

FLORIDA SENATE

HANDBOOK

2022-2024







MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

KATHLEEN PASSIDOMO

President of the Senate

Welcome to the Florida Senate. We are so pleased you have taken time to experience a part of Florida's past, present, and future by walking the halls and chambers where citizen-legislators have gathered for generations.

The Florida Senate is comprised of independently elected women and men of differing walks of life, family backgrounds, and communities of faith. During the 2022-2024 Legislative Term, we welcomed a diverse group of 14 new Senators, including the first combat-wounded Green Beret to serve in the Senate, the youngest Senator in recent history, and the first African-American Senator to represent our State's Capital City in over 130 years. Each Senator comes to Tallahassee to represent over half a million Floridians. The microphones on our desks amplify not only our voices, but the 22 million Floridians we collectively represent. My colleagues and I share a commitment to the people of our state, the courage to boldly address the challenges of our day, and a passion for freedom and independence which has defined our nation, our state, and the institution of the Florida Senate throughout our history.

During the 2022-2024 Legislative Term, we have much to focus on in both the short and long term. My top priority is to improve options for safe, attainable housing for Floridians of every income level and each stage of life, with a focus on opportunities for our workers to live in the communities they serve. We are also working to expand access to Florida's Wildlife Corridor, connecting the iconic corridor to Florida's Greenways and Trails System and the SUN Trail Network, as well as recreational pathways to heritage small towns across Florida. I believe that fifty years from now our grandchildren will say that the greatest thing the Florida Legislature did in the 2020's was the expansion of the Wildlife Corridor and the preservation of millions of acres of farmland and ranch land for conservation. It will be our Central Park.

You play an important role in the legislative process, and we encourage you to stay involved by contacting your local Senator with suggestions, ideas, and feedback. Thank you again for visiting the Florida Senate. I look forward to seeing you around the Capitol.

Respectfully,
Kathleen Passidomo

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 Florida Senate today has 40 members, each elected from a single-member district and each representing approximately 560,000 Florida citizens.



Each Senator is elected for a four-year term. He or she may be elected for more than one term, but may not seek reelection if, at the end of the current term, the Senator would have served in that office 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, registered voters, residents of the district from which they are elected, and must have resided in Florida for two years.

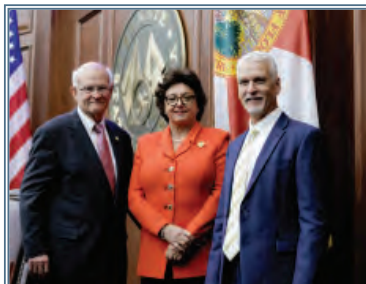
While members of the other branches of government work full time in public service, the Legislature maintains its identity as the citizen legislature. Senators work in a different business or profession when not carrying out their legislative duties. Their occupations include law, business, education,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



The Senate membership includes 24 men and 16 women. There are 28 Republicans and 12 Democrats. The average Senator is about 56 years old, is married, and has children. Thirty-one 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 2022-2024 term is Senator Kathleen Passidomo from Naples. The President Pro Tempore is Senator Dennis Baxley from Ocala.

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.



KATHLEEN PASSIDOMO
REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 28

OCCUPATION Attorney; Kelly, Passidomo & Kelly, LLP **BORN** in Jersey City, New Jersey **EDUCATION** Trinity University, Washington D.C., B.A., 1975, Stetson University College of Law, J.D., 1978 **SPOUSE** John M. Passidomo of Naples **CHILDREN** Catarina, Francesca, Gabriella **GRANDCHILDREN** William, Emilio **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2016; Majority (Republican) Leader, 2018-2020; House of Representatives: 2010-2016 **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Roman Catholic **RECREATION** Cooking, opera **EMAIL** passidomo.kathleen.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.



DENNIS BAXLEY
REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 13

OCCUPATION Funeral Director; Consultant for Hiers-Baxley Funeral Services **BORN** in Ocala **EDUCATION** College of Central Florida, A.A., 1972, Florida State University, B.A., Psychology and Sociology, 1974, Miami-Dade College, A.S., Funeral Services, 1975 **SPOUSE** Ginette Begín Baxley of Ocala **CHILDREN** Micah, Justin, Damon, Jeffrey, Renee **GRANDCHILDREN** Jacob, Joshua, Makayla, Kate Lynn, Martha, Katherine, Hazel, William **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2016; House of Representatives: 2000-2007, 2010-2016 **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Baptist **RECREATION** Fishing, reading **EMAIL** baxley.dennis.web@flsenate.gov

MEMBERS OF THE FLORIDA SENATE



BEN ALBRITTON

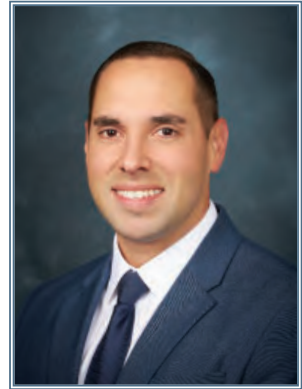
REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 27
MAJORITY (REPUBLICAN) LEADER

OCCUPATION Agribusiness Owner **BORN** in Lakeland **EDUCATION** Florida Southern College, B.S., Business/Citrus, 1990 **SPOUSE** Missy of Wauchula **CHILDREN** Rebecca, Joshua, Ryan **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2018; House of Representatives: 2010-2018 **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Christian **RECREATION** Spending time with family, reading **EMAIL** albritton.ben.web@flsenate.gov

BRYAN AVILA

REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 39

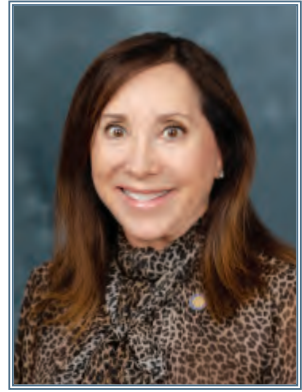
OCCUPATION Director of Business Development **BORN** in Hialeah **EDUCATION** Miami Dade College, A.A., 2004; University of Miami, B.A., 2006; Florida International University, M.S., 2010; Florida International University, Master of Public Administration, 2010 **SPOUSE** Cindy Gil of Bogota, Colombia **CHILDREN** Olivia Rose, Brandon **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2022; House of Representatives: 2014-2022, Speaker Pro Tempore: 2020-2022, Majority Duty Whip: 2016-2018 **MILITARY SERVICE** Florida Army National Guard, First Lieutenant, April 2016-present **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Roman Catholic **RECREATION** Spending time with family, playing sports, exercising, traveling, reading **EMAIL** avila.bryan.web@flsenate.gov



LORI BERMAN

DEMOCRAT, DISTRICT 26

OCCUPATION Attorney **BORN** in New York, New York; moved to Florida in 1958
EDUCATION George Washington University Law School, J.D., 1983; University of Miami, General Educational Development, LL.M.-Estate Planning, 2002; Tufts University, B.A., 1980, magna cum laude **SPOUSE** Jeffrey Ganeles of Plainview, New York **CHILDREN** Caryn Ganeles, Steven Ganeles **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate 2018; House of Representatives: 2010-2018 **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Jewish **RECREATION** Skiing, travel, tennis, reading **EMAIL** berman.lori.web@flsenate.gov



LAUREN BOOK

DEMOCRAT, DISTRICT 35

MINORITY (DEMOCRATIC) LEADER

OCCUPATION Founder/CEO Lauren's Kids (501(c)(3)) **BORN** in Hollywood **EDUCATION** University of Miami, M.S., Education, 2012; University of Miami, B.A., Elementary Education, Creative Writing, 2008 **SPOUSE** Blair Jacob Byrnes of West Bloomfield, Michigan **CHILDREN** Kennedy Grace Byrnes, Hudson Lee Byrnes **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2016; Minority (Democratic) Leader Pro Tempore: 2016-2018 **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Jewish **RECREATION** Spending time with family, reading, watching documentaries, cooking, enjoying the sun and the sand at South Florida's beautiful beaches **EMAIL** book.lauren.web@flsenate.gov



JIM BOYD

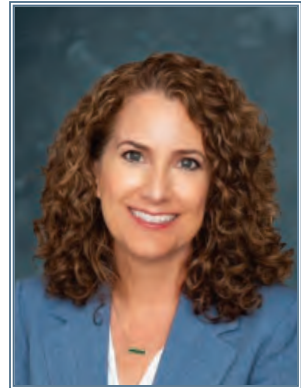
REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 20

OCCUPATION Insurance and Investments
BORN in Bradenton **EDUCATION** Florida State University, B.S., 1978 **SPOUSE** Sandra Woodard of Palmetto **CHILDREN** Ansley, Austin **GRANDCHILDREN** Houston
LEGISLATIVE SERVICE Elected to the Senate in 2020; House of Representatives: 2010-2018 **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Baptist
RECREATION Golf, quail hunting
EMAIL boyd.jim.web@flsenate.gov

