



THE FLORIDA SENATE
SENATOR BEN ALBRITTON
Republican President Designate

MEMORANDUM

TO: All Senators
FROM: Ben Albritton
SUBJECT: Appropriations Committee Chairs
DATE: November 13, 2024

Stewardship of hard-earned tax dollars is a tall task, particularly when it comes to working within an allocation to balance the funding priorities of the Governor, our state agencies, our partners in the Florida House, and those our Senators bring forward from their home communities.

Leading an Appropriations Committee is a significant, demanding responsibility. I have asked the following Senators to serve as Chairs of our Senate Appropriations Committees. Each of these appointments represents a substantial position of trust and authority. I'm grateful to each Senator listed below for agreeing to step into a key leadership position. Along with Chair Hooper, I know they will work hard to ensure all of your voices and those of your constituents are reflected in where we prioritize the limited taxpayer dollars we are entrusted with.

The education policy changes passed over the last two years have solidified Florida's spot as the national leader in school choice. We are also leading the way on deregulation, which will help cut red tape and let our traditional public schools compete in the new universal choice paradigm. Meanwhile, our top-ranked higher education system continues to earn national accolades. Under President Passidomo, the committees on Pre-K–12 Education and Postsecondary Education were able to focus exclusively on the unique policy issues facing these two education systems. I am proposing we establish separate appropriations committees to allow for the same level of review of our education spending.

Senator Gayle Harrell – Appropriations Committee on Higher Education

Senator Harrell will chair our Senate Appropriations Committee on Higher Education. Senator Harrell is our longest-serving legislator, with years of institutional knowledge gained through service in the House and Senate. She knows what it took to get our colleges and universities to the top, and what it will take to keep them there. We've made historic investments in our higher

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education system, and we need to continue to look for ways to advance research and produce the skilled workforce our growing state will demand. Senator Harrell has the experience to ensure our higher education system produces the outcomes our state and students deserve.

Senator Danny Burgess – Appropriations Committee on Pre-K–12 Education

Senator Burgess will chair the Committee on Pre-K–12 Education Appropriations. As a fellow homeschool parent, I know he highly values parental rights in education. He will work hard to balance our resources to ensure parents can make the best decisions for their children’s education, whether in one of our amazing neighborhood public schools, a faith-based private school, or a customized homeschool program. Preparing our students for a lifetime of success is paramount. This is a mission Senator Burgess can effectively lead.

Senator Jason Brodeur – Appropriations Committee on Agriculture, Environment, and General Government

Senator Brodeur will continue to serve as Chair of the Senate Appropriations Committee on Agriculture, Environment, and General Government. He shares my passion for reform and vision for continued investment in these areas, which I chaired in both the House and the Senate. Florida’s food supply and clean water infrastructure are critically important as our state continues to grow. Likewise, Floridians expect the nuts and bolts of state government agencies to run efficiently and effectively. I know I can count on Senator Brodeur to lead the Senate efforts in these key areas.

Senator Ileana Garcia – Appropriations Committee on Criminal and Civil Justice

Senator Garcia will chair the Appropriations Committee on Criminal and Civil Justice. Without law and order, nothing else we do matters. Senator Garcia is a passionate advocate for law enforcement, and will work hard to make certain our law enforcement agencies and judicial system have the resources they need to keep Floridians safe. Likewise, we have made progress in recent years to improve the conditions of our prisons, enhancing safety for our corrections officers and the inmates they guard. If we believe all human life is valuable that includes those paying their debts to society. We have work to do in this area of the budget, and I know Senator Garcia is the right person for the job.

Senator Jay Trumbull – Appropriations Committee on Health and Human Services

Senator Trumbull will chair the Appropriations Committee on Health and Human Services. If you don’t have your health, it’s hard to focus on anything else. Under the leadership of President Passidomo, Senator Harrell, and Senator Burton, we made significant strides in growing our health care workforce and invested in technologies that increase access and help reduce costs through the passage and ongoing implementation of Live Healthy. Senator Trumbull is a thoughtful and innovative leader who will work diligently to make certain our state investments in the health of Floridians are achieving better outcomes.

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Senator Nick DiCeglie – Appropriations Committee on Transportation, Tourism, and Economic Development

Senator DiCeglie will chair the Appropriations Committee on Transportation, Tourism and Economic Development. As our state continues to grow, our infrastructure is the foundation for thriving communities and businesses. Over the last few years, we have made historic investments in Florida's transportation infrastructure, and it is important we keep up the momentum. Senator DiCeglie has the experience to thoroughly review the investments the state makes to grow our economy. Additionally, I saw firsthand the devastation the recent hurricanes caused Senator DiCeglie's community, including his own home. As we work to recover and rebuild, he will be a strong advocate for those impacted as well as ensuring the state is prepared for future storms.

Senator Bryan Avila – Committee on Finance and Tax

Senator Avila will chair the Senate Committee on Finance and Tax. There is no question inflation has significantly impacted families across our state. We see it in obvious places like the grocery store, and we feel it as increased costs for labor and goods drive up prices for routine services like an oil change or a haircut. Over the last few years, Florida has responded with historic tax relief designed to reduce the cost of raising a family, starting a business, or retiring with dignity. Senator Avila will be a strong leader for the Senate as we evaluate new opportunities to return hard-earned tax dollars to Floridians.

I look forward to sharing more leadership announcements later in the week.