

SESSION PRESIDENT

Statehood

1845	James A. Berthelot
1846	Dennitt H. Mays
1847	Daniel G. McLean
1848-1849	Erasmus D. Tracy
1850-1853	Robert J. Floyd
1854-1855	Hamlin V. Snell
1856	Philip Dell
1858-1859	John Finlayson
1860-1861	Thomas Jefferson Eppes
1862-1863	Enoch J. Vann
1864	Abraham K. Allison
<p>From 1865 through 1887, the Lt. Governor served as President.</p>	
1865-1868	William W. J. Kelly
1868-1870	William H. Gleason
1870	Edmund C. Weeks
1871-1873	Samuel T. Day
1873-1874	Marcellus L. Stearns
1874-1877	A.L. McCaskill* (President Pro Tempore)
1877-1879	Noble A. Hull

* Presided over the Senate in the absence of Lt. Governor Stearns who became Governor on March 18, 1874, upon the death of Governor O.B. Hart



1891 Capitol



1910 Capitol



1924 Capitol

SESSION PRESIDENT

1881-1885	L.W. Bethel
1885-1887	Milton Mabry
1889**	Patrick Houstoun
1889	Joseph B. Wall
1891	Jefferson B. Browne
1893	William H. Reynolds
1895	Frederick T. Myers
1897	Charles J. Perrenot
1899	Frank Adams
1901	Thomas Palmer
1903	Frank Adams
1905	Park M. Trammell
1907	W. Hunt Harris
1909	Frederick M. Hudson
1911-1912	Frederick P. Cone
1913	Herbert J. Drane
1915	Charles E. Davis
1917-1918	John B. Johnson
1919	James E. Calkins
1921	William A. MacWilliams
1923	Theo. T. Turnbull
1925	John S. Taylor
1927	Samuel W. Anderson

** Extraordinary Session



1936 Capitol



1950 Capitol



1978 Capitol

SESSION PRESIDENT

1929	Jesse J. Parrish
1931	Patrick C. Whitaker
1933	Truman G. Futch
1935	William C. Hodges
1937	D. Stuart Gillis
1939	J. Turner Butler
1941	John R. Beacham
1943	Philip D. Beall
1945	Walter W. Rose
1947-1948	Scott Dilworth Clarke
1949	Newman C. Brackin
1951	Wallace E. Sturgis
1953	Charley E. Johns
1955-1956	W. Turner Davis
1957	William A. Shands
1959	Dewey M. Johnson
1961-1962	W. Randolph Hodges
1962-1963	F. Wilson Carraway
1965	James E. Connor
1967	Verle A. Pope
1968-1970	John E. Mathews, Jr.
1970-1972	Jerry Thomas
1972-1974	Mallory E. Horne
1974	Louis de la Parte***



1989 Capitol



2012 Historic Capitol



2012 Capitol

SESSION PRESIDENT

1974-1976	Dempsey J. Barron
1976-1978	Lew Brantley
1978-1980	Philip D. Lewis
1980-1982	W.D. Childers
1982-1984	N. Curtis Peterson, Jr.
1984-1986	Harry A. Johnston II
1986-1988	John W. Vogt
1988-1990	Bob Crawford
1990-1992	Gwen Margolis
1992-1993	Ander Crenshaw
1993-1994	Pat Thomas
1994-1996	James A. Scott
1996-1998	Toni Jennings
1998-2000	Toni Jennings
2000-2002	John M. McKay
2002-2004	James E. "Jim" King, Jr.
2004-2006	Tom Lee
2006-2008	Ken Pruitt
2008-2010	Jeff Atwater
2010-2012	Mike Haridopolos
2012-2014	Don Gaetz

*** As President Pro Tempore, served as Acting President from July 1, 1974 when President Horne resigned until November 6, 1974

Capitol photos from 1824-1989 courtesy of the Florida State Archives

Senate Page Program

Be a part of history! The Senate Page Program gives Florida students the rare opportunity to observe and participate in the legislative process.

During regular sessions of the Legislature, participating students come to Tallahassee for one week to work in the Senate Chamber, distribute materials, and deliver messages to Senators and professional staff. Each Senator may sponsor up to two pages (ages 15-18). Senators may also submit applications for alternate pages, who serve on an as-needed basis.



Sponsoring Senators give an application to the students they wish to sponsor. Senators submit completed applications by January of each year. The Office of the Senate President schedules each page for one week of service during the upcoming session. Professional dress is required.

Pages receive a minimum-wage stipend for participating in the program. Students are expected to provide their own transportation, housing, and meals while in Tallahassee.

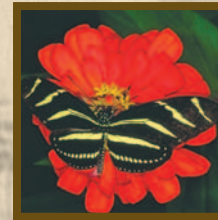
During each week of session, pages discuss the legislative process and participate in a "mock session." Students act as Senators, debating and voting on bills. Other educational opportunities and Capitol tours are planned during session.



Official State Designations

This is just a sample of the numerous official designations for our state. Other designations range from the state motto and state anthem, to the state pie and state horse. A longer list may be found in the Capitol Rotunda between the legislative chambers. A complete listing of the state designations can be found in Chapter 15, Florida Statutes.