JENNIFER BRADLEY

REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 6

OCCUPATION Attorney **BORN** in Tachikawa U.S. Air Base in Tokyo, Japan; moved to Florida in 1988 **EDUCATION** Florida State University, J.D., 1995, Law Review; University of Florida, B.A., Criminology, 1991 **SPOUSE** Rob Bradley of Green Cove Springs **CHILDREN** Connor, Stephanie, Caroline **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2020 **HISTORICAL** Spouse Rob Bradley, Florida Senate, 2012-2020 **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Christian
RECREATION Gator football, dogs, gardening
EMAIL bradley.jennifer.web@flsenate.gov



JASON BRODEUR

REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 10

OCCUPATION Healthcare Consultant

BORN in Daytona Beach **EDUCATION**

Dartmouth College, M.P.H. 2022; University of Florida, M.B.A., 2003; University of Florida, B.S., Food and Resource Economics, 1997

SPOUSE Christy Daly Brodeur of Tallahassee

LEGISLATIVE SERVICE Elected to the

Senate in 2020; House of Representatives: 2010-

2018 **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Christian

RECREATION Outdoorsman, travel, reading

EMAIL brodeur.jason.web@flsenate.gov



DOUG BROXSON

REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 1
APPROPRIATIONS CHAIR

OCCUPATION Insurance and Real

Estate **BORN** in Pensacola **EDUCATION**

Evangel University, B.S. **SPOUSE** Mary of

Shreveport, Louisiana **CHILDREN** Julie,

Jason, Judd, Jill **GRANDCHILDREN** Ten

grandchildren **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE**

Elected to the Senate in 2016; House of

Representatives: 2010-2016 **HISTORICAL**

John Broxson, brother, Florida Senate, 1966-

1972; Clark Broxson, uncle, Florida House

of Representatives, 1858-1861 **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Assembly

of God **RECREATION** Fishing, golfing, hiking **EMAIL** broxson.doug.

web@flsenate.gov



DANNY BURGESS

REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 23

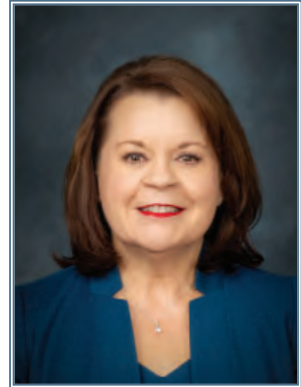
OCCUPATION Attorney, U.S. Army Reserve Officer **BORN** in Zephyrhills **EDUCATION** Barry University School of Law, J.D., 2011; The U.S. Army Judge Advocate General's Legal Center and School, 2013; University of South Florida, B.A., Political Science, 2008 **SPOUSE** Courtney Clem of Lithia **CHILDREN** Adeline, Danny III, Eleanor **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2020; House of Representatives: 2014-2019 **MILITARY**

SERVICE U.S. Army Reserve Major, 2021-present; U.S. Army Reserve Captain, 2012-2021 **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Roman Catholic **RECREATION** Community involvement, spending time with my wife and children, studying history and politics, traveling in an RV with my family **EMAIL** burgess.danny.web@flsenate.gov

COLLEEN BURTON

REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 12

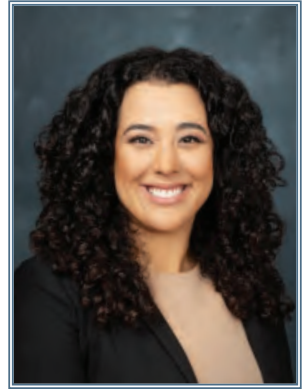
OCCUPATION Former Nonprofit Executive Director-Polk Vision, Imperial Symphony Orchestra **BORN** in Heidelberg, Germany, moved to Florida in 1987 **EDUCATION** California State University, Sacramento, B.S., Public Administration, 1980 **SPOUSE** Brad Burton of Berkeley Heights, NJ **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2022; House of Representatives: 2014-2022 **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Roman Catholic **RECREATION** Spending time with family, traveling, cooking **EMAIL** burton.colleen.web@flsenate.gov



ALEXIS CALATAYUD

REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 38

BORN in Miami **EDUCATION** Florida International University, B.S., 2017; Florida International University, Student Government Association, President
LEGISLATIVE SERVICE Elected to the Senate in 2022 **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Nondenominational Christian **EMAIL** calatayud.alexis.web@flsenate.gov



JAY COLLINS

REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 14

OCCUPATION Chief Programs Officer of a national 501(c)(3) with a focus on food needs in and out of disaster zones **BORN** in Scobey, Montana. Moved to Florida in 2019 **EDUCATION** Norwich University, 2012 with Honors; American Military University, B.S., Health Sciences, 2010, Summa Cum Laude: Special Forces Qualification Course, 2005: Leadership Award as chosen by peers and cadre
SPOUSE Layla Sangid Collins of Princeton, West Virginia **CHILDREN** Gabe, Colt **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2022 **MILITARY SERVICE** Retired 23-year Army Green Beret **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Christian **RECREATION** Family time, running, cycling, reading **EMAIL** collins.jay.web@flsenate.gov



TRACIE DAVIS

DEMOCRAT, DISTRICT 5

OCCUPATION El-Cart Staffing Solutions

BORN in Jacksonville **EDUCATION**

University of North Florida, Master of Education, Educational Leadership, 2001;

Edward Waters University, B.S., Elementary Education, 1994, Magna Cum Laude **SPOUSE**

Robert E. Davis of Jacksonville **CHILDREN** Antonisha, Robert Jr., Brittnie **LEGISLATIVE**

SERVICE Elected to the Senate in 2022; House of Representatives: 2016-2022 **RELIGIOUS**

AFFILIATION Non-denominational **RECREATION** Traveling, shopping, skating, movies **EMAIL** davis.tracie.web@flsenate.gov

NICK DICEGLIE

REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 18

OCCUPATION Small business owner **BORN**

in McAlester, Oklahoma, moved to Florida in

1996 **SPOUSE** Erica Rowell of Augusta, Maine

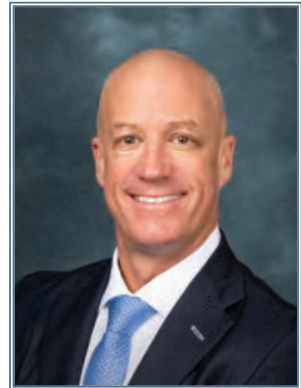
CHILDREN Livia, Carlo **LEGISLATIVE**

SERVICE Elected to the Senate in 2022; House of Representatives: 2018-2022 **RELIGIOUS**

AFFILIATION Catholic **RECREATION**

Golfing, boating, fishing, running, cooking Italian Sunday dinner

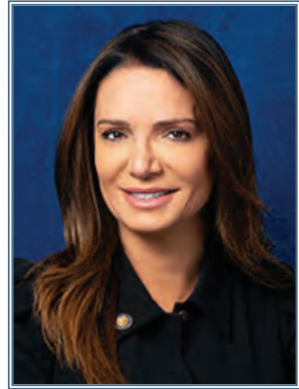
EMAIL diceglie.nick.web@flsenate.gov



ILEANA GARCIA

REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 36

OCCUPATION Broadcaster, Programmer, Radio and TV Personality, Influencer, Hispanic Engagement **BORN** in Miami **EDUCATION** Miami Senior High School, 1987 **CHILDREN** Victor Manuelle **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2020 **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Catholic
EMAIL garcia.ileana.web@flsenate.gov



ERIN GRALL

REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 29

OCCUPATION Attorney **BORN** in Vero Beach **EDUCATION** Marquette University, J.D., 2003; Wake Forest University, B.A., Communication, 1999, Cum Laude, Honor and Ethics Council, Co-Chair, Resident Student Association, President, Managing Editor of the Yearbook, Kappa Alpha Theta **SPOUSE** Michael Bielecki of Highland, Michigan **CHILDREN** One daughter, two sons **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2022; House of Representatives: 2016-2022 **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Catholic **RECREATION** Traveling, reading, watching our children discover their talents
EMAIL grall.erin.web@flsenate.gov



JOE GRUTERS
REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 22

OCCUPATION Certified Public Accountant
BORN in Tampa **EDUCATION** University of South Florida, M.B.A., 2003; Florida State University, B.S., 1999 **SPOUSE** Sydney Spence of Citrus Hills **CHILDREN** Spencer, Jack Ryan, Elle **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2018; House of Representatives: 2016-2018 **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Roman Catholic **RECREATION** College football, mountaineering, heli-skiing, concerts **EMAIL** gruters.joe.web@flsenate.gov

GAYLE HARRELL
REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 31

OCCUPATION Health Information Technology Consultant; CEO Health IT Strategies **BORN** in Nashville, Tennessee; moved to Florida in 1943 **EDUCATION** University of Florida, M.A., Latin American Studies/History, 1971; B.A., Spanish, 1964 **CHILDREN** Stephanie, Jennifer, Jamie, Melinda **GRANDCHILDREN** James, Jupiter, Justice, Nicole, Anna, Aaron, Tyler, Nicholas **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2018; House of Representatives: 2000-2008, 2010-2018 **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Presbyterian **RECREATION** Grandchildren, Gator football, travel, politics **EMAIL** harrell.gayle.web@flsenate.gov



