

2020 2022

THE FLORIDA SENATE

HANDBOOK



Message from the President



Wilton Simpson
President of the Senate

Welcome to the Florida Senate. During this unprecedented global pandemic, the Senate has partnered with an infectious disease team at Tampa General Hospital and hired an in-house epidemiologist to develop safety protocols designed to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and keep Senators and our Senate professional staff as safe as possible.

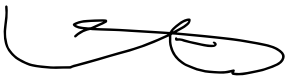
Just like our Senators and staff, you also play an important role in the legislative process. Input from various stakeholders and members of the public is critical, and the Senate is working diligently to ensure Floridians have access to their elected officials as we consider important legislation for our state.

Until the COVID-19 vaccine is widely available for those outside of high-risk designation, the Senate is proceeding with care and caution, limiting in-person meetings, and observing social distancing guidelines, mask requirements, and sanitation protocols.

For the 2021 Regular Session of the Florida Legislature, the Senate is working in partnership with Florida State University to reserve three remote viewing rooms at the Leon County Civic Center, which provide the opportunity for members of the public to view meetings and virtually address Senate committees in a safe, socially distant manner. We also encourage you to stay involved by viewing all Senate meetings and floor sittings on our website and contacting your local Senator with suggestions, ideas, and feedback.

I look forward to the day when we can all be together again walking the halls and chambers where Florida's citizen-legislators have served for generations. This session might look a little different, but together we can put COVID-19 behind us and keep our state the best place to live, work, raise a family, start or grow a business, and retire.

Respectfully,



Wilton Simpson


SENATE

The Florida Senate



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

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

The Florida Senate today has 40 members, each elected from a single-member district and each representing approximately 470,000 Florida citizens. Each Senator is elected for a four-year 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, must be registered voters, must be residents of the district from which they are elected, and must have resided in Florida for two years prior to their election.

While members of the other branches of government work full time in public service, the Legislature maintains its identity as the citizen legislature. Many of the Senators work in a business or profession when they are 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 philosophy of the Senate.



The Senate membership includes 25 men and 15 women. There are 24 Republicans and 16 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 2020-2022 term is Senator Wilton Simpson from Trilby. The President Pro Tempore is Senator Aaron Bean from Fernandina Beach.

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.



Wilton Simpson
Republican, District 10

Farmer and Entrepreneur **BORN** in Lakeland **EDUCATION** Pasco-Hernando Community College, A.A., 1997 **SPOUSE** Kathy Shotts of Dade City **CHILDREN** Lauran Monbarren, Wilton, Jr. **GRANDCHILDREN** Addy, Emy **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2012, reelected subsequently; Majority (Republican) Leader, 2016-2018 **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Christian **RECREATION** College football, boating **EMAIL** simpson.wilton.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.



Aaron Bean
Republican, District 4

UF Health Jacksonville, Relationship Development Officer; Licensed Auctioneer **BORN** in Fernandina Beach **EDUCATION** Jacksonville University, B.S., Finance, 1989 **SPOUSE** Abby of Green Cove Springs **CHILDREN** Bradley, Gray, Walker **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE** Elected to the Senate in 2012, reelected subsequently; House of Representatives: 2000-2008 **HISTORICAL** Lewis "Red" Bean, father, Fernandina Beach City Commissioner **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Christian **RECREATION** Family time **EMAIL** bean.aaron.web@flsenate.gov

Members of the Florida Senate



BEN ALBRITTON

REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 26

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



LORANNE AUSLEY

DEMOCRAT, DISTRICT 3

Attorney, Hollimon, P.A.

BORN in Tallahassee

EDUCATION Washington & Lee University School of Law, J.D., 1990; Randolph-Macon Woman's College, B.A., 1985

SPOUSE William Hollimon of Pensacola

CHILDREN Will, John

LEGISLATIVE SERVICE Elected to the Senate in 2020; House of Representatives: 2000-2008, 2016-2020

HISTORICAL Grandfather, Charles S. Ausley, Florida Senate; great-great-grandfather, Alexander McSwain, Florida House of Representatives

RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION Presbyterian

RECREATION Running, biking, swimming, yoga, three-time Ironman finisher

EMAIL ausley.loranne.web@flsenate.gov

Members of the Florida Senate



DENNIS BAXLEY
REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 12

Funeral Director; Consultant for Hiers-Baxley Funeral Services

BORN in Ocala

EDUCATION Miami-Dade College, A.S., Funeral Services, 1975; Florida State University, B.A., Psychology and Sociology, 1974; College of Central Florida, A.A., 1972

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, reelected subsequently; House of Representatives: 2000-2007, 2010-2016

RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION Baptist

RECREATION Fishing, reading

EMAIL baxley.dennis.web@flsenate.gov



LORI BERMAN
DEMOCRAT, DISTRICT 31

Attorney

BORN in New York, New York; moved to Florida in 1958

EDUCATION University of Miami, LL.M.-Estate Planning, 2002; George Washington University Law School, J.D., 1983; 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 April 10, 2018, reelected subsequently; House of Representatives: 2010-2018

RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION Jewish

RECREATION Skiing, travel, tennis, reading

EMAIL berman.lori.web@flsenate.gov

Members of the Florida Senate



LAUREN BOOK

DEMOCRAT, DISTRICT 32

Founder/CEO Lauren's Kids (501(c)(3))

BORN in Hollywood

EDUCATION University of Miami, M.S., Community Psychology and Social Change, 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, reelected subsequently; 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 21

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

Members of the Florida Senate



RANDOLPH BRACY

DEMOCRAT, DISTRICT 11

Business Owner

BORN in Jacksonville

EDUCATION University of Central Florida, M.B.A., 2008; University of Central Florida, M.S., Sports Management, 2008; College of William and Mary, B.S., Psychology, 1999

CHILDREN London, Brooklyn

LEGISLATIVE SERVICE Elected to the Senate in 2016, reelected subsequently; House of Representatives: 2012-2016

RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION Christian

RECREATION Basketball, music

EMAIL bracy.randolph.web@flsenate.gov



JENNIFER BRADLEY

REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 5

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

Members of the Florida Senate



JEFF BRANDES
REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 24

Real Estate

BORN in St. Petersburg

EDUCATION Carson Newman College, B.S., Business Administration, 1999; Marion Military Institute, A.A., 1996

SPOUSE Natalie of Concord, Massachusetts

CHILDREN Charlotte "Lottie," Colin, Conor, Lizzie

LEGISLATIVE SERVICE Elected to the Senate in 2012, reelected subsequently; House of Representatives: 2010-2012

MILITARY SERVICE U.S. Army Reserves, Transportation Officer, 1996-2007; served in Iraq, 2003-2004

RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION Methodist

RECREATION Scuba diving, travel, flying

EMAIL brandes.jeff.web@flsenate.gov



JASON BRODEUR
REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 9

Seminole County Chamber, President/CEO; Healthcare Consulting Company, Owner, Realtor

BORN in Daytona Beach

EDUCATION Dartmouth College, M.P.H. Candidate; 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

Members of the Florida Senate



DOUG BROXSON
REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 1

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, reelected subsequently; 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 20

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 Captain, 2012-present
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

Members of the Florida Senate



JANET CRUZ
DEMOCRAT, DISTRICT 18

Optician/Healthcare Executive
BORN in Tampa
EDUCATION Hillsborough Community College, A.A., Opticianry Dispensing, 1977
SPOSUE Dr. Stephen "Steve" Rifkin
CHILDREN Ana Cruz, Raymond "Nick" Cruz, Stephen Rifkin, Laura McCauley
GRANDCHILDREN Madison McCauley, Peter McCauley, Teresa McCauley
LEGISLATIVE SERVICE Elected to the Senate in 2018; House of Representatives: February 23, 2010-2018; Minority Leader, 2016-2018
RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION Catholic
RECREATION Gourmet cooking, tarpon fishing, watercolor, writing
EMAIL cruz.janet.web@flsenate.gov



MANNY DIAZ, JR.
REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 36

College Administrator
BORN in Hialeah
EDUCATION Harvard Graduate School of Education, General Educational Development, Summer Urban Principal's Institute, 2006; Nova Southeastern University, M.S., Educational Leadership, 1998; St. Thomas University, B.A., Human Resources, 1994
SPOUSE Jennifer Diaz of Hialeah
CHILDREN Madison, Grayson, Lexington, Dominic
LEGISLATIVE SERVICE Elected to the Senate in 2018; House of Representatives: 2012-2018
RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION Catholic
RECREATION Fishing, camping, boating
EMAIL diaz.manny.web@flsenate.gov

Members of the Florida Senate



GARY M. FARMER, JR.

DEMOCRAT, DISTRICT 34
MINORITY (DEMOCRATIC) LEADER

Attorney, Morgan & Morgan

BORN in Ft. Lauderdale

EDUCATION University of Toledo College of Law, J.D., cum laude, 1991, Law Review 1990-1991; Florida State University, B.S., History, 1986

CHILDREN Hannah Lynn, Abigail Rose

LEGISLATIVE SERVICE Elected to the Senate in 2016, reelected subsequently

RECREATION Florida State athletics, hiking, rafting, relaxing in the Smoky Mountains

EMAIL farmer.gary.web@flsenate.gov



GEORGE B. GAINER

REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 2

Automobile Dealer

BORN in Marianna

EDUCATION Attended Gulf Coast Community College

SPOUSE Jan Gainer

CHILDREN Vicki, Tina, Georgia, Angie, Scooter, Jeffrey

GRANDCHILDREN Courtney, Kelsi, Tanner, Easton, Chandler, Stella, Isabella, George, Katie, Matthew, Pierson

GREAT-GRANDCHILDREN Beckham

LEGISLATIVE SERVICE Elected to the Senate in 2016, reelected subsequently

RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION Baptist

RECREATION Antique and classic cars

EMAIL gainer.george.web@flsenate.gov

Members of the Florida Senate



ILEANA GARCIA

REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 37

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 Christian

EMAIL garcia.ileana.web@flsenate.gov



AUDREY GIBSON

DEMOCRAT, DISTRICT 6

Paralegal and PR Liaison

BORN in Jacksonville

EDUCATION Florida State University, B.S., Criminology; Florida State College at Jacksonville, A.A.

CHILDREN Two sons, one daughter

LEGISLATIVE SERVICE Elected to the Senate October 18, 2011, reelected subsequently; Minority (Democratic) Leader, 2018-2020; House of Representatives: 2002-2010

RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION AME

RECREATION Auto racing, flower gardening

EMAIL gibson.audrey.web@flsenate.gov

Members of the Florida Senate



JOE GRUTERS
REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 23

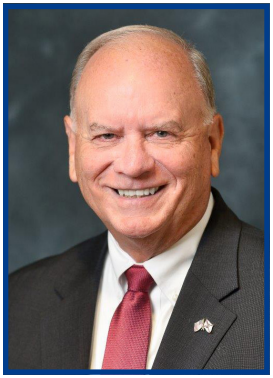
Certified Public Accountant
BORN in Tampa
EDUCATION University of South Florida, M.B.A., 2003; Florida State University, B.S., 1999
SPOUSE Sydney Spence of Citrus Hills
CHILDREN Spencer, Jack Ryan, Elle
LEGISLATIVE SERVICE Elected to the Senate in 2018, reelected subsequently; House of Representatives: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



GAYLE HARRELL
REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 25

Health Information Technology Consultant; CEO Health IT Strategies
BORN in Nashville, Tennessee; moved to Florida in 1957
EDUCATION University of Florida, M.A., Latin American Studies and History, 1977, 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, reelected subsequently; House of Representatives: 2000-2008, 2010-2018
RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION Presbyterian
RECREATION Grandchildren, Gator football, travel, politics
EMAIL harrell.gayle.web@flsenate.gov

