



Happy Father's Day!

I hope you are having a relaxing Father's Day sharing cherished memories and making new ones. Father's Day is an opportunity to tell the father figures in our lives how much we truly love and appreciate them.

When asking my own father what he would like for father's day, his response is always, "spending time together is enough." I hope you can connect with your father, or the father figure in your life, on this special day.

Everglades Restoration Advances

As Chair of the Senate Appropriations Committee on Agriculture, Environment and General Government, I am proud that the Florida Legislature allocated more than \$367 million for Everglades Restoration in the 2019-2020 budget. With the help of Chairman Hutson, and the Senate Transportation and Economic Development Appropriations Committee, an additional \$40 million was included in the Florida Department of Transportation work program to raise the Tamiami Trail and restore water flow south to the Everglades.

Recently the US Department of Transportation announced that they would be matching Florida's investment by awarding an additional \$60 million to fully fund the project.

The Tamiami Trail project is a key component of the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan. Through this fully funded project, an additional 6.5 miles of elevated bridging will be installed. Elevating the Trail allows for an additional 75-80 billion gallons of water a day to flow south into the Everglades and Florida Bay.

From the Desk of Governor Ron DeSantis

This past week Governor Ron DeSantis delivered on his promise to find innovative solutions to the rising health care costs plaguing Floridians.

This week Governor DeSantis signed the following bills into law:

[HB 19: Prescription Drug Importation Programs](#), establishes two programs - the Canadian Prescription Drug and the International Prescription Drug Importation Program - to safely import federal Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved prescription drugs into the state for the benefit of consumers and public programs. The bill outlines the importation

process, safety standards, drug distribution conditions and penalties for violations of program requirements. Both programs also establish eligibility criteria for the types of prescription drugs which may be imported and the entities that may export or import prescription drugs. The bill requires both programs to seek federal authorization prior to importing prescription drugs. Governor DeSantis' administration is currently working with the White House and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Through this legislation, Floridians will be able to enjoy safe and more affordable prescription drugs.

[HB 1113: Patient Savings Act](#) enables health insurers to offer incentives to Floridians who shop for high-quality, lower-cost healthcare services. HB 1113 creates a framework for health insurers to voluntarily establish a shared savings incentive program for certain non-emergency healthcare services. This program not only encourages Floridians to compare pricing for routine services, but has the potential to provide saving to both patients and providers. Additionally, the bill directs the Department of Management Services to undertake several actions regarding the State Group Health Insurance Program, including authorizing the use of formulary management techniques to ensure access to the most clinically appropriate and effective prescription drugs at the lowest cost. This will provide a projected savings to the state of up to \$46 million annually.

The Governor also received the budget this week, also known as the [2019-2020 General Appropriations Act](#). The Governor has the authority to reject the budget, as well as line item veto authority which can be used to delete any specific budget item within the Appropriations Act. The Governor has 15 days from the day he receives the budget to take action. To express your support of local projects in the budget, please [contact Governor DeSantis's Office](#). Please [copy my office](#) on your correspondence related to the budget, so we can continue to advocate for projects of importance to District 17.

District Highlights

United States Army Commemorates 244th Birthday

This past week I had the honor of joining the Space Coast Chapter Association of the United States Army (AUSA) to commemorate the Army's 244th anniversary of its founding.

The United States Army was established on June 14, 1775, when the Second Continental Congress authorized the enlistment of ten companies of expert riflemen to protect the United Colonies in the American Revolutionary War. George Washington received his appointment as Commander-in-Chief of the Continental Army the next day, and formally took command on July 3, 1775.

As the oldest and largest branch of America's armed forces, the Army has defended and preserved the peace and security of our citizens in every major conflict since the founding of our country.

Today the Army is made up of nearly half a million highly dedicated soldiers, who serve at home and abroad, with a mission to "fight and win our nation's wars by providing ready, prompt, and sustained land dominance."

The [AUSA Space Coast Chapter](#) is a nonprofit advocacy group committed to building the best professional and representative association for the Army forces and its members families. They host professional development programs and provide financial support through ROTC scholarships.

'First Lady of Vero Beach' Alma Lee Loy

This week I had the pleasure of attending the Indian River Chamber of Commerce Legacy Luncheon to celebrate the Vero Beach Centennial. I want to thank the four panelists, Sam Block, Bobby Brackett, Sid Banack and Alma Lee Loy, for sharing their stories of growing up and shaping the beautiful town known as Vero Beach. We also took this opportunity to celebrate the 90th Birthday of a woman who we all have grown to know as the First Lady of Vero Beach, Alma Lee Loy. Alma Lee Loy has served as a dedicated public servant devoted to the Indian River County community for her entire life.



Alma Lee owned and operated Alma Lee's Children's Clothing Center for more than 40 years. As a passionate supporter of youth education, she has been an instrumental supporter of the Gifford Youth Orchestra, the McKee Botanical Garden and the Indian River State College Foundation.

In the first of her appointments by Florida Governors, Alma Lee was named by Governor Farris in 1964 to serve as an original member of the Florida Commission on the Status of Women, and then later named by Governor Burns to the Florida Association of Women's Safety Leaders. She also served on the original board of the Indian River Memorial Hospital, now known as the Indian River Medical Center, and later was appointed by Governor Crist to serve on the Indian River County Hospital District board.

Elected in 1968, she was the first woman to serve on the Indian River County Board of County Commissioners. Among her many affiliations Alma Lee has served as president of the Indian River County Chamber of Commerce, the Downtown Merchants Association, and the United Way of Indian River County.

Alma Lee has worked consistently to expand opportunities for local residents, and her efforts have been recognized in the naming of the Wabasso Beach County Park, the Alma Lee Loy Chamber of Commerce building, and the 17th Street Bridge that spans the Indian River Lagoon.

Alma Lee Loy is a great friend and mentor to myself and many others. We are lucky to have such a gem here on the Treasure Coast.

Space Coast League of Cities

I joined the [Space Coast League of Cities](#) this past week, where they recognized local officials with Home Rule Hero Awards for their work during the 2019 Legislative Session.

Adopted by the Florida Legislature in 1973, the Home Rule provision provides cities and counties the ability to enact ordinances and render services at the local level without approval from the state.

The following local leaders earned the Home Rule Heroes Award for their efforts to protect the Home Rule powers.

- Kathy Meehan, Mayor - City of Melbourne
- Carol McCormack, Mayor - Town of Palm Shores
- Stuart Glass, Deputy Mayor – Town of Indian River
- Mike Miller, Commissioner - City of Cocoa Beach
- Dominick Montanaro, Council Member – City of Satellite Beach
- Brenda Fettrow, City Manager – City of Rockledge
- Courtney Barker, City Manager – City of Satellite Beach
- Mark Ryan, City Manager – City of Indian Harbour Beach
- John Titkanich, City Manager - City of Cocoa

I greatly appreciate working with our local officials to better understand how legislation introduced at the state level may affect each of the 18 unique municipalities in District 17.

Follow me on Facebook and Twitter, and visit my [Senate website](#)



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