ED HOOPER

REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 21

OCCUPATION Retired Firefighter; Consus Group, LLC, Partner **BORN** in Statesville, North Carolina; moved to Florida in 1972

EDUCATION St. Petersburg College **SPOUSE** Lee Hooper of Queens, New York

CHILDREN Brian, Ann

GRANDCHILDREN Amanda, Arin, John, Brianna, Brad

LEGISLATIVE SERVICE Elected to the Senate in 2018; House of Representatives: 2006-2014

RECREATION Golf **EMAIL** hooper.ed.web@flsenate.gov



TRAVIS HUTSON

REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 7

DEAN OF THE SENATE

OCCUPATION Vice President at Hutson Companies **BORN** in Jacksonville

EDUCATION Lafayette College, B.S., Economics and Business, 2007

SPOUSE Tanya Hutson of Easton, Pennsylvania

CHILDREN Taylor, Tyler, Turner, and Tucker

LEGISLATIVE SERVICE Elected to the Senate April 7, 2015; House of Representatives: 2012-2015

HISTORICAL Malcolm Lawrence Hinson, great-grandfather, Florida House of

Representatives, 1923 **RECREATION** Fishing, hunting, sports **EMAIL** hutson.travis.web@flsenate.gov



BLAISE INGOGLIA

REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 11

OCCUPATION Homebuilder **BORN** in Queens, New York **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2022; House of Representatives, 2014-2022 **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Christian **EMAIL** ingoglia.blaise.web@flsenate.gov

SHEVRIN D. “SHEV” JONES

DEMOCRAT, DISTRICT 34

OCCUPATION Executive Director, Florida Reading Corps **BORN** in Miami Gardens **EDUCATION** Florida Atlantic University, Ph.D., Educational Leadership, Higher Ed, 2022; Florida Atlantic University, Master of Education, Educational Leadership, Higher Ed, 2017; Florida A&M University, B.S., Biochemistry/Molecular Biology, 2006 **SPOUSE** Matthew Beatty of Miami Shores **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2020; House of Representatives: 2012-2020 **RECREATION** Running, reading, spending time with family **EMAIL** jones.shevrin.web@flsenate.gov



JONATHAN MARTIN

REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 33

OCCUPATION Attorney **BORN** in Cherokee, Iowa; Moved to Florida in 1986 **EDUCATION** Liberty University School of Law, J.D., 2007; Stetson University, B.S., 2004; Stetson University, B.A., 2004; Student Government Association, President; Stetson University, B.A., 2004 **SPOUSE** Amy D'Alessandro Martin of Fort Myers **CHILDREN** Ryker, Reagan, Rhett **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2022 **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Christian **RECREATION** Traveling, boating, hunting **EMAIL** martin.jonathan.web@flsenate.gov



DEBBIE MAYFIELD

REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 19

RULES CHAIR



OCCUPATION Retired Banking Executive **BORN** in Pensacola **EDUCATION** Florida Banking School; Santa Fe Community College **SPOUSE** Dr. Robert P. Scaringe of Wantagh, New York **CHILDREN** Evan Mayfield, Samuel Mayfield, Coleman Mayfield **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2016; House of Representatives: 2008-2016 **HISTORICAL** Stan Mayfield, late husband, Florida House of Representatives, 2000-2008 **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Roman Catholic **RECREATION** Sailing, boating, fishing **EMAIL** mayfield.debbie.web@flsenate.gov



ROSALIND OSGOOD

DEMOCRAT, DISTRICT 32

OCCUPATION Chief Executive Officer
BORN in Fort Lauderdale **EDUCATION**
New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary,
Master of Divinity, 2010; Nova Southeastern
University, DPA, 2002; Nova Southeastern
University, Master's Degree, 1997; Nova
Southeastern University, Bachelor's Degree,
1996; Florida A&M University, Attended
1983-1985 **CHILDREN** Shennette, Anthony,
Gabriel **GRANDCHILDREN** Kyla,

Gabriel **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate March 8, 2022
RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION Baptist **RECREATION** Reading, writing,
traveling, basketball **EMAIL** osgood.rosalind.web@flsenate.gov

KEITH PERRY

REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 9

OCCUPATION Founder, CEO Perry Roofing
Contractors **BORN** in Tallahassee **SPOUSE**
Amy Cekander of Champaign, Illinois
CHILDREN Alexis, Amanda **LEGISLATIVE**
SERVICE Elected to the Senate in 2016; House
of Representatives: 2010-2016 **RELIGIOUS**
AFFILIATION Christian **RECREATION**
Gator sports, classic cars, fencing **EMAIL**
perry.keith.web@flsenate.gov



JASON W. B. PIZZO

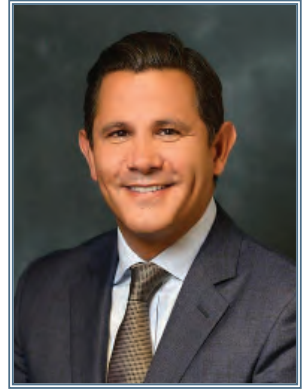
DEMOCRAT, DISTRICT 37

OCCUPATION Attorney **BORN** in Somerville, New Jersey; moved to Florida in 2007

EDUCATION University of Miami, J.D., 2010; Columbia University, M.S., 2007; New York University, B.A., 1999 **SPOUSE** April Pizzo of Phillipsburg, New Jersey **CHILDREN** Jack, Julian

LEGISLATIVE SERVICE Elected to the Senate in 2018 **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Roman Catholic **EMAIL**

pizzo.jason.web@flsenate.gov



TINA SCOTT POLSKY

DEMOCRAT, DISTRICT 30

OCCUPATION Mediator, Lawyer **BORN** in Merrick, New York; moved to Florida in 2005

EDUCATION Columbia University School of Law, J.D., Cum Laude, 1994; University of Pennsylvania, B.A., 1990, Cum Laude

SPOUSE Jeff Polsky of Paramus, New Jersey

CHILDREN Rebecca, Jesse **LEGISLATIVE**

SERVICE Elected to the Senate in 2020; House of Representatives: 2018-2020 **RELIGIOUS**

AFFILIATION Jewish **RECREATION**

Family, dogs, tennis **EMAIL** polsky.tina.web@flsenate.gov



BOBBY POWELL

DEMOCRAT, DISTRICT 24

OCCUPATION Planner and Project Manager, Urban Design Kilday Studios **BORN** in West Palm Beach **EDUCATION** Florida State University, M.S., Urban and Regional Planning, 2006; Florida A&M University, B.S., Journalism and Public Relations, 2003 **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2016; House of Representatives: 2012-2016 **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Methodist **RECREATION** Reading, exercising, spending time with family,

participating in activities across the district **EMAIL** powell.bobby.web@flsenate.gov

ANA MARIA RODRIGUEZ

REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 40

OCCUPATION Senior Vice President of Miami Realtors **BORN** in Miami **EDUCATION** Nova Southeastern University, H. Wayne Huizenga School of Business, M.S., Leadership, 2009, Dean's List; Florida International University, School of Journalism and Mass Communications, B.S., Communications, 1999 **SPOUSE** Dr. Clemente M. Canabal of Cartagena, Colombia **CHILDREN** JC, Nina, Eros, Hermes **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2020; House of Representatives: 2018-2020 **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Roman Catholic **RECREATION** Traveling, reading, sewing, spending time with family **EMAIL** rodriguez.anamaria.web@flsenate.gov



DARRYL ERVIN ROUSON

DEMOCRAT, DISTRICT 16

OCCUPATION Attorney, Rubenstein Law
BORN in New Orleans, Louisiana; moved to Florida in 1959 **EDUCATION** University of Florida, J.D., 1980; Xavier of New Orleans, B.A., 1977; **SPOUSE** Angela Holmes Rouson of St. Petersburg **CHILDREN** Antonio Winston, Sakeisha Winston, Danielle Rouson, Giselle Rouson, Evan Holmes, Daniel Rouson, Emanuel Rouson, Jared Rouson, Aaron Rouson
LEGISLATIVE SERVICE Elected to the Senate in 2016; House of Representatives: 2008-2016 **RECREATION** Reading, public speaking, power walking **EMAIL** rouson.darryl.web@flsenate.gov



COREY SIMON

REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 3

OCCUPATION Athlete Alumni Engagement and Development Director **BORN** in Pompano Beach **EDUCATION** Florida State University, B.S., Information Studies, 1999, Football Team Captain, 1998-1999 **SPOUSE** Natasha Givens Simon of Wildwood **CHILDREN** Corey "CJ" Jr. **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2022 **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Christian **RECREATION** Hunting, fishing, golfing, cooking **EMAIL** simon.corey.web@flsenate.gov



LINDA STEWART

DEMOCRAT, DISTRICT 17

OCCUPATION Former Insurance Agent
BORN in Johnstown, Pennsylvania; moved to Florida in 1949 **EDUCATION** Valencia College;
SPOUSE Jerry of Orlando **CHILDREN** Sam, Amanda, Courtney **GRANDCHILDREN** Leah, Owen, Brenner, Ben, Liza, Molly
LEGISLATIVE SERVICE Elected to the Senate in 2016; House of Representatives: 2012-2014 **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Methodist
RECREATION Mysteries and action movies, reading **EMAIL** stewart.linda.web@flsenate.gov

GERALDINE F. THOMPSON

DEMOCRAT, DISTRICT 15

OCCUPATION Retired College Administrator, Museum Founder **BORN** in New Orleans, Louisiana; moved to Florida in 1955
EDUCATION Florida State University, M.S., 1973; University of Miami, Bachelor of Education, 1970; Miami Dade College, A.A., 1968 **SPOUSE** Emerson R. Thompson, Jr. of Windermere **CHILDREN** Laurise, Emerson, Elizabeth **GRANDCHILDREN** Jasmyn, Imani, Kiara, Symone, Jacqueline, Julia **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2022, prior Senate 2012-2016; House of Representatives: 2006-2012, 2018-2022 **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Baptist **RECREATION** Published author, writer, and world traveler
EMAIL thompson.geraldine.web@flsenate.gov



VICTOR M. TORRES, JR.