Members of the Florida Senate



ED HOOPER

REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 16

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

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
LEGISLATIVE SERVICE Elected to the Senate April 7, 2015, reelected subsequently; 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

Members of the Florida Senate



SHEVRIN D. "SHEV" JONES

DEMOCRAT, DISTRICT 35

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

RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION Christian (non-denominational)

RECREATION Running, reading, spending time with family

EMAIL jones.shevrin.web@flsenate.gov



DEBBIE MAYFIELD

REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 17
MAJORITY (REPUBLICAN) LEADER

Retired Banking Executive

BORN in Pensacola

EDUCATION Florida Banking School; Santa Fe Community College

SPOUSE Dr. Robert P. Scaringe

CHILDREN Evan Mayfield, Samuel Mayfield, Coleman Mayfield

LEGISLATIVE SERVICE Elected to the Senate in 2016, reelected subsequently; House of Representatives: 2008-2016

HISTORICAL Stan Mayfield, late husband, Florida House of Representatives, 2000-2008

RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION Roman Catholic

RECREATION Family activities, sailing, boating, fishing

EMAIL mayfield.debbie.web@flsenate.gov

Members of the Florida Senate



KATHLEEN PASSIDOMO

REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 28

Attorney; Kelly, Passidomo & Alba, LLP
BORN in Jersey City, New Jersey; moved to Florida in 1979
EDUCATION Stetson University College of Law, J.D., 1978; Trinity University, Washington D.C., B.A., cum laude, 1975
SPOUSE John M. Passidomo of Naples
CHILDREN Catarina, Francesca, Gabriella
GRANDCHILDREN William, Emilio
LEGISLATIVE SERVICE Elected to the Senate in 2016, reelected subsequently; Majority (Republican) Leader, 2018-2020; House of Representatives: 2010-2016
RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION Roman Catholic
RECREATION Cooking, opera
EMAIL passidomo.kathleen.web@flsenate.gov



KEITH PERRY

REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 8

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, reelected subsequently; House of Representatives: 2010-2016
RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION Christian
RECREATION Gator sports, classic cars, fencing
EMAIL perry.keith.web@flsenate.gov

Members of the Florida Senate



JASON W. B. PIZZO

DEMOCRAT, DISTRICT 38

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 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 29

Mediator, Lawyer

BORN in Merrick, New York; moved to Florida in 2005

EDUCATION Columbia University School of Law, J.D., 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

Members of the Florida Senate



BOBBY POWELL

DEMOCRAT, DISTRICT 30
Minority (Democratic) Leader Pro Tempore

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, magna cum laude, 2003

LEGISLATIVE SERVICE Elected to the Senate in 2016, reelected subsequently; 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



RAY WESLEY RODRIGUES

REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 27

Director of Interagency Partnerships

BORN in Pensacola

EDUCATION Florida Gulf Coast University, M.P.A., 2017; Berry College, B.A., 1992

SPOUSE Ruth Lindsey of Plant City

CHILDREN Rhett

LEGISLATIVE SERVICE Elected to the Senate in 2020; House of Representatives: 2012-2020

HISTORICAL Webb Jernigan, maternal great-cousin, Florida House of Representatives, 1937, 1945, 1951, 1953, 1956

RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION Church of Christ

RECREATION Spending time with family, golf, reading

EMAIL rodrigues.ray.web@flsenate.gov

Members of the Florida Senate



ANA MARIA RODRIGUEZ

REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 39

Senior Vice President of Miami Realtors

BORN in Miami

EDUCATION Nova Southeastern University, H. Wayne Huizenga School of Business, M.S., Leadership, 2009; 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 19

Attorney, Rubenstein Law

BORN in New Orleans, Louisiana; moved to Florida in 1959

EDUCATION University of Florida, J.D., 1980, President, Black Law Students Association; Xavier of New Orleans, B.A., 1977; Bishop Barry High School, 1973

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, reelected subsequently; House of Representatives: 2008-2016

RECREATION Reading, public speaking, power walking

EMAIL rouson.darryl.web@flsenate.gov

Members of the Florida Senate



KELLI STARGEL
REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 22

Investment Property Manager
BORN in Tampa
EDUCATION Tallahassee Community College
SPOUSE John
CHILDREN Rebekah, Amanda, Robert, Hannah, Laura
GRANDCHILDREN Austin, Cadence, Caroline, Olivia, Avery
LEGISLATIVE SERVICE Elected to the Senate in 2012, reelected subsequently; Deputy Majority (Republican) Leader: 2016-2018; House of Representatives: 2008-2012
HISTORICAL Husband, John Stargel, DCA Judge; Ancestors: Aaron Jernigan, Florida House of Representatives, 1848; James Lane, Sumter County Sheriff, 1897-1905
RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION Baptist
RECREATION Reading, genealogy, family activities
EMAIL stargel.kelli.web@flsenate.gov



LINDA STEWART
DEMOCRAT, DISTRICT 13

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

Members of the Florida Senate



ANNETTE TADDEO

DEMOCRAT, DISTRICT 40

Founder and CEO of LanguageSpeak

BORN in Colombia; moved to Florida in 1985

EDUCATION Dartmouth Tuck School of Business, Advanced Executive Education Program, 2004; Dartmouth Tuck School of Business, Executive Education Program, 2003; University of North Alabama, B.A., Commercial Spanish, 1992

SPOUSE Eric Goldstein, Ph.D., of Miami

CHILDREN Sofia Taddeo-Goldstein

LEGISLATIVE SERVICE Elected to the Senate September 26, 2017, reelected subsequently

RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION Jewish

RECREATION Spending time with family, reading, volunteer activities, mentoring, playing with my dogs, travel

EMAIL taddeo.annette.web@flsenate.gov



PERRY E. THURSTON, JR.