Butterfly:
Zebra Longwing



Bird:
Mockingbird



Shell:
Horse conch



Wildflower:
Coreopsis



Animal:
Florida panther



Beverage:
Citrus sinensis
(orange juice)



Saltwater mammal:
Porpoise



Marine mammal:
Manatee



Reptile:
American alligator



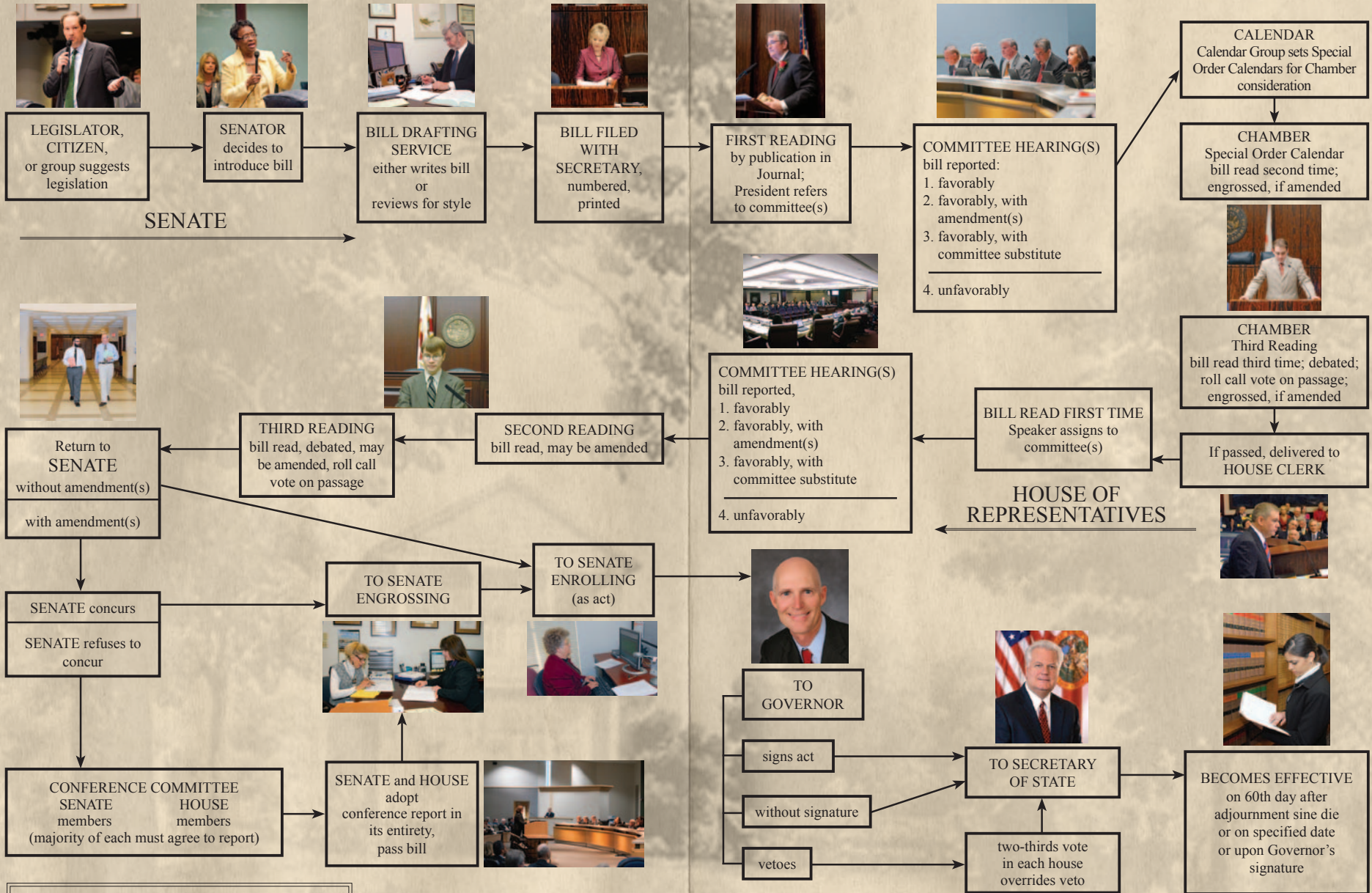
Tree:
Sabal Palmetto palm



Photos courtesy of the Florida State Archives

The Florida Senate

HOW AN IDEA BECOMES A LAW



A simplified chart showing the route many bills take through the Florida Legislature. Bills may originate in either house. This bill originated in the Senate.

Prepared by the Office of the Secretary of the Senate

Three Branches of Government



Florida's Constitution, in the traditional American pattern of "separation of powers," divides state government into three separate and independent branches. This division of powers creates a system of "checks and balances" ensuring that all three branches properly perform their constitutional duties in the administration of state affairs. Tallahassee is the seat of Florida's state government.