DEMOCRAT, DISTRICT 25

OCCUPATION Retired NYC Transit Police Detective **BORN** in New York, New York; moved to Florida in 1993 **EDUCATION** John Jay College; Transit Police Academy **SPOUSE** Carmen L. Rodriguez-Torres of San Juan, Puerto Rico **CHILDREN** Yvonne Torres, Victor M. Torres III, Justin Torres, Amy Mercado, Melony Marcella **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2016; House of Representatives: 2012-2016 **MILITARY SERVICE** U.S. Marine Corps Veteran **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Episcopal **RECREATION** Softball **EMAIL** torres.victor.web@flsenate.gov



JAY TRUMBULL

REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 2

OCCUPATION Business owner **BORN** in Panama City **EDUCATION** Auburn University, 2011 **SPOUSE** Brittany Fishel of Panama City **CHILDREN** Merritt, Tripp, Emery **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2022; House of Representatives: 2014-2022 **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Christian **RECREATION** Fishing, hunting **EMAIL** trumbull.jay.web@flsenate.gov



TOM A. WRIGHT

REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 8

OCCUPATION Retired Businessman **BORN** in Rochester, Minnesota; moved to Florida in 2004 **EDUCATION** Stewartville Public Schools, 1970 **SPOUSE** Cindy L. Copeman of Wykoff, Minnesota **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2018 **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Lutheran **RECREATION** Collecting classic cars
EMAIL wright.tom.web@flsenate.gov



CLAY YARBOROUGH

REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 4

OCCUPATION Business development **BORN** in Mobile, Alabama. Moved to Florida in 1985 **EDUCATION** University of North Florida **SPOUSE** Jordan Ellison of Merrit Island **CHILDREN** Emerson, Grayson, Barrett, Archer **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2022; House of Representatives 2016-2022 **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Baptist **RECREATION** Spending time with family **EMAIL** yarborough.clay.web@flsenate.gov

SENATE COMMITTEES

- AGRICULTURE
- APPROPRIATIONS
- APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, ENVIRONMENT, AND GENERAL GOVERNMENT
- APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE ON CRIMINAL AND CIVIL JUSTICE
- APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
- APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
- APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION, TOURISM, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
- BANKING AND INSURANCE
- CHILDREN, FAMILIES, AND ELDER AFFAIRS
- COMMERCE AND TOURISM
- COMMUNITY AFFAIRS
- CRIMINAL JUSTICE
- EDUCATION POSTSECONDARY
- EDUCATION PRE-K -12
- ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES
- ETHICS AND ELECTIONS
- FINANCE AND TAX
- FISCAL POLICY
- GOVERNMENTAL OVERSIGHT AND ACCOUNTABILITY
- HEALTH POLICY
- JUDICIARY
- MILITARY AND VETERANS AFFAIRS, SPACE, AND DOMESTIC SECURITY
- REAPPORTIONMENT
- REGULATED INDUSTRIES
- RULES
- TRANSPORTATION
- SELECT COMMITTEE ON RESILIENCY
- JOINT ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES COMMITTEE
- JOINT COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC COUNSEL OVERSIGHT
- JOINT LEGISLATIVE AUDITING COMMITTEE
- JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE ON COLLECTIVE BARGAINING
- JOINT LEGISLATIVE BUDGET COMMISSION

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 nonmember constitutional officer compiles and 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, and other supporting functions. Special chamber computer programs, such as the electronic vote system, are custom 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 staff. The Secretary's Office maintains Senate information available on the Florida Senate website and on Online Sunshine, the website of the Florida Legislature.

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



TRACY C. CANTELLA SECRETARY OF THE SENATE

Secretary Cantella was unanimously elected as the Senate Secretary on November 22, 2022, following two decades of service as a member of the Senate Professional Staff. She began her career in the Secretary's Office and became well-versed in every facet of the office, before serving as professional staff to the Committee on Rules for more than 10 years. In this role, she was responsible for providing Senators with concise, accurate, and impartial interpretations of the Senate Rules during sittings. Senators also

rely on the Secretary for her thoughtful, fair, and decisive knowledge of floor processes. Secretary Cantella resides in Tallahassee with her husband, Chad, and their teenage sons, Jason and Wyatt.

SENATE SERGEANT AT ARMS

The incoming Senate President appoints a Sergeant at Arms during each organization session. The Sergeant is responsible for the security and maintenance of the Senate Chamber as well as all Senate offices and property.

The Sergeant at Arms, under the direction of the President, maintains order on the Senate floor and in the public gallery when the Senate sits to do business. The Sergeant at Arms or a member of his staff is also present at each Senate committee meeting and ensures proper order and decorum as required by the Senate Rules.

The Sergeant at Arms also coordinates with the Division of Capitol Police in Tallahassee and local law enforcement throughout the state to ensure Senators, Senate staff, and members of the public can fulfill their responsibilities in a safe and secure manner.

The recorded history of the Office of Sergeant at Arms dates back to the 1400s, though it likely existed well before that because preserving order was essential to the conduct of business in even the earliest legislative chambers. The first Florida Senate Sergeant at Arms was Alfred A. Fisher, who was appointed in 1839 when Florida was still a territory.

DAMIEN KELLY

SENATE SERGEANT AT ARMS

Sergeant Kelly moved to the United States from Ireland to play Division I soccer for Eastern Illinois. He was a three-time All-American and went on to play soccer professionally before joining the Memphis Police Department. After moving to Florida, Sergeant Kelly served as a special agent for the Florida Department of Law Enforcement on the protective detail for three Governors and their families. He is an expert in firearm certification and proficiency, surveillance, and protective operations, as well as gang investigation and interrogation. In 2018, Sergeant Kelly was appointed by Governor Scott as the first Director of Safe Schools. Appointed Senate Sergeant in 2020, Sergeant Kelly has worked to upgrade the security within Senate facilities and enhanced security protocols to ensure Senators, staff, and visitors are safe as we all participate in the legislative process. Sergeant Kelly resides in Tallahassee with his wife, Deborah, who is also a retired law enforcement officer. They have an adult daughter, Caitlin.



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 fifth used since the first session of the Senate was called to order in 1839. A major renovation occurred in this chamber in 2016. The chamber now has a timeless design which accommodates modern technology and reflects the design elements of the Florida Historic Capitol.

On the floor above the chamber is the public gallery where visitors may observe the Senate in session. From the gallery, attention is drawn to the rostrum where the President presides. Above the rostrum is the Senate Seal, which was originally adopted in 1972 and revised in most recently in 2016.

The President occupies the “chair,” pacing the flow of legislation, deciding who will speak, and ruling on parliamentary disputes. The President may also call on other Senators to preside from time to time. 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 to the right of the President’s rostrum. Each time a new portrait is added, the oldest one is taken down and moved to the Historic Capitol, keeping 100 years of past Presidents on display in the Senate 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.

Senators can access legislative information from their offices or the chamber by using a custom computer application designed to display amendments and bill information.



Voting boards on each side of the chamber record a Senator's green "yes" or red "no" vote. An amber light next to a Senator's name indicates that the 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 district staff. Only members of the Senate and designated 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.

The Senate rules require a Senator to address another Senator by title and district number or title and surname. A Senator must not address or refer to another Senator by his or her first name.



Just above the main entrance is the press gallery, where members of the media report Senate actions. The remainder of the gallery is open to the public. A portion of the gallery is also 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. 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.thefloridachannel.org.