DEMOCRAT, DISTRICT 33

Attorney

BORN in Pompano Beach

EDUCATION University of Miami School of Law, J.D., 1987; Morehouse College, School of Business, B.A., Finance, 1982

SPOUSE Dawn Board of Cleveland, Ohio

CHILDREN Alison Nicole Thurston, Perry E. Thurston III

LEGISLATIVE SERVICE Elected to the Senate in 2016, reelected subsequently; House of Representatives: 2006-2014; Minority (Democratic) Leader: 2012-2014

RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION Baptist

RECREATION Basketball, football, tennis

EMAIL thurston.perry.web@flsenate.gov

Members of the Florida Senate



VICTOR M. TORRES, JR.

DEMOCRAT, DISTRICT 15

Retired NYC Transit Police Detective

BORN in New York, New York; moved to Florida in 1993

EDUCATION John Jay College; Transit Police Academy, Certificate, 1972, Company Sergeant

SPOUSE Carmen L. Rodriguez-Torres of San Juan, Puerto Rico

CHILDREN Yvonne Torres, Victor M. Torres III, Justin Torres, Amy Mercado, Melony Marcella

GRANDCHILDREN Evan, Eliza, Jeremy, Jaslene, Ivan, Rebekah, Arielle, Aaron, Carin, Nadia

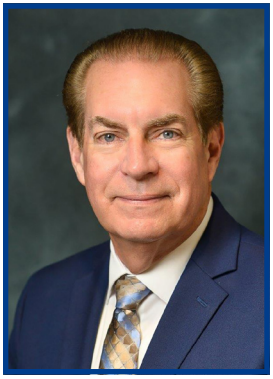
LEGISLATIVE SERVICE Elected to the Senate in 2016, reelected subsequently; House of Representatives: 2012-2016

MILITARY SERVICE U.S. Marine Corps Veteran

RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION Episcopal

RECREATION Softball

EMAIL torres.victor.web@flsenate.gov



TOM A. WRIGHT

REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 14

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

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.



Debbie Brown
Secretary of the Senate

BORN in Denver, Colorado; moved to Florida in 1967
EDUCATION Tallahassee Community College: A.A., 2009; A.S., Business Administration and Management, 1991
SPOUSE Larry
CHILDREN Monica, Michael
GRANDCHILDREN Brayden, Maddie Grace, Sophie, Hudson
LEGISLATIVE SERVICE Elected Secretary of the Senate: January 2012-present; Director: Senate Administration, 2010-2019; Office of the Senate President: 2002-2011; Office of the Senate Secretary: 1993-2002; Florida Constitution Revision Commission Liaison: 1997-1998
RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION Methodist
RECREATION Reading

Senate Sergeant at Arms

The 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

BORN in Dublin, Ireland; moved to Florida in 2005
EDUCATION Attended Eastern Illinois University
SPOUSE Deborah of Memphis, Tennessee
CHILDREN Caitlin
LEGISLATIVE SERVICE Sergeant at Arms: 2020-present
RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION Catholic
RECREATION Soccer, traveling

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, and the renovated chamber was unveiled on November 22, 2016, for the organization session. 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 2015 and 2016.

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

The portraits hanging below the gallery commemorate past Presidents of the Senate. After each President's term, a portrait is painted and hung in this area. The portraits are arranged in chronological order with the most recent 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.

A Senator who wishes to "approach the well" to make a speech speaks from the Secretary's desk. Senators have the flexibility to access legislative information from their offices or the chamber by using a custom computer application that is 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 decree that a Senator address another Senator by title and district number or title and surname. A Senator is "the Senator from the fifth," for example, but never "the gentleman or lady from the fifth." 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 Florida's press corps report Senate actions. The remainder of the gallery is open to the public at all sessions, except that a portion of the gallery is usually reserved for the Senators' families and other sections are often temporarily reserved for visiting students.

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



THE FLORIDA SENATE
2020-2022



Gainer (R)
District 2
Panama City



Stewart (D)
District 13
Orlando



Rodriguez (R)
District 39
Miami



Taddeo (D)
District 40
Miami



Gibson (D)
District 6
Jacksonville



Wright (R)
District 14
New Smyrna Beach



Garcia (R)
District 37
Miami



Berman (D)
District 31
Lantana

Secretary
of the Senate



Debbie Brown



Simpson (R)
District 10
Trilby
President



Albritton (R)
District 26
Wauchula



Rodrigues (R)
District 27
Estero



Bracy (D)
District 11
Ocoee



Brandes (R)
District 24
St. Petersburg



Gruters (R)
District 23
Sarasota



Burgess (R)
District 20
Zephyrhills



Powell (D)
District 30
West Palm Beach



Bean (R)
District 4
Fernandina Beach
President Pro Tempore



Farmer (D)
District 34
Lighthouse Point
Minority Leader



Rouson (D)
District 19
St. Petersburg



Thurston (D)
District 33
Fort Lauderdale

IDENT
SENATE



SIMPSON

ARY'S DESK



PASSIDOMO (R)
DISTRICT 28
NAPLES
RULES CHAIR



MAYFIELD (R)
DISTRICT 17
MELBOURNE
MAJORITY LEADER



HARRELL (R)
DISTRICT 25
STUART



TORRES (D)
DISTRICT 15
ORLANDO



STARGEL (R)
DISTRICT 22
LAKELAND



HOOPER (R)
DISTRICT 16
CLEARWATER



BRADLEY (R)
DISTRICT 5
FLEMING ISLAND



POLSKY (D)
DISTRICT 29
BOCA RATON



BROXSON (R)
DISTRICT 1
PENSACOLA



DIAZ (R)
DISTRICT 36
HIALEAH



PIZZO (D)
DISTRICT 38
N. MIAMI BEACH



CRUZ (D)
DISTRICT 18
TAMPA



HUTSON (R)
DISTRICT 7
ST. AUGUSTINE



BOOK (D)
DISTRICT 32
PLANTATION



BOYD (R)
DISTRICT 21
BRADENTON



JONES (D)
DISTRICT 35
WEST PARK



PERRY (R)
DISTRICT 8
GAINESVILLE



BAXLEY (R)
DISTRICT 12
OCALA



BRODEUR (R)
DISTRICT 9
SANFORD



AUSLEY (D)
DISTRICT 3
TALLAHASSEE

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.