The Executive Branch



The Governor and the Cabinet: Attorney General Pam Bondi, Commissioner of Agriculture Adam Putnam, Governor Rick Scott, and Chief Financial Officer Jeff Atwater

The Florida Constitution vests the supreme executive power of the state in the Governor and provides that he or she shall ensure that the laws are faithfully executed. It provides for a Lieutenant Governor to be elected in a joint candidacy with the Governor. The Lieutenant Governor works with the Governor and performs such duties pertaining to the office of the Governor as assigned by the Governor, or as otherwise provided by law. The Constitution also provides that the Governor shall be assisted by an elected Cabinet consisting of an Attorney General, Chief Financial Officer, and a Commissioner of Agriculture.

The Governor, Lieutenant Governor, and members of the Cabinet are elected to four-year terms. They take office on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in January following their election in November of non-presidential election years. The Governor may succeed himself or herself in office unless he or she has served more than six years in two consecutive terms. Cabinet members may not seek reelection if, by the end of their current term, they will have served in that office for eight consecutive years.

The Judicial Branch



The Florida Supreme Court

The Judicial Branch interprets the law and applies the Constitution. Florida's court system consists of a series of circuit and county courts, district courts of appeal, and the state Supreme Court.

County courts preside over criminal trials of misdemeanors and some civil cases. They also have the power to issue warrants of arrest. There is one county court located in each of Florida's 67 counties. The number of judges in each county court varies with the population and caseload of the county. County judges are elected to four-year terms.

Circuit courts are located in each of Florida's 20 judicial circuits. Some circuits contain only one county, but most are multi-county. The circuit courts are at the top of the trial system, and they also hear limited appeals from county courts. Circuit judges are elected by the voters of the circuits to serve six-year terms.

The District Courts of Appeal are intermediate appellate courts that receive most of the appeals from trial courts. There are five judicial districts in Florida, with courts located in Tallahassee, Lakeland, Daytona Beach, West Palm Beach, and Miami. Appointed by the Governor to serve in each district court, these judges must be reconfirmed by the voters every six years.

The Supreme Court is at the top of Florida's court system and is the final state court of appeal. The Supreme Court determines the constitutionality of statutes, has the authority to issue advisory opinions to the Governor, and has administrative responsibilities over all lower courts. There are seven Supreme Court justices, each appointed by the Governor and retained by a popular vote every six years. Current justices include: Justice Barbara J. Pariente, Chief Justice Ricky Polston, Justice R. Fred Lewis, Justice Jorge Labarga, Justice Peggy A. Quince, Justice Charles T. Canady, and Justice James E.C. Perry.

The Legislative Branch

The Legislative Branch has exclusive lawmaking power and determines the general policies by which the problems of society are to be met. It may delegate limited rulemaking power to some executive agencies.

Composition and Organization.

The Constitution of the State of Florida requires that members of the Legislature be elected at the general election in November of even-numbered years. Florida's Legislature is composed of two houses, the Senate and the House of Representatives. Each house is the sole judge of the qualifications and elections of its members and has the power to choose its own officers and establish its own rules of procedure. All legislative sessions are open to the public, except when appointments or suspensions of public officials are considered in executive session. Either house of the Legislature may initiate legislation on any subject.



The State Constitution provides that the Legislature shall be apportioned into 30 to 40 senatorial districts, and 80 to 120 representative districts. The 1972 Legislature established 40 Senate districts and 120 House districts. Senators serve four-year terms and representatives serve two-year terms. While a legislator may be elected for more than one term, he or she may not seek reelection if at the end of his or her current term he or she has served for eight consecutive years.



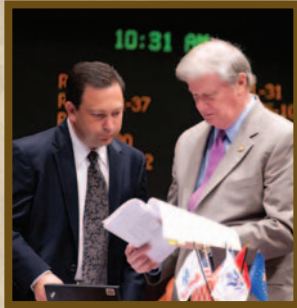
Legislative Sessions. Two weeks after each general election, the Legislature convenes for the exclusive purpose of organization and election of officers. No legislation is considered during the organization session.



Regular sessions of the Legislature begin on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in March in odd-numbered years and continue for 60 consecutive days, which may be extended by a three-fifths vote of each house. The Legislature may change its convening date in even-numbered years, but generally the date remains the same as in odd-numbered years, except once every 10 years when the Constitution requires the Legislature to reapportion the state's voting districts. Special sessions may be called by the Governor, or may be convened by joint proclamation of the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives. Special sessions may not exceed 20 days, unless extended by a three-fifths vote of each house. Each "call" for a special session outlines the business to be considered. The Senate may resolve itself into executive session to consider appointment to or removal from public office, even when the House of Representatives is not meeting.

Rules. During the organization session, each house adopts its rules of procedure to be followed for the next two years. The rules provide for orderly proceedings and determine how each house will conduct its business.

Committees. A committee functions to study, research, and plan solutions to issues facing Floridians. The Senate and House rules provide for standing committees, special or select committees, and subcommittees. The presiding officers name the chairs and members of all committees.



Bills are assigned to one or more committees for study. Committees may hold public hearings where committee members hear sponsoring legislators and others who are interested in the bill. The committee may vote to recommend the bill favorably; favorably with a committee substitute; unfavorably; or favorably with amendments to be considered when the bill is debated on the floor by the respective house.

