



Good Morning!

Tomorrow my staff and I will return to the Capitol for the first week of the 2020 Legislative Session. We expect the next sixty-days to be extremely busy as we prepare the state budget and act on issues impacting all Floridians.

The Florida Senate will convene session at 9:30 AM on Tuesday, January 14th. Governor Ron DeSantis will also be delivering the State of the State Address in the Florida House of Representatives Chambers on Tuesday at 11:00 AM. You can watch these events and more on the [Senate Calendar](#) or tune in to watch streaming unedited coverage on [The Florida Channel](#). I invite you to like my [Facebook](#) page and follow me on [Twitter](#) for live updates during session.



I consider it a great honor to represent District 17. Please share [this link](#) with your friends and family so that they too can sign up for the [Mayfield Minute](#).

If you or someone you know needs my assistance, please don't hesitate to contact my office. My staff and I are here to serve you!

Legislation Update

I recently **filed** the following legislation:

[SB 1310 Hunting and Fishing Sales Tax Holiday](#) provides for a sales tax holiday on hunting and fishing supplies — including guns, ammo, fishing rods and other items — on the Saturday before Labor Day.

[SB 1414 Fish and Wildlife Activities](#) increases the number of authorized license-free fishing days to allow more anglers to get out and experience our state's natural resources. This legislation also expands the list of invasive species that are prohibited from being kept or sold to include the Green Iguana and Black & White Tegus.

I also **co-sponsored** the following legislation:

[SB 670 Smoking on Public Beaches and in Public Parks](#) which would allow municipalities and counties the ability to restrict smoking within the boundaries of any of their own public parks or beaches.

[SB 820 Health Insurance Prior Authorization](#) prohibits health maintenance organizations (HMOs) from excluding coverage for certain cancer treatment drugs. Also prohibits health insurers and HMOs from requiring fail first protocols for patients with Stage 4 Metastatic Cancer.

[SB 1044 Animal Cruelty](#) also known as “Allie’s Law”, requires veterinarians to report suspected animal cruelty in certain circumstances and provides that failure to report suspected animal cruelty is grounds for discipline.

Florida Forever Acquisition at Williams Wetland Preserve

The Florida Department of Environmental Protection has acquired a conservation easement totaling approximately 3,562 acres within the Etoniah/Cross Florida Greenway Florida Forever Project, which is part of the Williams Wetland Preserve tract in Putnam County and adjacent to Rice Creek Conservation Area.



The Williams Wetland Preserve is composed of mesic flatwoods, bottomland forest, floodplain swamp and sandhill ecosystems. Numerous seepage streams originate along the western ridge of the property and flow eastward into Rice Creek, a tributary of the St. Johns River. Through past surveys, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission has discovered that the property is home to the largest population of spotted turtles in Florida, 45 reptile and amphibian species, and over 100 species of birds. Additionally, 160 acres of timberland within the easement will be conserved specifically for gopher tortoise habitat.

Florida Forever is the state's conservation and recreation lands acquisition program, a blueprint for conserving our natural resources and renewing our commitment to conserve our natural and cultural heritage.

There is approximately \$122 million remaining in the Florida Forever Trust Fund. During the 2019 Session the Florida Legislature invested an additional \$33 million in the Florida Forever program to ensure the protection of our environment and natural resources for generations to come.

District 17 Highlights

Piper Aircrafts Apprenticeship Program

During the Fall of 2018, [Piper Aircraft, Inc.](#), headquartered in Vero Beach, launched an accredited apprenticeship program for local high school graduates in cooperation with Indian River State College.

The program was created in response to the increasing demand for high quality manufacturing candidates at Piper Aircraft. The two-year program, includes a combination of on-the-job training as well as classroom instruction designed to qualify participants as Journeyman in Aircraft Assembly.

With the application process for their 2020 Apprenticeship Program now open, Piper Aircraft is hosting an informational session for prospective apprentices on **January 15th** at 6:00 p.m. at their factory in Vero Beach. The session will include a brief presentation, the opportunity for prospective students and their guardians to meet with current apprentices. Program coordinators will also be available to provide guidance on the application process and timing.

For more information or to RSVP call (772) 299-2859, email apprentice@piper.com or visit piper.com/careers.

Brevard Re-Entry Portal Opening

This past week Representative Tyler Sirois and I had the opportunity to join the Brevard Re-Entry Portal for their grand opening celebration. During the 2019 Session, our Brevard Legislative Delegation was able to secure \$500,000 to support the Brevard Re-Entry Portal which works to facilitate the successful reintegration of those recently released from incarceration that are returning to Brevard County.



This Re-entry initiative will allow those individuals access to important services with the intent of helping them successfully transition back into the community. This includes support services like housing, employment, cognitive-behavioral intervention, health care, job placement and training, mentoring, and counseling. This program also increases public safety through the reduction of recidivism.

If you would like to support the Center, please consider donating items from their wish list: For women (petite to plus sizes, new/gently used) shoes, underwear, slacks, tops. For men (up to 4x, new/gently used) shoes, underwear, work boots, work clothes, tennis shoes. Additionally they are in need of deodorant, shaving cream, dental floss, toothbrushes, toothpaste, perfume/cologne, feminine products, shampoo/conditioner, hand sanitizer, towels, wash clothes, soap, gift cards (walmart), gas cards, non-perishable food, back packs.

The Reentry Center of Brevard is the collaboration of My Community Cares, the Reentry Task Force of Brevard, and the Brevard Homeless Coalition. For more information on this program call (321) 305-6027 or visit their [website](#).

Update on High Speed Passenger Rail Act to John's Island

This past week I spoke with residents at the John's Island community in Vero Beach to discuss [SB 676: High Speed Passenger Rail Safety Act](#). This important legislation would ensure that rail corridors and railway operating equipment are safe and well maintained, pedestrian and road crossings are gated, high-risk corridors are fenced, and local emergency service providers are properly trained for increased risks resulting from high speed train accidents.

The [Alliance for Safe Trains](#), a grassroots organization advocating for improved rail safety measures, also presented at the forum. They revealed that the Florida East Coast Rail is one of the deadliest in the United States, and that southern Florida's new high speed passenger rail line, Virgin Trains has the worst per-mile death rate of the nation's 821 railroads.

This high speed passenger rail service provides service between Miami and West Palm Beach, and is expanding service from West Palm Beach to Orlando. With the rail service operating at speeds of 80-125mph as it moves through our communities, it should be our priority to ensure the safety of both the passengers, and the citizens of the communities that will be impacted by these trains as they travel through our neighborhoods.

Please follow me on [Twitter](#) or [Facebook](#) for live updates on this important legislation.

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



Contact Information

Melbourne Office

900 E. Strawbridge Ave.
Melbourne, FL 32901
(321) 409-2025

Staff: [Adrienne Cronebaugh](#)
[Yvette Campbell](#)

Tallahassee Office

322 Senate Office Building
404 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1100
(850) 487-5017

Staff: [Lauren Lange](#)

Vero Beach Office

Administration Building B
1801 27th Street
Vero Beach, FL 32960
(772) 226-1970

Staff: [Kaitlyn Currey](#)