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
1881-1885	L.W. Bethel
1885-1887	Milton Mabry
1889**	Patrick Houstoun

** 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
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
1929	Jesse J. Parrish
1931	Patrick C. Whitaker
1933	Truman G. Futch
1935	William C. Hodges
1937	D. Stuart Gillis

*** Extraordinary Session*

Presidents of the Senate



1936 Capitol



1950 Capitol



1978 Capitol

Session	President
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
1976-1978	Lew Brantley
1978-1980	Philip D. Lewis
1980-1982	W.D. Childers
1982-1984	N. Curtis Peterson, Jr.

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

Presidents of the Senate



1982 Historic Capitol



1989 Capitol



Today's Capitol

Session	President
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

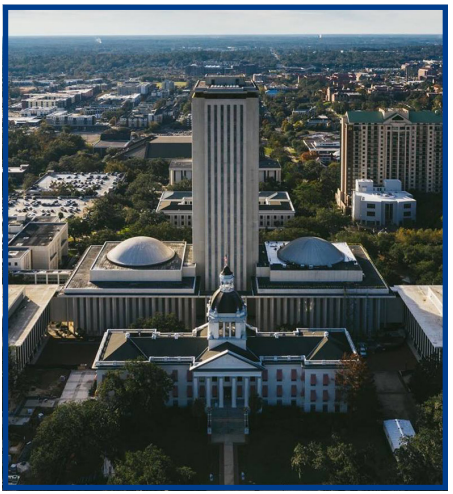
Capitol photos from 1824-1989 courtesy of the Florida State Archives

Senate Committees

STANDING COMMITTEES AND SUBCOMMITTEES

- **Agriculture**
- **Appropriations**
  - Subcommittees
    - Agriculture, Environment, and General Government
    - Criminal and Civil Justice
    - Education
    - Health and Human Services
    - Transportation, Tourism, and Economic Development
- **Banking and Insurance**
- **Children, Families, and Elder Affairs**
- **Commerce and Tourism**
- **Community Affairs**
- **Criminal Justice**
- **Education**
- **Environment and Natural Resources**
- **Ethics and Elections**
- **Finance and Tax**
- **Governmental Oversight and Accountability**
- **Health Policy**
- **Judiciary**
- **Military and Veterans Affairs, Space, and Domestic Security**
- **Reapportionment**
- **Regulated Industries**
- **Rules**
- **Transportation**

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 the public 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 required 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 providing 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.
- 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.





Remote Committee Viewing/Public Testimony During the COVID-19 Pandemic

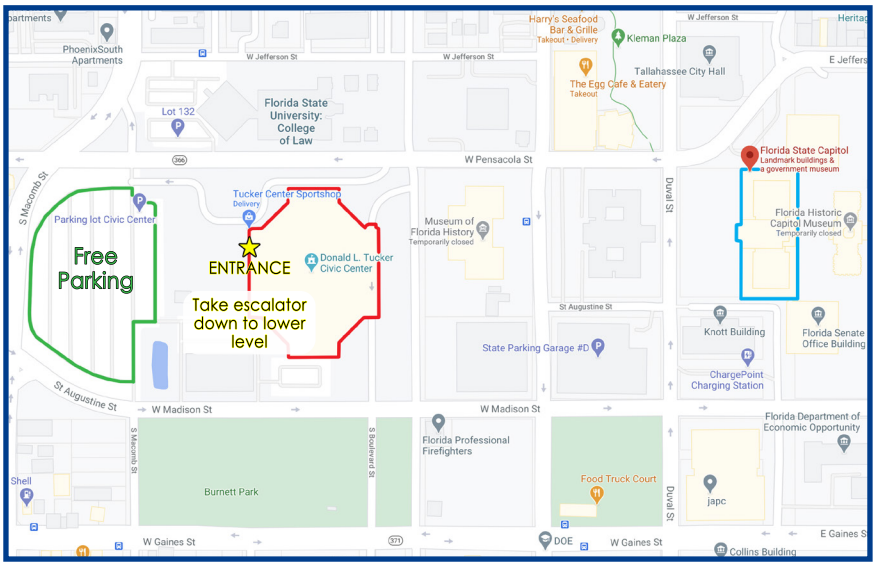
Input from various stakeholders and members of the public is critical to the legislative process, and the Senate is working diligently to ensure Floridians have access to their elected officials as we consider important legislation for our state. The Senate worked in partnership with Florida State University to reserve three remote viewing rooms at the Leon County Civic Center, which provide the opportunity for members of the public to view meetings and virtually address Senate committees in a safe, socially distant manner.

Each committee notice published in the Senate calendar includes the room number within the Civic Center where members of the public may gather should they wish to address the committee.

Senate Public Testimony

The following rooms are provided at the Donald L. Tucker Civic Center, 505 W. Pensacola St., Tallahassee, FL 32301, for members of the public wishing to offer comments on items listed on a Senate agenda.

- A1 Civic Center for Senate meetings taking place in 110S
- A2 Civic Center for Senate meetings taking place in 37S
- A3 Civic Center for Senate meetings taking place in 412 Knott



The Florida Senate



LEGISLATOR, CITIZEN, or group suggests legislation



SENATOR decides to introduce bill



BILL DRAFTING SERVICES either writes bill or reviews for style



BILL FILED WITH SECRETARY, numbered, printed

SENATE





THIRD READING bill read, debated, may be amended, roll call vote on passage

SECOND READING bill read, may be amended

Return to SENATE without amendment(s)

with amendment(s)

TO SENATE ENGROSSING

TO SENATE ENROLLING (as act)





SENATE concurs

SENATE refuses to concur

CONFERENCE COMMITTEE
SENATE members
HOUSE members
(majority of each must agree to report)

SENATE and HOUSE adopt conference report in its entirety, pass bill



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.