THE FLORIDA SENATE 2022-2024



SIMON (R)
DISTRICT 3
TALLAHASSEE



BRODEUR (R)
DISTRICT 10
SANFORD



BOYD (R)
DISTRICT 20
BRADENTON



OSGOOD (D)
DISTRICT 32
FT. LAUDERDALE

SECRETARY
OF THE SENATE



TRACY C. CANTELLA



DAVIS (D)
DISTRICT 5
JACKSONVILLE



BURTON (R)
DISTRICT 12
LAKELAND



GRUTERS (R)
DISTRICT 22
SARASOTA



JONES (D)
DISTRICT 34
WEST PARK



WRIGHT (R)
DISTRICT 8
NEW SMYRNA BEACH



THOMPSON (D)
DISTRICT 15
OCFEE



POWELL (D)
DISTRICT 24
WEST PALM BEACH



PIZZO (D)
DISTRICT 37
SUNNY ISLES BEACH



BROXSON (R)
DISTRICT 1
PENSACOLA



STEWART (D)
DISTRICT 17
ORLANDO



BERMAN (D)
DISTRICT 26
LANTANA



AVILA (R)
DISTRICT 39
MIAMI SPRINGS



BAXLEY (R)
DISTRICT 13
EUSTIS
President Pro Tempore



BOOK (D)
DISTRICT 35
DAVIE
Minority Leader



POLSKY (D)
DISTRICT 30
BOCA RATON



RODRIGUEZ (R)
DISTRICT 40
MIAMI



THE SECRETARY'S DESK

PRESIDENT
OF THE SENATE



KATHLEEN PASSIDOMO



MAYFIELD (R)
DISTRICT 19
MELBOURNE
RILEY GHARI



ALBRITTON (R)
DISTRICT 27
WAUCHULA
MACEY IZACES



TORRES (D)
DISTRICT 25
ORLANDO



CALATAYUD (R)
DISTRICT 38
MIAMI



HUTSON (R)
DISTRICT 7
ST. AUGUSTINE



COLLINS (R)
DISTRICT 14
TAMPA



BURGESS (R)
DISTRICT 23
ZEPHYRHILLS



GARCIA (R)
DISTRICT 36
MIAMI



YARBROUGH (R)
DISTRICT 4
JACKSONVILLE



INOCLIA (R)
DISTRICT 11
SPRING HILL



HOOPER (R)
DISTRICT 21
CLEARWATER



MARTIN (R)
DISTRICT 33
FORT MYERS



TRUMBULL (R)
DISTRICT 2
PANAMA CITY



PERRY (R)
DISTRICT 9
GAINESVILLE



DI CEGLIE (R)
DISTRICT 18
INDIAN ROCKS BEACH



HARRELL (R)
DISTRICT 31
STUART



PASSIDOMO (R)
DISTRICT 28
NAPLES
PRESIDENT



BRADLEY (R)
DISTRICT 6
FLEMING ISLAND



ROUSON (D)
DISTRICT 16
ST. PETERSBURG



GRALL (R)
DISTRICT 29
VERO BEACH



SERGEANT
AT ARMS

DAMIEN KELLY

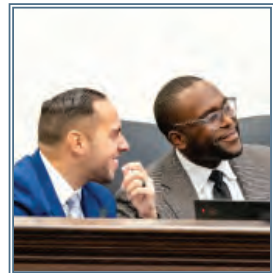
CONTACTING A SENATOR



Senators are interested in hearing opinions concerning issues on which the Senate will vote. Below are some tips on how to express those opinions.

Most people communicate with a Senator by email; however, others communicate by telephone or in person. No matter which method you choose, the same guidelines apply:

- Know the subject matter well.
- Know the full name of the Senator with whom you wish to communicate and learn the position he or she has taken on the issue.
- Do not use form letters; instead, write the essential points in your own words.
- If representing others from the community formally, or even informally, indicate that to the Senator.
- Be brief in any presentation. Provide supporting documentation with a cover letter.
- Be courteous.
- Be completely fair when presenting the facts.
- Refer to a specific bill by number. This information is available on the Senate website at www.flsenate.gov. Note that Senate bills are even-numbered and House bills are odd-numbered.
- Always provide contact information so that the Senator or a member of his or her staff can request further data or discussion.
- If meeting personally with a Senator, prepare carefully for the meeting and be on time.
- If the Senator requests more information, be prompt in responding to the request.



COMMITTEE TESTIMONY

Many Floridians follow bills as they progress through the legislative process. The Senate website provides detailed information on all bill actions through a variety of resources (www.flsenate.gov). Senate Tracker is a custom-designed feature that allows people to track bills, committees, press releases, publications, and more throughout the website; view the latest updates on the Tracker tab; and receive email notifications when those items are updated. Tracker is a free service provided by the Florida Senate and users can sign up for an account online.



Public testimony on issues is an important element of the committee process. A committee appearance record is provided by each committee for each speaker on each bill. The form is available at: <http://www.flsenate.gov/UserContent/Committees/CommitteeAppearanceForm.pdf> and in printed form at every committee meeting.

When offering comment on a bill that is scheduled for a public hearing, keep these guidelines in mind:

- Generally, each committee chair follows the order of the bills listed on the agenda.
- Prepare comments in advance and be brief unless asked to elaborate.
- Time may be limited so it is important to be specific and to-the-point regarding the bill.
- Be prepared to answer questions from committee members on the position taken on the 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
From 1865 through 1887, the Lt. Governor served as President.	
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

PRESIDENTS OF THE SENATE



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	Theodore 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***
1974-1976	Dempsey J. Barron

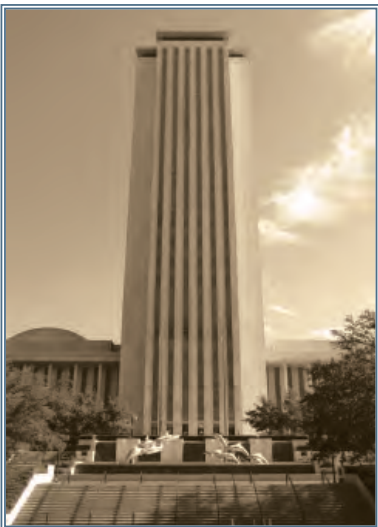
*** As President Pro Tempore, served as Acting President from July 1, 1974, when President Horne resigned, until November 6, 1974



1829 Historic Capitol



1989 Capitol



Today's Capitol

SESSION PRESIDENT

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
2014-2016	Andy Gardiner
2016-2018	Joe Negron
2018-2020	Bill Galvano
2020-2022	Wilton Simpson
2022-2024	Kathleen Passidomo

Symbols of FLORIDA

STATE SEAL

In 1985, a revised Great Seal of the State of Florida was presented to the Governor and Cabinet. The previous version of the state seal had several historical errors that were corrected in the 1985 seal. The current seal features a Seminole woman rather than a western Plains Indian, as was depicted on earlier seals. The image of a steamboat has been made more accurate, and the seal now includes a sabal palm, our state tree, instead of a cocoa palm.



Through the years, the appearance of the state seal has changed considerably. The steamboat, for instance, has been depicted in a variety of ways. Also, the earliest official state seal pictured a mountainous background that was later removed because it did not represent Florida's flat terrain. The Native American woman has worn various types of clothing, some of them more historically accurate than others. In one version of the seal, for example, the woman wore a feather headdress of a style worn only by men. Despite the changes in the appearance of the seal, the basic elements of the Great Seal of the State of Florida have remained the same.

STATE FLAG

The 1899 Legislature adopted a joint resolution that led to the design of our current flag: "The State Flag shall conform with standard commercial sizes and be of the following proportions and descriptions: The seal of the state, in diameter one-half of the hoist, shall occupy the center of a white background. Red bars, in width one-fifth the hoist, shall extend from each corner towards the center, to the outer rim of the seal."



STATE MOTTO

"In God We Trust" was adopted by the Florida Legislature as part of the state seal in 1868. This is also the motto of the United States and is a slight variation on Florida's first state motto, "In God is our Trust." In 2006, "In God We Trust" was officially designated in state statute as Florida's motto.



STATE ANTHEM

Responding to an initiative to find a new Florida state song, the Florida Music Educators Association managed an online contest to find a new song to represent the state. The winning song was "Florida, Where the Sawgrass Meets the Sky," written by Jan Hinton, a music teacher from Pompano Beach. In the 2008 Legislative Session, a compromise was reached that kept the old state song "Old Folks at Home" (with revised lyrics) and designated "Florida, Where the Sawgrass Meets the Sky" as the new state anthem. Sawgrass grows in Florida's coastal marshes and is particularly common in the Everglades, where it stretches as far as the eye can see.

Florida, Where the Sawgrass Meets the Sky

*Florida, where the sawgrass meets the sky,
Florida, where our hearts will ever lie,
Sitting proud in the ocean like a sentinel true,
Always shielding your own, yet giving welcome.*

*Florida, land of flowers, land of light.
Florida, where our dreams can all take flight.
Whether youth's vibrant morning or the twilight of years,
There are treasures for all who venture here in Florida.*

*Mockingbirds cry and 'gators lie out in the sun,
Bridges span southward to the Keys and rockets skyward
run,
The orange blossoms' sweet perfume and fireworks fill the
air,
And cultures rich our native people share.*

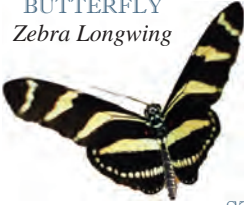
*Florida, where the sawgrass meets the sky,
Florida, where our hearts will ever lie,
Sitting proud in the ocean like a sentinel true,
Always shielding your own, yet giving welcome.*

*Florida, land of flowers, land of light.
Florida, where our dreams can all take flight.
Whether youth's vibrant morning or the twilight of years,
There are treasures for all who venture
here in Florida, Florida.*

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.