When the Senate and House are unable to agree on the final content of a bill, it goes to a conference committee. This committee, composed of members of both houses, tries to resolve the differences between the Senate and House versions of a bill.



Other committees commonly used are joint committees, which are composed of members from each house, and select committees, which are usually appointed to make recommendations on special or unique problems.

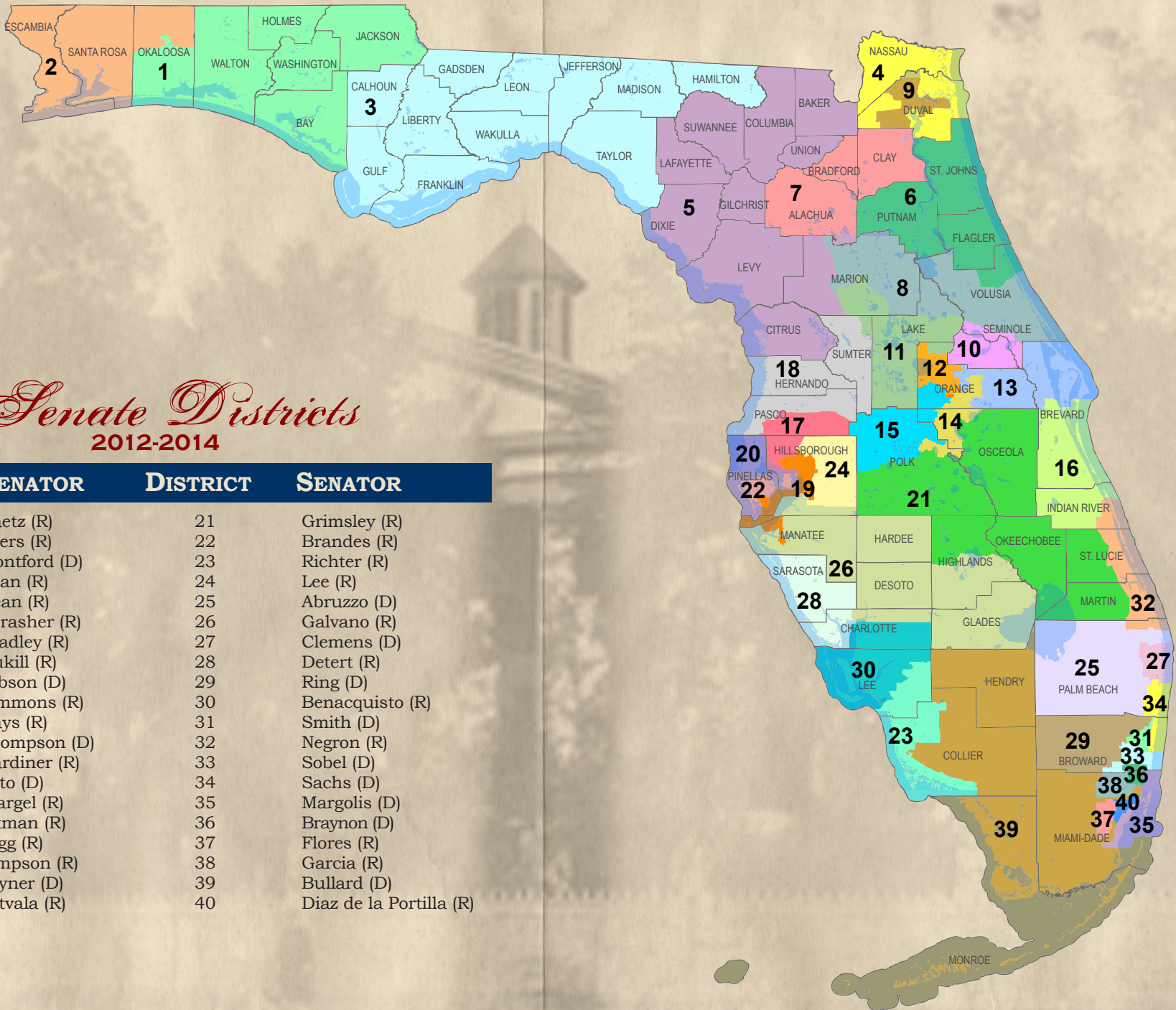
Lobbying. A lobbyist is someone who tries to influence decisions made by government. Unless exempted by law or rule, any person who seeks to affect legislation must register with the Division of Legislative Information Services before he or she can begin lobbying. Each lobbyist must also state any direct business association or partnership with any current member of the Legislature. Lobbyist firms must make periodic reports on compensation.

Journals and Calendars. The Secretary of the Senate and the Clerk of the House each publish daily journals and calendars during the legislative session. Each journal details the proceedings on the floor, committee reports, and related actions of the previous day. Calendars serve as official notification of legislative activities, such as sessions, committee meetings, bills to be considered, schedules, deadlines, and other significant information.