How an Idea Becomes a Law



FIRST READING
by publication in Journal;
President refers to committee(s)



COMMITTEE HEARING(S)
bill reported:
1. favorably
2. favorably, with amendment(s)
3. favorably, with committee substitute

4. unfavorably

CALENDAR
Calendar Group sets Special Order Calendars for Chamber consideration

CHAMBER
Special Order Calendar
bill read second time; engrossed, if amended



CHAMBER
Third Reading
bill read third time; debated; roll call vote on passage; engrossed, if amended

If passed, delivered to HOUSE CLERK



COMMITTEE HEARING(S)
bill reported,
1. favorably
2. favorably, with amendment(s)
3. favorably, with committee substitute

4. unfavorably

BILL READ FIRST TIME
Speaker assigns to committee(s)

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES





TO GOVERNOR

signs act

without signature

vetoes

TO SECRETARY OF STATE

two-thirds vote in each house overrides veto



BILL EFFECTIVE
on 60th day after adjournment sine die, on specified date, or upon Governor's signature

Prepared by the Office of the Secretary of the Senate

Three Branches of Government



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

The Executive Branch



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 five judicial districts in Florida, with courts located in Tallahassee, Lakeland, Daytona Beach, West Palm Beach, and Miami. Appointed by the Governor to serve in each district court, these judges must be reconfirmed by the voters every six years.

The Supreme Court is at the top of Florida's court system and is the final state court of appeal. The Supreme Court determines the constitutionality of statutes, has the authority to issue advisory opinions to the Governor, and has administrative responsibilities over all lower courts. There are seven Supreme Court justices, each appointed by the Governor and retained by a popular vote every six years.

The Legislative Branch

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



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

The State Constitution provides that the Legislature shall be apportioned into 30 to 40 senatorial districts, and 80 to 120 representative districts. The 1972 Legislature established 40 Senate districts and 120 House districts. Senators serve four-year terms and representatives serve two-year terms. While a 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 tries to influence decisions made by government. Unless exempted by law or rule, any person who seeks to affect legislation must register with the Lobbyist Registration Office in the Office of Legislative Services before he or she can begin lobbying. Each lobbyist must also state any direct business association or partnership with any current member of the Legislature. 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 both houses to agree on all items in the bill, a conference committee is usually appointed to resolve the differences.









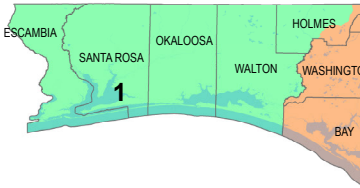






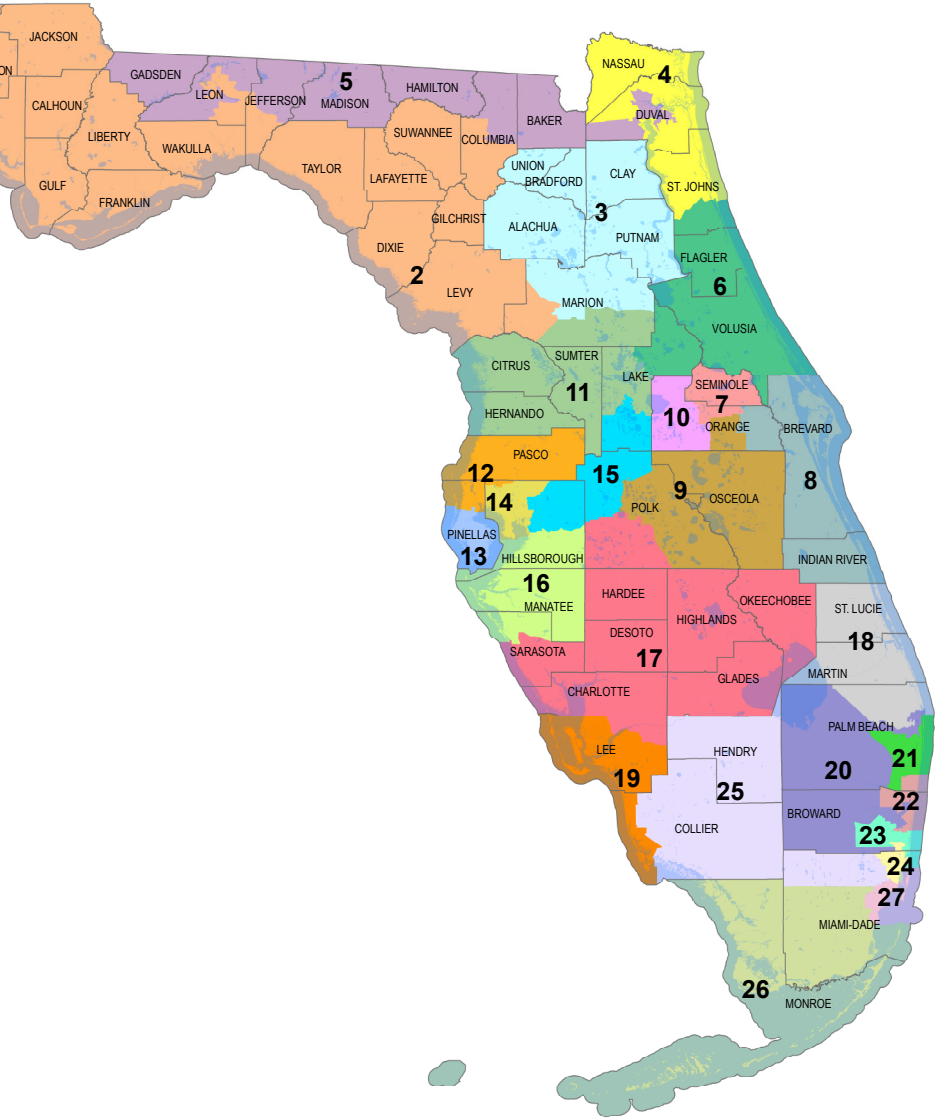
The United States Constitution authorizes each house to determine the rules of its proceedings. Pursuant to that authority, the House of Representatives adopts its rules on the opening day of each Congress. The Senate, which considers itself a continuing body, operates under standing rules that it amends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