STATE
BUTTERFLY
Zebra Longwing



STATE SHELL
Horse Conch



STATE WILDFLOWER
Coreopsis



STATE BIRD
Mockingbird



STATE ANIMAL
Florida Panther



STATE
SALTWATER MAMMAL
Porpoise



STATE BEVERAGE
Orange Juice



STATE MARINE MAMMAL
Manatee



STATE TREE
*Sabal Palmetto
Palm*



STATE REPTILE
American Alligator



SENATE PAGE PROGRAM

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

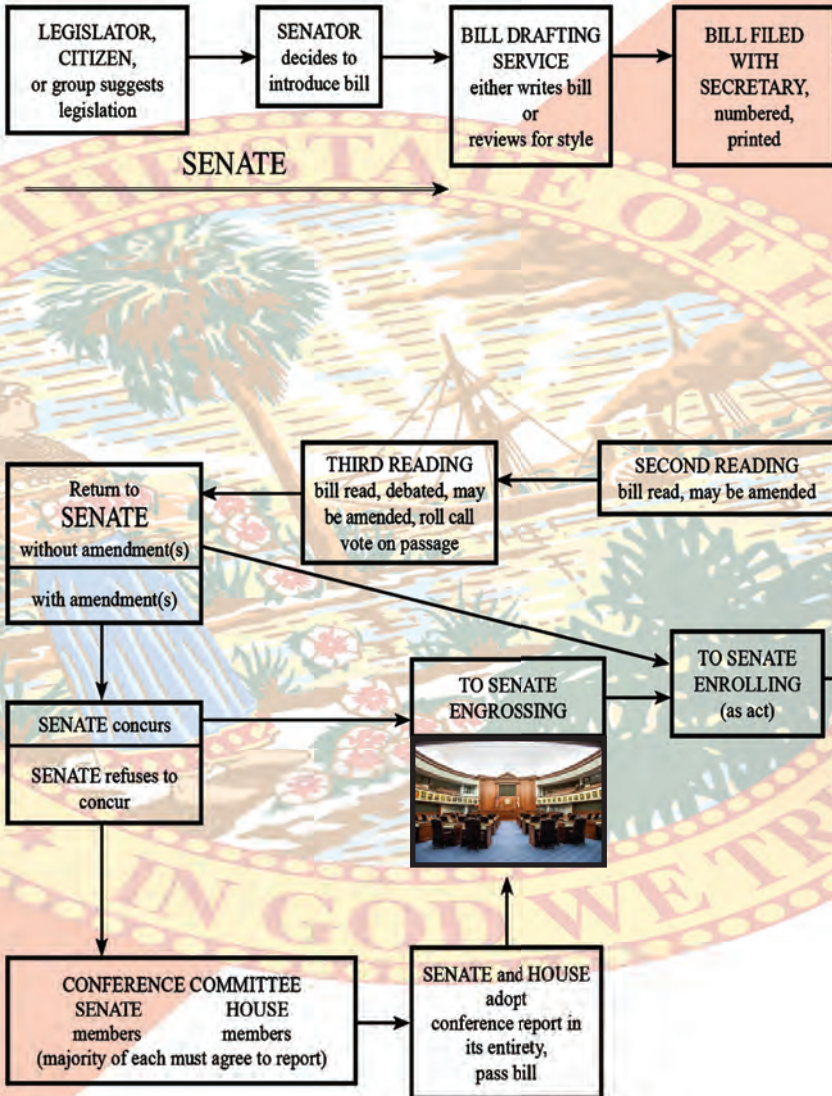
During a regular session, participating students come to Tallahassee for one week to work in the Senate by distributing materials and delivering messages to Senators and staff. Pages learn about the legislative process through a hands-on approach and experience a “mock session” in which pages role-play as Senators and engage in debating, discussing, and voting on legislation.



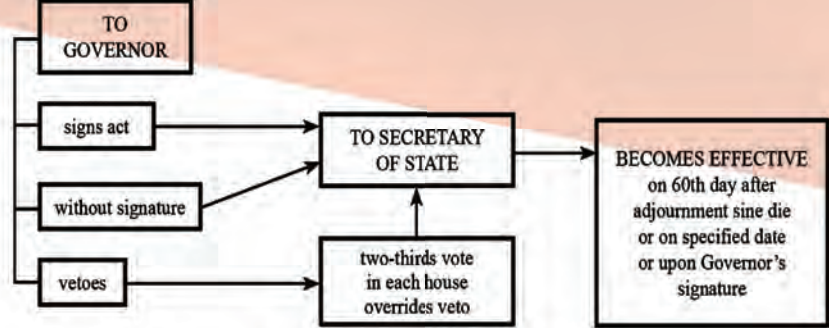
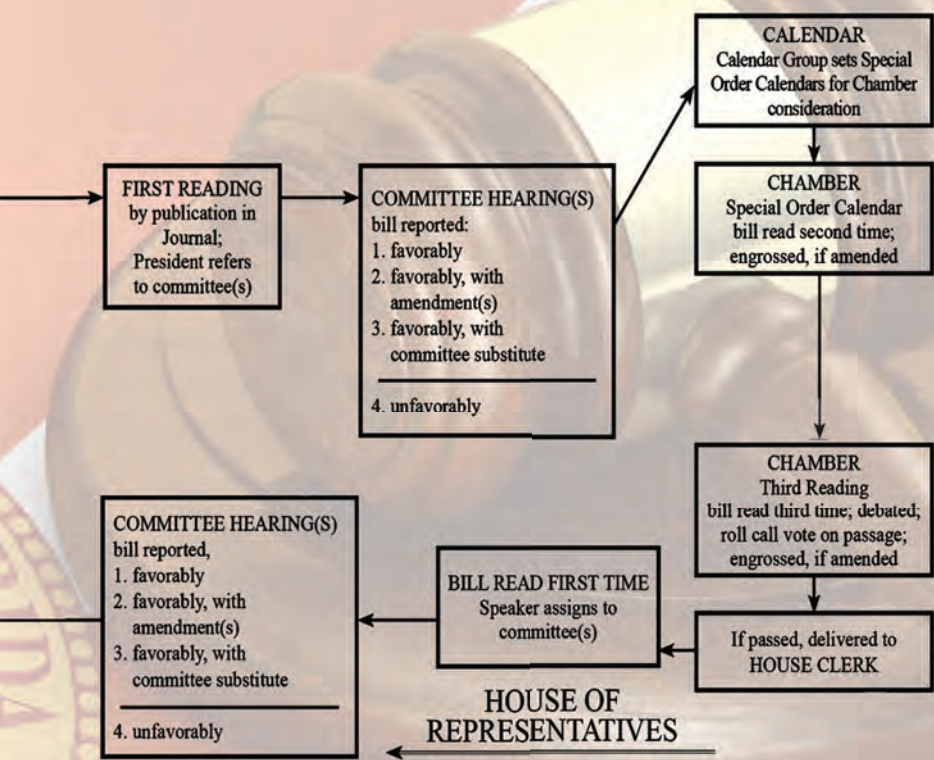
Professional dress is required. Pages must choose between a stipend or community service hours for participating in the program. Students are expected to provide their own transportation, housing, and meals while in Tallahassee. More information regarding this program and the application process may be found on the Senate website at <https://senatepages.flsenate.gov/>



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.



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



Governor Ron DeSantis

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 duties 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, a 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 serve a consecutive term 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 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 six-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 six judicial districts in Florida, with courts located in Tallahassee, Lakeland, Daytona Beach, West Palm Beach, Tampa, 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.

THE LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

The Legislative Branch has exclusive lawmaking power. 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 in very limited circumstances 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 Senator may be elected for more than one term, he or she may not seek reelection if, at the end of the current term, the Senator would have served in that office for eight consecutive years (see Article VI, Section 4, State Constitution).



Legislative Sessions. The Florida Constitution provides for the meeting dates for the Legislature. Two weeks after each general election, the Legislature convenes for the exclusive purpose of organization and selection of officers. No legislation is considered during the organization session. 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.



Regular sessions of the Legislature convene on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in March of each odd-numbered year, and on the second Tuesday after the first Monday in January of each even-numbered year, for a period not to exceed 60 consecutive days. Session may be extended by a three-fifths vote of each house.

Once every 10 years, the Constitution requires the Legislature to reapportion the state’s voting districts, convening in January. 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. Finally, 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.