Forms of Legislation. Legislative proposals may be in the form of bills, resolutions, concurrent resolutions, joint resolutions, or memorials. A bill is a proposed law, and it may be either a general bill or a local bill. A general bill would have a general impact within the state; a local bill would affect only a particular county, city, or town named in the bill. A majority vote is required to pass a bill, unless otherwise provided in the Constitution. Companion bills are often used as a timesaving device. These are identical bills introduced in both houses, which allow simultaneous committee study in each body. The appropriations bill is one of the most important bills considered by the Legislature. This bill is the state's budget and it specifies the amount of money available to various state agencies during the next year. The appropriations bill follows the same course as other general bills, but because it is difficult to get both houses to agree on all items in the bill, a conference committee is usually appointed to resolve the differences.





Senate Districts 2012-2014

DISTRICT	SENATOR	DISTRICT	SENATOR
1	Gaetz (R)	21	Grimsley (R)
2	Evers (R)	22	Brandes (R)
3	Montford (D)	23	Richter (R)
4	Bean (R)	24	Lee (R)
5	Dean (R)	25	Abruzzo (D)
6	Thrasher (R)	26	Galvano (R)
7	Bradley (R)	27	Clemens (D)
8	Hukill (R)	28	Detert (R)
9	Gibson (D)	29	Ring (D)
10	Simmons (R)	30	Benacquisto (R)
11	Hays (R)	31	Smith (D)
12	Thompson (D)	32	Negron (R)
13	Gardiner (R)	33	Sobel (D)
14	Soto (D)	34	Sachs (D)
15	Stargel (R)	35	Margolis (D)
16	Altman (R)	36	Braynon (D)
17	Legg (R)	37	Flores (R)
18	Simpson (R)	38	Garcia (R)
19	Joyner (D)	39	Bullard (D)
20	Latvala (R)	40	Diaz de la Portilla (R)

Glossary of Legislative Terms

Act – A bill passed by the legislature.

Adjourn – To end a committee meeting or a day's legislative sitting.

Adopt – To vote to accept.

Amendment – A proposal to change the original terms of a bill.

Bicameral – Consisting of two houses. All states have bicameral legislatures except Nebraska, which has only one house (unicameral).

Bill – A draft of a proposed law.

Budget – A bill that states how much money will be spent on government programs and services.

Calendar – A publication containing legislative activities or a list of bills awaiting action.

Chair – A legislator who presides over a committee meeting or a session.

Chamber – Also known as the “floor,” it is the room in which the Senate or the House of Representatives meets.

Clerk of the House of Representatives – The person appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives to assist the members of the House in the detailed processes of enacting laws and to record that history.

Committee – A group of Senators or Representatives appointed by the presiding officer to consider important issues and to report its recommendations for action by the body that originated it.

Constitution – The written instrument, embodying the fundamental principles of the state, that establishes power and duties of the government and guarantees certain rights to the people.

Constituent – A citizen who resides in the district of a legislator.

Convene – To meet in formal legislative session.

Debate – To argue the merits of a bill, for and against.

Decorum – Appropriate behavior and conduct.

District – That area of the state represented by a legislator, determined on the basis of population.

Gallery – The seating area for visitors located above each chamber (on the fifth floor of the Capitol).

Governor – The chief executive of the State.

Journal – The official record of the proceedings of the Senate or the House of Representatives.

Law – The final product of the legislative process. It is the end result of the introduction of a bill, its passage by both houses, its approval by the

Governor (or the overriding of his veto by the legislature), and its recording by the Secretary of State.

Majority party – The political party having more than half of the seats in a house.

Minority party – The political party having fewer than a majority of seats in a house.

Motion – A proposal, usually oral, made to the presiding officer and relating to procedure or action before a legislative body.

Oath of Office – An oath or vow taken by a public official prior to taking up his or her official duties.

Order of Business – The defined routine of procedure in the legislative body each day. It can be deviated from only by waiver of the rules.

Passage – Favorable action on a measure before the legislature.

President of the Senate – The presiding officer of the Senate. He or she is designated as President by the majority party in caucus and then elected by the full membership of the Senate for a term of two years.

President Pro Tempore of the Senate – Literally, president “for a time.” Elected by the Senate, he or she performs specified duties as prescribed by the Senate Rules or the Senate President.

Quorum – The number of members required for the conduct of business.

Repeal – The removal of a provision from the law.

Roll call – To determine a vote on a question by the taking of names in favor of and opposed to.

Rules – Provisions for the procedure, organization, officers, and committees of each house of the legislature.

Secretary of the Senate – The person elected by the Senate to assist Senate officers, members, and professional staff in the detailed processes of enacting laws and to record that history.

Sergeant at Arms – The person in each house who is responsible for the security of the legislative house and the maintenance of that house's property.

Session – The period during which the legislature meets.

Sine die – Refers to final adjournment of a legislative session. The term is sometimes used to denote the ceremony involving the dropping of white handkerchiefs, which symbolizes the end of a regular session.

Speaker of the House of Representatives – The presiding officer of the House of Representatives. He or she is designated as Speaker by the majority party in caucus and then elected by the full membership of the House for a term of two years.

Veto – Return by the Governor to the legislature of a bill without his or her signature; the veto message from the Governor usually explains why he or she thinks the bill should not become a law.