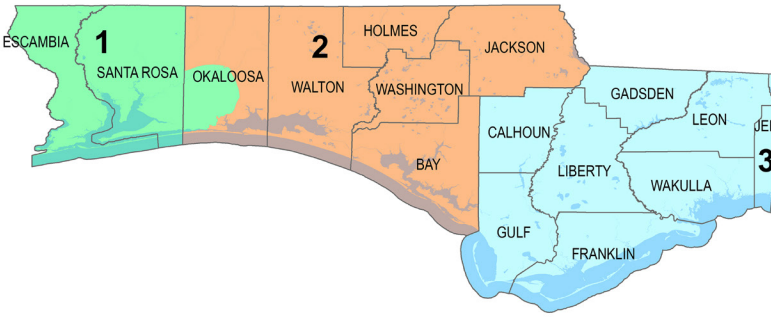
The chief function of Congress is the making of laws. In addition, the Senate has the function of advising and consenting to treaties and to certain nominations by the President. In the matter of impeachments, the House of Representatives presents the charges – a function similar to that of a grand jury – 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 2020-2022

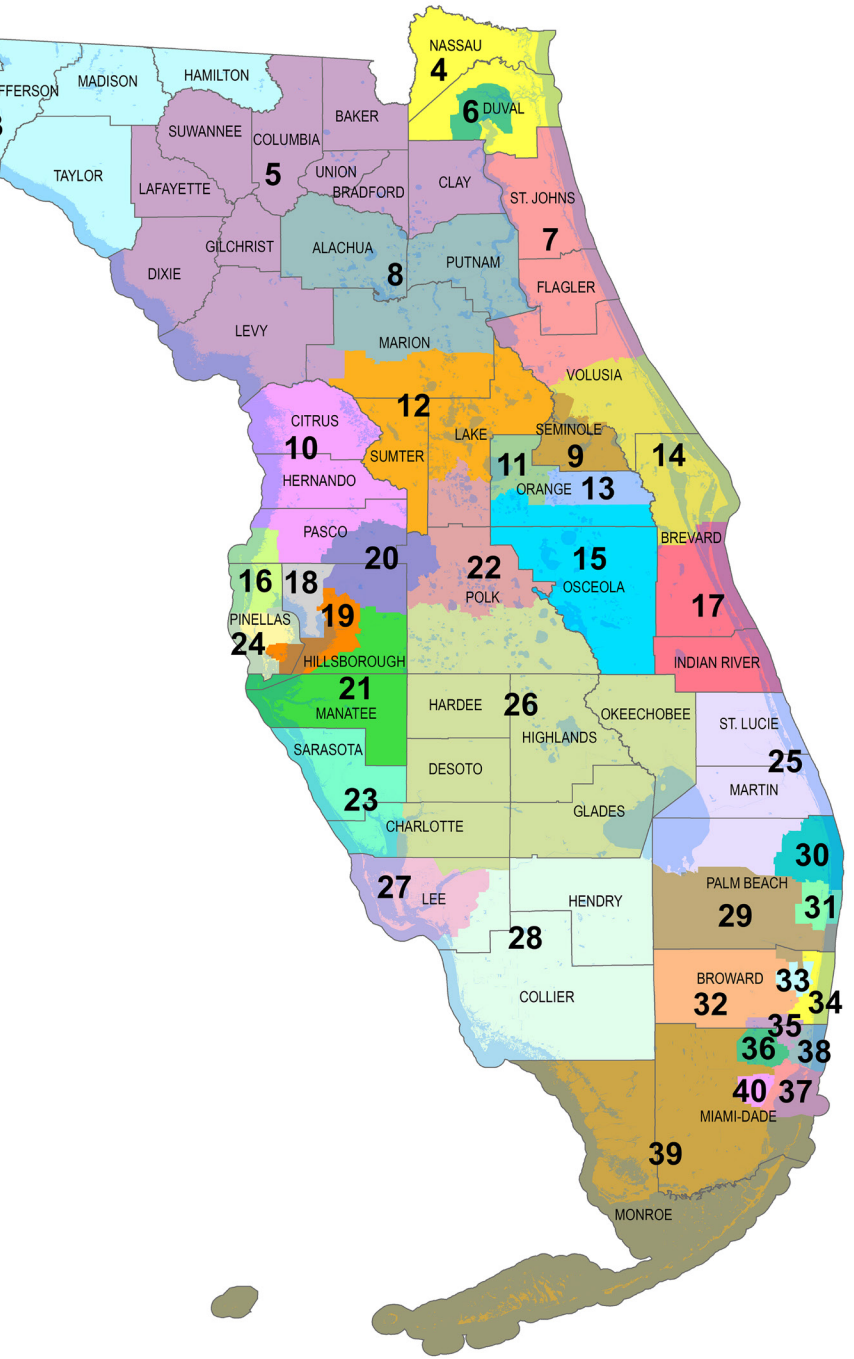
1. Matt Gaetz (R), Fort Walton Beach
2. Neal Dunn (R), Panama City
3. Kat Cammack (R), Gainesville
4. John Rutherford (R), Jacksonville
5. Al Lawson (D), Tallahassee
6. Michael Waltz (R), St. Augustine Beach
7. Stephanie N. Murphy (D), Winter Park
8. Bill Posey (R), Rockledge
9. Darren Soto (D), Kissimmee
10. Val Demings (D), Orlando
11. Daniel Webster (R), Clermont
12. Gus Bilirakis (R), Palm Harbor
13. Charlie Crist (D), St. Petersburg
14. Kathy Castor (D), Tampa
15. Scott Franklin (R), Lakeland
16. Vern Buchanan (R), Sarasota
17. Greg Steube (R), Sarasota
18. Brian Mast (R), Palm City
19. Byron Donalds (R), Naples
20. Alcee Hastings (D), Delray Beach
21. Lois Frankel (D), West Palm Beach
22. Ted Deutch (D), Boca Raton
23. Debbie Wasserman Schultz (D), Weston
24. Frederica S. Wilson (D), Miami Gardens
25. Mario Diaz-Balart (R), Miami
26. Carlos A. Gimenez (R), Miami
27. Maria E. Salazar (R), Miami