Committees. A committee functions to consider filed legislation and make recommendations for action to the full body. The Senate and House rules provide for standing committees, subcommittees, and select committees. The presiding officers select 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.

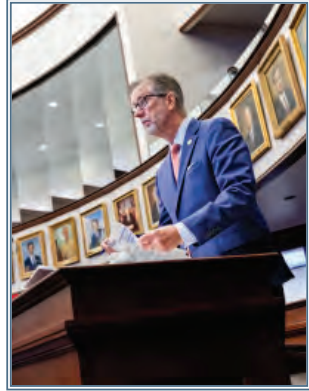
Other committees commonly used are joint committees, which are composed of members from each house, and select committees, which are usually appointed to make recommendations on special or unique problems.

Lobbying. A lobbyist is someone who represents a company, group or cause before the local, state or federal government.

Paid lobbyists of our state government must register with the Lobbyist Registration Office in the Office of Legislative Services. Each lobbyist must also state any direct business association or partnership with any current member of the Legislature. Lobbying 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

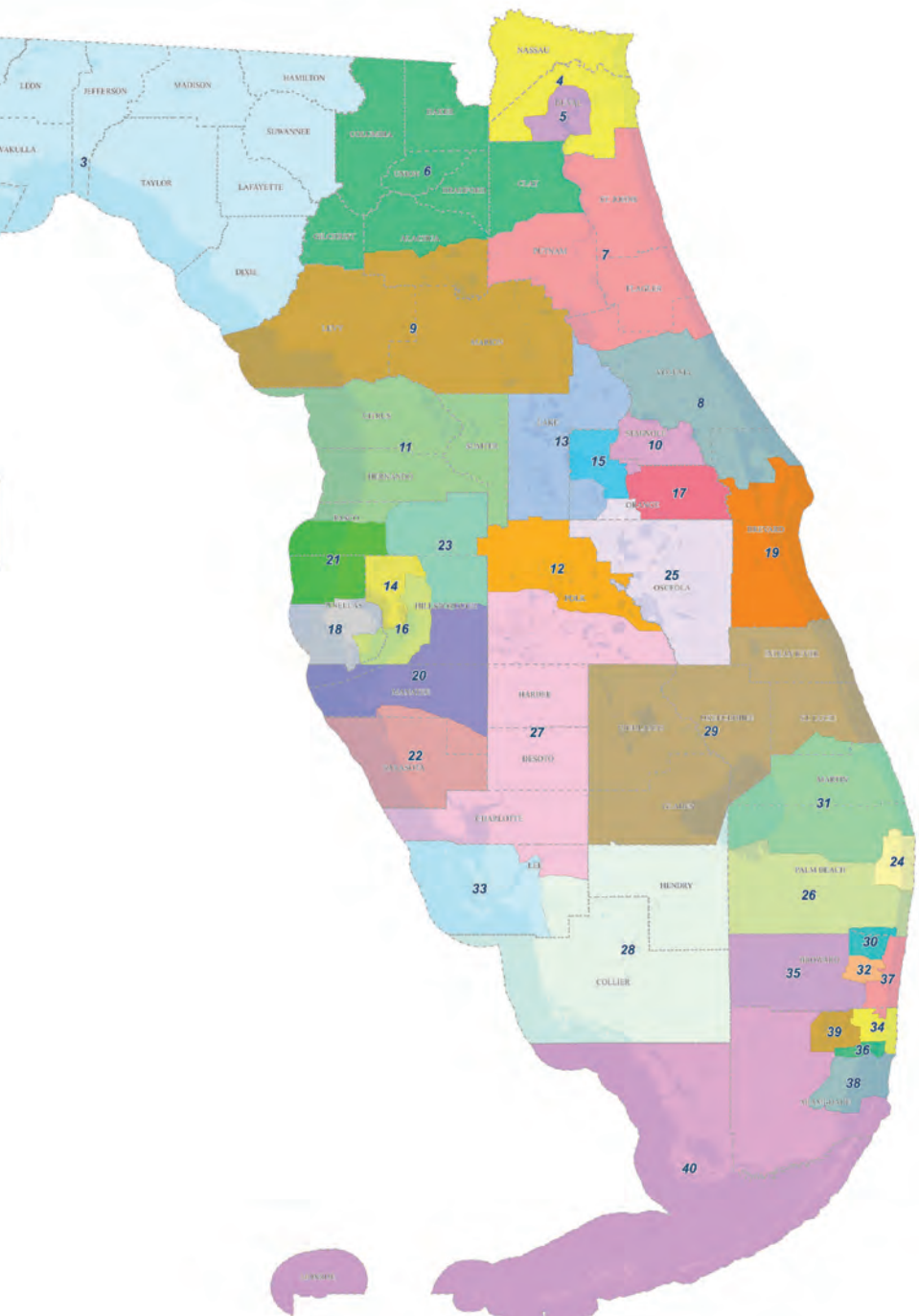




SENATE DISTRICTS

2022-2024

DISTRICT	SENATOR	DISTRICT	SENATOR
1	BROXSON (R)	21	HOOPER (R)
2	TRUMBULL (R)	22	GRUTERS (R)
3	SIMON (R)	23	BURGESS (R)
4	YARBOROUGH (R)	24	POWELL (D)
5	DAVIS (D)	25	TORRES (D)
6	BRADLEY (R)	26	BERMAN (D)
7	HUTSON (R)	27	ALBRITTON (R)
8	WRIGHT (R)	28	PASSIDOMO (R)
9	PERRY (R)	29	GRALL (R)
10	BRODEUR (R)	30	POLSKY (D)
11	INGOGLIA (R)	31	HARRELL (R)
12	BURTON (R)	32	OSGOOD (D)
13	BAXLEY (R)	33	MARTIN (R)
14	COLLINS (R)	34	JONES (D)
15	THOMPSON (D)	35	BOOK (D)
16	ROUSON (D)	36	GARCIA (R)
17	STEWART (D)	37	PIZZO (D)
18	DiCEGLIE (R)	38	CALATAYUD (R)
19	MAYFIELD (R)	39	AVILA (R)
20	BOYD (R)	40	RODRIGUEZ (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 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 designated by 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.

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

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.

CONVENE – To meet in formal legislative session.

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

DECORUM – Appropriate behavior and conduct.

DISTRICT – The area from which a legislator, state or federal, is elected.

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 the 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 designated by the Senate to assist Senate officers, members, and 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.

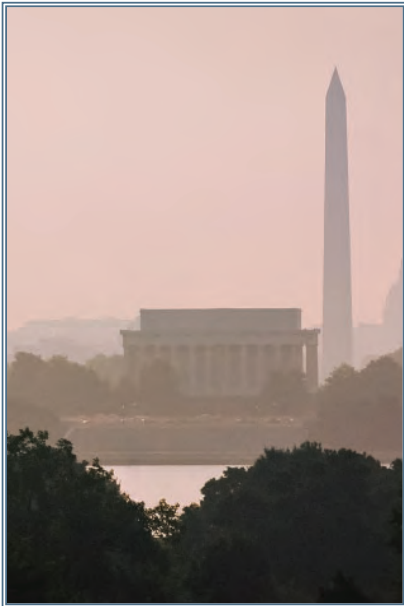
FLORIDA IN THE 118TH CONGRESS



Longworth House Office Building

Washington, D.C. is the seat of the nation’s government. The names and office addresses of Florida’s federal representatives may be found online. 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



Washington D.C skyline

The Senate is composed of 100 members, two from each state. A Senator must be at least 30 years of age, have been a citizen of the United States for nine years, and 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 arranged so that they do not terminate at the same time. Of the two Senators from a state, the one who was elected first is referred to as the “senior” Senator from that state. The other is referred to as the “junior” Senator. Senators Marco Rubio and Rick Scott represent Florida in Washington, D.C.



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.

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 U.S. Virgin Islands. The Resident Commissioner and the Delegates cannot 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).