Vote – A decision on a question, either affirmative or negative.

Florida in the 113th Congress



Sidewalk view of the Florida House

Washington, D.C. is the seat of the nation's government. The names and addresses of Florida's representatives in the legislative branch may be found on a separate page in many Florida telephone directories.

Further information on each member of Congress may be found at the official websites for The United States Senate (www.senate.gov) and The United States House of Representatives (www.house.gov).

United States Senate



View of the Capitol

The Senate is composed of 100 members, two from each state, elected by the people pursuant to the 17th Amendment to the United States Constitution. A Senator must be at least 30 years of age, have been a citizen of the United States for nine years, and, when elected, be a resident of the state from which the Senator is chosen. The term of office is six years, and one-third of the total membership of the Senate is elected every second year. The terms of both Senators from a particular state are so arranged that they do not terminate at the same time. Of the two Senators from a state serving at the same time, the one who was elected first (or if both were elected at the same time, the one elected for a full term) is referred to as the "senior" Senator from that state. The other is referred to as the "junior" Senator. Senators Bill Nelson and Marco Rubio represent Florida in Washington.



United States House of Representatives



The House of Representatives is composed of 435 members elected every two years from among the 50 states, apportioned according to their total populations. Today there is one representative for approximately every 709,760 residents, a much larger figure than the 30,000 residents the Constitution of the United States originally required for a Congressional district.

A Representative must be at least 25 years of age, have been a citizen of the United States for seven years, and, when elected, be a resident of the state in which the Representative is chosen.

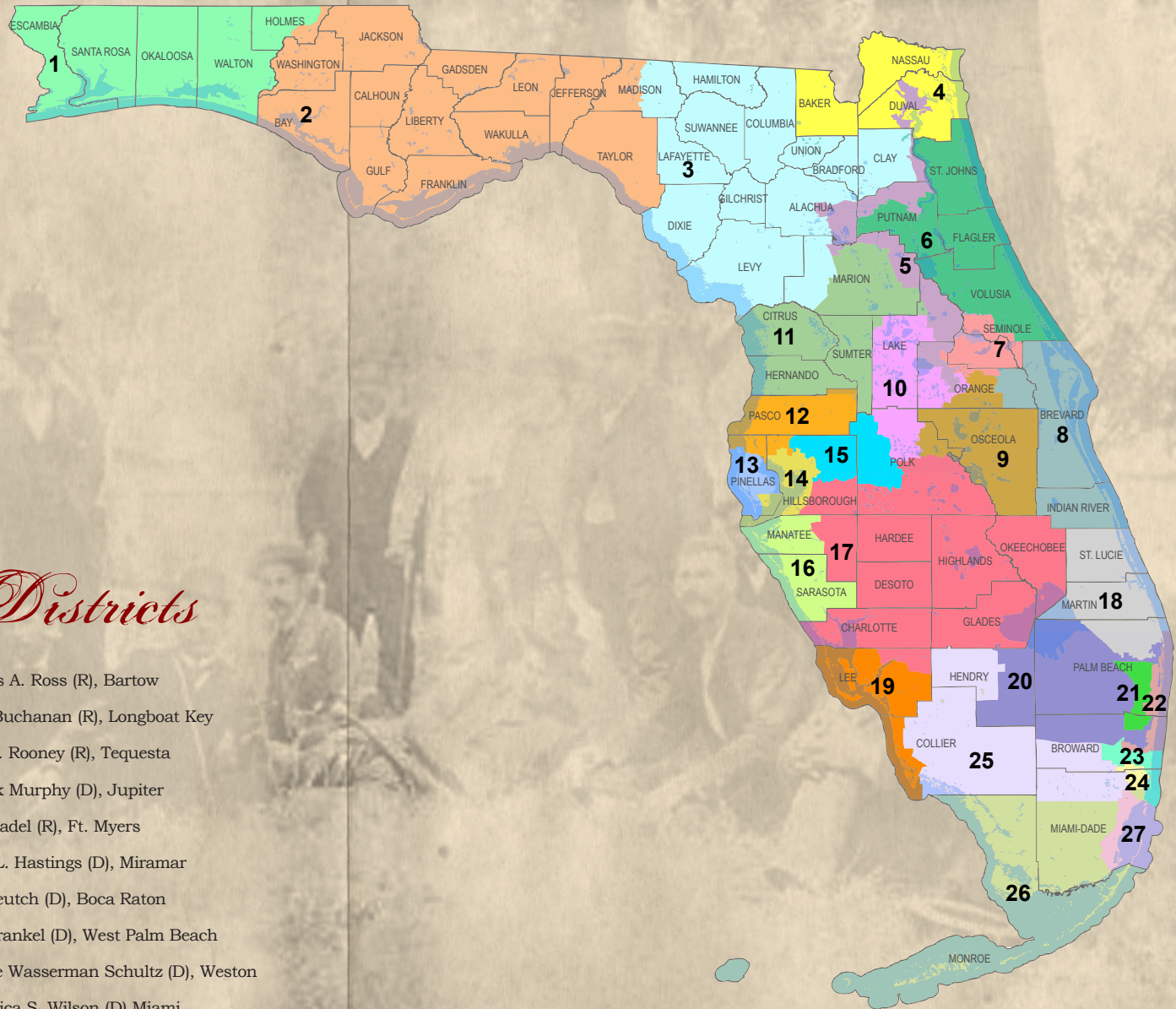
In addition to the Representatives from each of the states, there is a Resident Commissioner from the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico and Delegates from the District of Columbia, American Samoa, Guam, and the Virgin Islands. The Resident Commissioner and the Delegates have most of the prerogatives of Representatives, with the important exception of the right to vote on matters before the House.