JACKSON
GADSDEN
LEON
JEFFERSON
MADISON
HAMILTON
5
CALHOUN
LIBERTY
WAKULLA
TAYLOR
SUWANNEE
COLUMBIA
BAKER
NASSAU
4
DUVAL
GULF
FRANKLIN
LAFAYETTE
UNION
BRADFORD
CLAY
ST. JOHNS
GILCHRIST
ALACHUA
3
PUTNAM
DIXIE
2
LEVY
MARION
FLAGLER
6
VOLUSIA
SUMTER
CITRUS
LAKE
SEMINOLE
7
11
10
HERNANDO
ORANGE
BREVARD
PASCO
12
15
9
8
14
POLK
OSCEOLA
PINELLAS
13
HILLSBOROUGH
INDIAN RIVER
16
HARDEE
OKEECHOBEE
ST. LUCIE
MANATEE
HIGHLANDS
DESOTO
18
SARASOTA
17
MARTIN
GLADES
CHARLOTTE
PALM BEACH
LEE
HENDRY
21
19
20
25
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BROWARD
COLLIER
23
24
27
MIAMI-DADE
26
MONROE



Senate Districts 2020-2022

District	Senator	District	Senator
1	Broxson (R)	21	Boyd (R)
2	Gainer (R)	22	Stargel (R)
3	Ausley (D)	23	Gruters (R)
4	Bean (R)	24	Brandes (R)
5	Bradley (R)	25	Harrell (R)
6	Gibson (D)	26	Albritton (R)
7	Hutson (R)	27	Rodrigues (R)
8	Perry (R)	28	Passidomo (R)
9	Brodeur (R)	29	Polsky (D)
10	Simpson (R)	30	Powell (D)
11	Bracy (D)	31	Berman (D)
12	Baxley (R)	32	Book (D)
13	Stewart (D)	33	Thurston (D)
14	Wright (R)	34	Farmer (D)
15	Torres (D)	35	Jones (D)
16	Hooper (R)	36	Diaz (R)
17	Mayfield (R)	37	Garcia (R)
18	Cruz (D)	38	Pizzo (D)
19	Rouson (D)	39	Rodriguez (R)
20	Burgess (R)	40	Taddeo (D)


NASSAU
4
6 DUVAL
FFERSON
MADISON
HAMILTON
BAKER
SUWANNEE
COLUMBIA
TAYLOR
5
UNION
LAFAYETTE
BRADFORD
CLAY
ST. JOHNS
7
GILCHRIST
ALACHUA
PUTNAM
DIXIE
8
FLAGLER
LEVY
MARION
VOLUSIA
12
CITRUS
LAKE
SEMINOLE
10
SUMTER
11
9
14
HERNANDO
ORANGE
13
PASCO
BREVARD
20
22
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16
18
POLK
OSCEOLA
17
PINELLAS
19
24
HILLSBOROUGH
INDIAN RIVER
21
HARDEE
26
OKEECHOBEE
ST. LUCIE
MANATEE
HIGHLANDS
SARASOTA
DESOTO
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MARTIN
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GLADES
CHARLOTTE
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PALM BEACH
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LEE
HENDRY
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BROWARD
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COLLIER
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MIAMI-DADE
39
MONROE

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.

Glossary of Legislative Terms

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 117th Congress



Washington, D.C. is the seat of the nation's government. The names and addresses of Florida's representatives in the legislative branch may be found 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 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 have most of the prerogatives of Representatives, with the important exception of the right to vote on matters before the House.

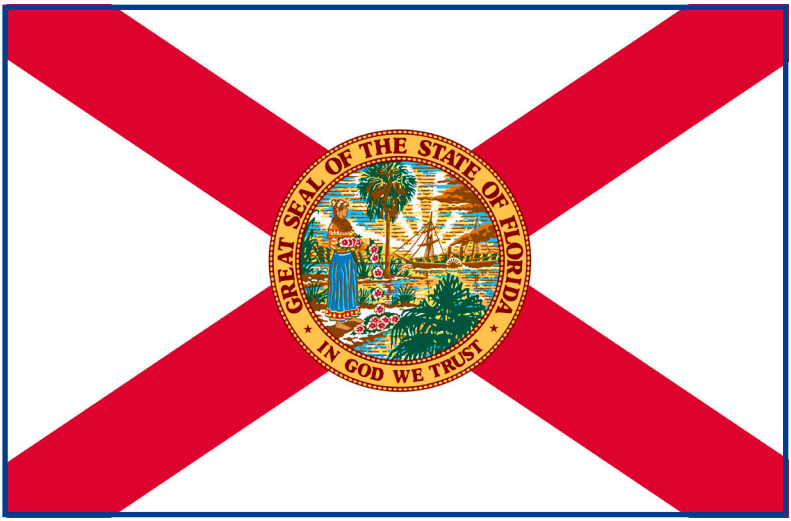
Under the provisions of Section 2 of the 20th Amendment to the United States Constitution, Congress must assemble at least once every year, at noon on the third day of January, unless by law it appoints a different day. A Congress lasts for two years, commencing in January of the year following the biennial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

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

United States Senate

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

Did You Know...



State Flag of Florida

- 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.

Did You Know...

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





Did You Know...



Sidewalk view of the Florida House

- 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.Floridahousedc.org).
- 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.
- 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).

Did You Know...

- 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

- "*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

Official State Designations

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

Butterfly:
Zebra Longwing



Bird:
Mockingbird



Shell:
Horse conch



Wildflower:
Coreopsis



Animal:
Florida panther



Beverage:
Orange juice



Saltwater mammal:
Porpoise



Marine mammal:
Manatee



Reptile:
American alligator



Tree:
Sabal palmetto palm



Photos courtesy of the Florida State Archives

Hey Kids, visit us on the web!

We have games, puzzles, fun facts,
and more about our state.
www.flsenate.gov/senatekids





Wilton Simpson
President of the Senate

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

Visit the Florida Senate homepage:
www.flsenate.gov