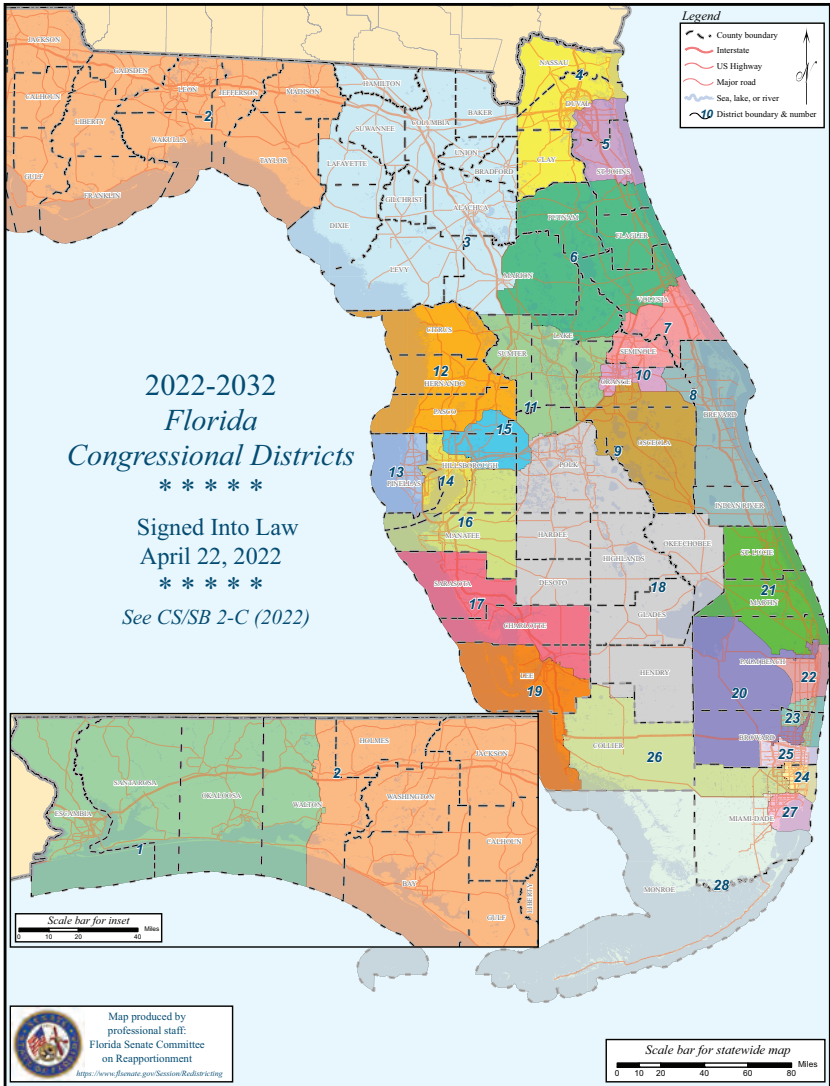
The United States Constitution authorizes each house to determine the rules of its proceedings. Pursuant to that authority, the House of Representatives adopts its rules on the opening day of each Congress. The Senate, which considers itself a continuing body, operates under standing rules that it amends 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 2022-2024

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Matt Gaetz (R), Fort Walton Beach 2. Neal Dunn (R), Panama City 3. Kat Cammack (R), Gainesville * 4. Aaron Bean (R) Fernandina Beach 5. John Rutherford (R), Jacksonville 6. Michael Waltz (R), St. Augustine Beach 7. Cory Mills (R), Lake Mary * 8. Bill Posey (R), Rockledge * 9. Darren Soto (D), Kissimmee 10. Maxwell Frost (D), Orlando * 11. Daniel Webster (R), Clermont 12. Gus Bilirakis (R), Palm Harbor 13. Anna Paulina Luna (R), Seminole 14. Kathy Castor (D), Tampa 15. Laurel Lee (R), Thonotosassa | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 16. Vern Buchanan (R), Brandon * 17. Greg Steube (R), Sarasota 18. Scott Franklin (R), Lakeland 19. Byron Donalds (R), Naples 20. Sheila Cherfilus-McCormick (D), Tamarac 21. Brian Mast (R), Port St. Lucie 22. Lois Frankel (D), Delray Beach 23. Jared Moskowitz (D), Coral Springs * 24. Frederica S. Wilson (D), Miami Gardens * 25. Wasserman Schultz (D), Sunrise * 26. Mario Diaz-Balart (R), Doral 27. Maria E. Salazar (R), Miami 28. Carlos Gimenez (R), Miami |
|--|---|

* Indicates those who formerly served in the Florida Senate



DID YOU KNOW...



- Florida has had six Constitutions since it became a state. The first Constitution was drafted in St. 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 53,625 square miles. The total water area is 12,133 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 yards 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, Tennessee Williams, and Zora Neale Hurton.
- 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.
- St. 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. Johns 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.
- 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).



Sidewalk view of the Florida House

- The Buckman Act of 1905 consolidated the state's public 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. Florida is now home to 12 state universities and 28 state colleges.
- Florida boasts over 4,500 islands or "keys" 10 acres or larger.
- 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.
- Eight student athletes from Florida universities have won the Heisman Trophy from 1966 to the present.



Heisman Trophy winning quarterback and NCAA national football championship winner Chris Weinke visiting the legislature - 2001

- 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 165 miles of local waterways.
- In anticipation of statehood, 56 commissioners elected from Florida's 20 counties gathered at St. 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 five tons.
- The Florida quarter was released by the U.S. Mint as part of its 50 State Quarters Program in 2004.
- The first Cuban American to serve as Senate President Pro Tempore was Senator Roberto Casas, 1996-1998.
- Senator Arthenia L. Joyner was the first African American woman to serve as Minority (Democratic) Leader, 2014-2016.

Some items were taken from The Florida Handbook (34th ed. 2014), available at <http://www.myfloridahouse.gov/contentViewer.aspx?Category=PublicGuide&File=FloridaHandbook.html>



- In 2022, Senator Alexis Calatayud (R-Miami) became the youngest Senator in recent history, elected just days after her 29th birthday.
- In 2022, Senator Corey Simon (R-Tallahassee) became the first African-American Senator to represent the Capital City since the end of the Reconstruction Era in 1887.

- Senator Victor Torres (D-Orlando) and Senator Tom Wright (R-New Smyrna Beach) both served as law enforcement officers before moving to Florida. Senator Ed Hooper (R-Clearwater) served as a firefighter.



- Senator Corey Simon (R-Tallahassee) played football for Florida State University on the 1999 National Championship Team. He later played football professionally for eight years, including playing in Super Bowl XXXIX for the Philadelphia Eagles.



- Elected to the Senate in April 2015, Senator Travis Hutson (R-St. Augustine) is the Dean of the Senate, an honorary title given to the longest-serving member of the Senate.
- President Pro Tempore Dennis Baxley (R-Eustis) also served as President Pro Tempore of the Florida House of Representatives from 2006-2008, under the leadership of now U.S. Senator Marco Rubio.

SENATORS WHO SERVED IN OUR MILITARY

- Senator Bryan Avila, Florida Army National Guard, First Lieutenant, April 2016-present
- Senator Danny Burgess, U.S. Army Reserve, Major, 2012-present
- Senator Victor M. Torres, Jr., U.S. Marine Corps, Veteran

SPOTLIGHT

SENATOR JAY COLLINS

U.S. ARMY GREEN BERET, RETIRED

As a Green Beret, the first to serve in the Florida Senate, Senator Collins led Americans into battle on some of the most demanding missions in the War on Terror. A highly-decorated Army Special Forces combat veteran and Purple Heart recipient with over two decades of service, Senator Collins served in deployments to Afghanistan, Iraq, and South America. In Afghanistan, in 2007, he sustained injuries that would eventually lead to the amputation of his leg. Senator Collins overcame his injuries, and following his amputation, was one of the first members of our United States Military ever to requalify as a fully deployable Green Beret, going on to serve over five more years on active duty. Senator Collins is married to his wife of 21 years, Layla, a retired veteran with 20 years of service herself. The couple has two young sons.

The Senate is grateful to all active duty and retired service men and women who have answered the call to serve our nation as members of the United States Armed Forces!



HISTORY OF WOMEN PRESIDENTS OF THE FLORIDA SENATE

In 1990, Senator Gwen Margolis (D-Miami), a former realtor, became the first woman to serve as President of the Florida Senate. President Margolis retired from the Senate in 2016, concluding more than four decades of elected service in state and local government. She passed away on June 9, 2020, at the age of 85.

In 1986, Senator Toni Jennings (R-Orlando), a former elementary school teacher who later ran her family's construction business, became the first woman to lead the Senate Republican Caucus, serving as Minority Leader during the 1986-1988 Legislative Term. Elected Senate President in 1996, she is the only person in modern history elected to serve two consecutive terms in the role. She later became the first woman to serve as Lt. Governor. President Jennings, 73, retired from elected office in 2007, upon the conclusion of her term as Lt. Governor. She continues to reside in Central Florida.

Presidents Margolis and Jennings were both inducted into the Florida Women's Hall of Fame.

Senator Kathleen C. Passidomo, 69, was elected to the Florida Senate in November 2016 after serving in the Florida House of Representatives since 2010. Senate President Wilton Simpson (R-Trilby) appointed her to serve as Chair of the Senate Committee on Rules for the 2020-2022 Legislative Term. During the 2018-2020 Legislative Term, she served as Republican (Majority) Leader under former Senate President Bill Galvano (R-Bradenton).

Senator Passidomo graduated in 1975 from Trinity College (now University) in Washington, D.C. In December 1978, she received her law degree from Stetson University's College of Law. She built a law practice around Real Estate and Business Law and has been practicing law in Naples for more than 40 years. Senator Passidomo was in the first group of attorneys in the state to obtain Board Certification in Real Estate Law, and her peers elected her to serve as President of both the Collier County Bar Association and the Collier County Women's Bar Association.

Senator Passidomo and her husband John married in 1979. Together, they have three adult daughters, Catarina, Francesca, and Gabriella, and two grandsons, William and Emilio. Emilio is featured on the cover of the current Senate Kids Handbook which can be seen on the next page.

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