Under the provisions of Section 2 of the 20th Amendment to the United States Constitution, Congress must assemble at least once every year, at noon on the third day of January, unless by law it appoints a different day. A Congress lasts for two years, commencing in January of the year following the biennial election of members, and is divided into two sessions.

Unlike some other parliamentary bodies, both the Senate and the House of Representatives have equal legislative functions and powers (except that only the House of Representatives may initiate revenue bills), and the designation of one as the "upper" House and the other as the "lower" House is not appropriate.

The United States Constitution authorizes each House to determine the rules of its proceedings. Pursuant to that authority, the House of Representatives adopts its rules on the opening day of each Congress. The Senate, which considers itself a continuing body, operates under standing rules that it amends from time to time.

The chief function of Congress is the making of laws. In addition, the Senate has the function of advising and consenting to treaties and to certain nominations by the President. In the matter of impeachments, the House of Representatives presents the charges – a function similar to that of a grand jury – and the Senate sits as a court to try the impeachment. Following a presidential election, both houses meet in joint session on the sixth day of January, unless by law they appoint a different day, to count the electoral votes.



Congressional Districts 2012-2014

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Jeff Miller (R), Chumuckla | 15. Dennis A. Ross (R), Bartow |
| 2. Steve Southerland II (R), Panama City | 16. Vern Buchanan (R), Longboat Key |
| 3. Ted Yoho (R), Gainesville | 17. Tom J. Rooney (R), Tequesta |
| 4. Ander Crenshaw (R), Jacksonville | 18. Patrick Murphy (D), Jupiter |
| 5. Corrine Brown (D), Jacksonville | 19. Trey Radel (R), Ft. Myers |
| 6. Ron DeSantis (R), Ponte Vedra Beach | 20. Alcee L. Hastings (D), Miramar |
| 7. John L. Mica (R), Winter Park | 21. Ted Deutch (D), Boca Raton |
| 8. Bill Posey (R), Rockledge | 22. Lois Frankel (D), West Palm Beach |
| 9. Alan Grayson (D), Orlando | 23. Debbie Wasserman Schultz (D), Weston |
| 10. Daniel Webster (R) Winter Garden | 24. Frederica S. Wilson (D) Miami |
| 11. Richard Nugent (R), Brooksville | 25. Mario Diaz-Balart (R), Miami |
| 12. Gus M. Bilirakis (R), Palm Harbor | 26. Joe Garcia (D), Miami |
| 13. C.W. "Bill" Young (R), Indian Shores | 27. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R), Miami |
| 14. Kathy Castor (D), Tampa | |

Did You Know.



- Florida has had six Constitutions since it became a state. The first Constitution was drafted in Saint Joseph, now known as Port St. Joe. Presently, Florida is governed by the Constitution of 1968, as subsequently amended.

- Florida's first Legislative Council, which was supposed to meet in Pensacola on June 10, 1822, did not meet until 44 days later due to hazardous and time-consuming travel.

- Tallahassee was named the state capital in 1824 by Florida's first territorial governor, William P. DuVal.

- The total land area of Florida is 54,252 square miles. The total water area is 4,308 square miles.

- In 1824, three log cabins were erected in Tallahassee to accommodate the Legislative Council. This was Florida's first Capitol.

- In the 1890s, several efforts were made to move the state capital from Tallahassee. Choices included Jacksonville, Ocala, and St. Augustine.

- Florida's fourth and present Capitol was officially opened on March 31, 1978, by Governor Reubin Askew.



- Construction of Florida's present Capitol required 3,700 tons of structural steel and 2,800 tons of reinforcing steel. The Capitol contains 25,000 cubic feet of concrete, the equivalent of 16 football fields, each one foot thick.



- Florida has been home to such famed writers as Ernest Hemingway, Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings, and Tennessee Williams.
- In 1990, Senator Gwen Margolis of Miami became the first woman in Florida's history to be elected to serve as President of the Senate.
- Toni Jennings was the first Senator in Florida to be elected President of the Senate for two consecutive terms, presiding from 1996-2000. In 2003, she was chosen by Governor Jeb Bush to become Florida's first female Lieutenant Governor following the resignation of Frank Brogan.



- The first reusable spacecraft, the space shuttle Columbia, was launched from the Kennedy Space Center in Florida on its maiden voyage on April 12, 1981.
- The word "Tallahassee" is of Creek derivation and is frequently translated as "old town" or "old fields." The name may have been taken from the Seminole Indians who occupied the area.

