

LORANNE AUSLEY
STATE SENATOR DISTRICT 3

THE AUSLEY UPDATE



Session Wrap-Up

SENATOR AUSLEY



THE WEEKLY RECAP

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Session has adjourned Sine Die! The 2022 Legislative Session ended a few days late on Monday at 1:03 pm, after we took a final vote on the budget, followed by the ceremonial drop of the handkerchiefs by the Senate and House Sergeants at Arms.

THE BUDGET

The General Appropriations Act passed both the House and Senate with

overwhelming bipartisan support, and it includes many wins for the citizens of Florida and Senate District 3. We listened to the people across North Florida and worked hard to secure more than **\$70 million** for 37 community projects. These are local necessities such as children's health and welfare, addressing food insecurity, schools, airports, courthouses, and jails... wetland and riverbank restoration...and so much more! Other budget successes include **\$6.4 million for local cultural and historic preservation grants and \$700,000 for our parks** - ALL right here in Senate District 3.

I am THRILLED that our hard-working **state employees will receive a 5.38% across-the-board pay increase!** This historic increase is long overdue and incredibly well deserved. Thank you to every single state employee for the work that you do for our state and our citizens! Law Enforcement and Correctional Officers as well as Assistant State Attorneys and Public Defenders will receive additional dollars to help make their salaries more competitive. In this budget, we also ensure that every state employee makes at least \$15 per hour.

You know that broadband and early learning have been my priorities and this budget moves the needle significantly on both fronts. **\$400 MILLION for broadband expansion** (on top of the federal broadband dollars) will bring unprecedented opportunities for our small, rural and unserved communities to finally access high-speed internet and it can't happen fast enough.

The budget also includes a **significant increase in funding for pre-k and early education**, which will help thousands of families afford quality child-care, and make sure that every child shows up at Kindergarten ready to learn.

We also worked hard to get a last-minute increase of an **ADDITIONAL \$50 million to repair rural roads, highways, and bridges** - on top of what was already budgeted - as well as an **ADDITIONAL \$25 Million in a Rural Infrastructure Fund**. The budget also includes desperately needed housing dollars -- **\$209 million for State Housing Initiatives Partnerships**, and **\$153.3 million in affordable housing programs. \$300 million for the Rural and Family Lands Protection Program and \$168.7 million for Florida Forever programs and land acquisition** will ensure the continued protection of our precious natural resources.

There are so many other positives in this budget, but I just wanted to highlight a few - I am truly excited about what this means for all of Senate District 3.

LEGISLATION

While the budget was the highlight of the good that came out of this Session, other legislation that passed made it difficult from a policy

perspective. Bills that restrict women's health care options, marginalize kids, and make teachers' jobs more difficult will be making their way to the Governor. I am distressed by the number of otherwise good bills that were contaminated by a section of terrible policy—or outright bad bills masquerading as good ones under misleading titles. One example is the bill entitled “Local Business Protection Act,” the latest in a long line of preemption bills that will most certainly result in lawsuits and impact the budgets of small communities across Florida.

The once-a-decade redistricting process took an unprecedented turn when the Governor interjected by proposing a controversial Congressional map. While the Senate and House districts maps passed and have been upheld by the Court, the Governor has promised a veto of the unique primary/secondary Congressional map - leaving the outcome in question.

AND FINALLY

It was wonderful to be able to meet in person with constituents, elected officials and community leaders, advocacy organizations and my fellow legislators again! It was nice to see the hallways and courtyards bustling. Covid may have kept us apart for the past couple of years, but thankfully the vaccine and precautions made it possible for us to gather together safely again!

AFTER SESSION

I spent a chilly but great weekend at several events in Franklin and Wakulla County. Carrabelle held a parade to celebrate the history of Camp Gordon Johnston and to honor our veterans. It was fun to run in front of the marching band and hand out treats to all the candy-loving spectators, young and old. If you haven't visited the Camp Gordon Johnston Museum, just outside of town, you really must--the history of this former military amphibious training camp from the 1940's is fascinating. Down the road, Wakulla was celebrating its 179th birthday, and I had a piece of the delicious, GIANT birthday cake in Crawfordville. Another must-see museum is the Wakulla County Museum, which houses the local historical society. Did you know that a train carried passengers from Carrabelle to Columbus GA throughout the early 1900s? Just think how wonderful it would be to get Amtrak running again across the Panhandle—wouldn't it be great to be able to go to Jacksonville or New Orleans on the train?



**Camp Gordon
Johnston Parade
and Museum
&
Wakulla's 179th
Birthday**



Thank you for the honor of serving as your Senator!

Please call on me or my staff if we can assist you:

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850-487-5003 - Tallahassee Office

Sincerely,

Loranne Ausley
Senator, District 3

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