- Juan Ponce de Leon came ashore on the northeast coast of Florida sometime between April 2 and April 8, 1513. He called the area *la Florida*, in honor of Pascua Florida (feast of the flowers), a popular celebration held in Spain around Easter.



- A prior Constitution in 1868 provided that the Seminole Tribe was entitled to a member in the Florida Senate and House.
- Saint Augustine is the oldest continuously inhabited European settlement in North America.

- Snow fell in Dade County on January 20, 1977.
- Dr. John Gorrie of Apalachicola patented the process of making ice artificially in 1851.
- The St. John's River is one of the few rivers that flows north instead of south, and at 273 miles in length, it is Florida's longest river.



- The Buckman Act of 1905 consolidated the state's institutions of higher learning into three: the University of Florida at Gainesville, the Florida State College for Women at Tallahassee, and the Florida Agricultural and Mechanical College for Negroes at Tallahassee.



- Founded in 1973 by Rhea Chiles as Florida's "embassy" in our nation's capital, Florida House is owned by the people of the State of Florida. Florida is the only state to have such a facility. It enjoys approximately 10,000 visitors a year. Florida House serves as "home base" for tourists as well as the business community (www.floridaembassy.com).

- Florida has more than 11,000 miles of rivers, streams, and waterways.
- In 1937, Amelia Earhart took off from Miami for an around-the-world flight and was never seen again.

- The first commercial airline service between two U.S. cities was established between St. Petersburg and Tampa in 1914.

- Seven student athletes from Florida universities have won the Heisman Trophy between 1966 and 2012.



- The unified government of Florida was established March 30, 1822, when President Monroe signed into law the act which provided for a Governor and a Legislative Council of 13 citizens. Florida was the 27th state to be admitted to the United States (March 3, 1845).

- DeFuniak Springs is home to one of the two naturally round lakes in the world.



- Ft. Lauderdale is known as the Venice of America because it has 185 miles of local waterways.

- In anticipation of statehood, 56 commissioners elected from Florida's 20 counties gathered at Saint Joseph (Port St. Joe) to draft a constitution. The convention lasted from December 3, 1838, until January 11, 1839.

- Florida's highest natural point is 345 feet, located near Lakewood in Walton County.



- "Stormsong," the 50-foot long pod of leaping dolphins in front of the Capitol, is made of stainless steel and recycled aluminum and weighs 8,000 pounds (four tons).

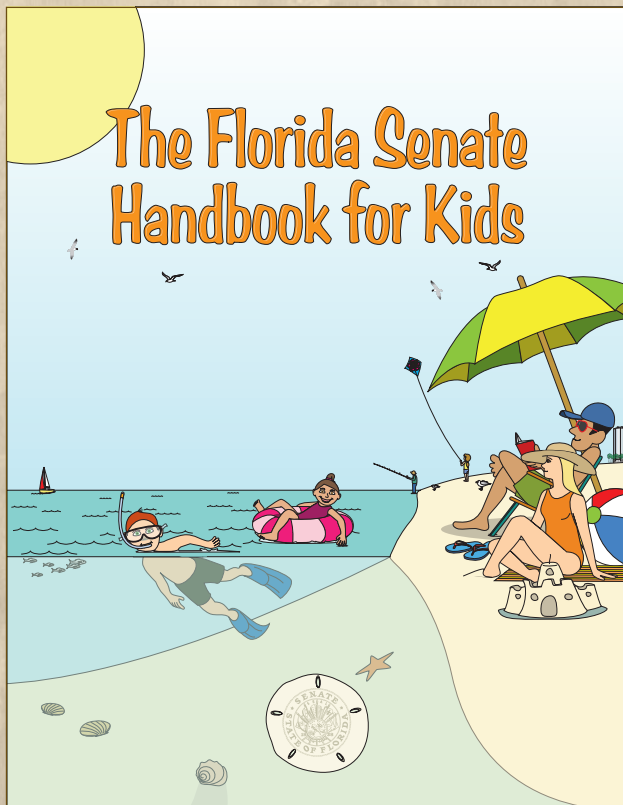
- The Florida quarter was released by the U.S. Mint as part of its 50 State Quarters Program in 2004.

Some items were taken from The Florida Handbook, 1997-1998 by Allen Morris, published by The Peninsular Publishing Company, Tallahassee, FL.

Hey Kids, visit us on the web!

We have games, puzzles, fun facts,
and more about our state.

www.flsenate.gov



This Internet site introduces younger Floridians to the Florida Senate. Designed to be educational, it appeals to children of all ages. This site is easily accessed (interface is not browser specific) and low-resolution graphics allow for ease of use. Senate Kids is always under construction. Keep checking for new features.



This Florida Senate Handbook is published by the Secretary of the Senate. It is distributed free of charge to Capitol visitors and other interested Floridians to enhance their knowledge and understanding of Florida's government, and particularly, the Florida Senate.

Debbie Brown

Secretary of the Senate

Visit the Florida Senate's homepage:

<http://www.flsenate.gov>



**DON GAETZ
PRESIDENT**

