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BILL GALVANO

State Representative, District 68 ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

OFFICIAL LEGISLATIVE UPDATE - 2007



Galvano leads discussion on important legislation on the House floor.

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Dear Friend/Neighbor:

As your state representative, it continues to be my great privilege to serve you in Tallahassee. This year the Florida Legislature took on several important issues none as complex as property insurance and property taxes. Although we made progress, our work on these issues is not complete.

As the Chairman of the Bay Area Legislative Delegation, I was successful in creating the Tampa Bay Area Regional Transportation Authority (TBARTA). The Legislature expanded the Office of Child Abuse Protection, which was created last year, to include adoption of children in Florida's foster care. In addition, we brought \$85 million home to Manatee County for important projects like Wares Creek and Manatee Community College. I encourage you to take the time to read my newsletter.

If I may be of assistance to you, please do not hesitate to contact me. It is my honor to represent your interests in the Florida House of Representatives.

Sincerely,

Galvano Takes Up Tiff's Initiative

On December 7, 2005, Tiffany Olson and her boyfriend were tragically killed in an accident. Tiffany's mother, Christine Olson, was not immediately notified that her daughter had been involved in an accident. Six hours had passed before Ms. Olson was notified about her daughter's death and her daughter's body was now with the medical examiner. Her mother did not get to see her child until the following morning when the medical examiner's office reopened.

Through this tragedy comes a great idea, a triumph and determination of a mother. Ms. Olson contacted my district office, and we immediately contacted the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (DHSMV). Through Christine's effort, the DHSMV developed a web application that allows people to voluntarily enter their emergency contact information online. This information is accessible only by law enforcement. DHSMV was recently recognized with an award for Excellence in Customer Service for its creation and promotion of the Emergency Contact initiative. Currently, over 600,000 people are using Tiff's initiative.

Please take the steps to ensure that your loved ones can be contacted by logging on to <http://www.hsmv.state.fl.us/ECIHistory1.htm>. Go to drivers license menu.



Christine Olson, Rep. Bill Galvano, DHSMV Director Electra Theodorides-Bustle, Leg. Affairs Admin. Steven Fielder

Rep. Galvano's Hurricane Emergency Numbers

Manatee County Emergency Mgmt.
(941) 749-3022

Citizens Info Center
(941) 748-4501

Salvation Army
(800) 725-2769

Statewide Emergency Management
www.floridadisaster.org

Special Needs Shelter Registration
(941) 749-3022 x3530

American Red Cross
(941) 792-8686

Pet Friendly
www.petfriendly.com

FEMA
(800) 621-FEMA



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Legislation Creates the Tampa Bay Area Regional Transportation Authority

During the 2007 legislative session, the legislature created the Tampa Bay Area Regional Transportation Authority (TBARTA). TBARTA will consider a full range of public transportation systems, i.e., express bus, bus rapid transit, light rail, commuter rail, heavy rail, roadway systems and bridges. The Authority covers the seven-county area of Citrus, Hernando, Hillsborough, Manatee, Pasco, Pinellas and Sarasota.

The legislation was a priority of Rep. Bill Galvano, who spent the last year promoting the legislation around the region. Sen. Mike Fasano (R-New Port Richey) sponsored the measure in the Senate.

The authority met the first time on August 24th.

Legislature Passes Property Tax Reforms



Rep. Galvano supported a fair and reasonable tax relief plan that is designed to save Florida homeowners nearly \$32 billion over the next five years. However, those savings come in two phases-Phase I this year, and Phase II, which requires voter approval of a constitutional amendment in 2008.

Phase I - This phase provides \$15 billion in immediate relief by rolling back property tax rates and capping what local governments can spend each year. In Manatee County that means an additional cut of approximately 4.8%. All property owners will receive this relief. Also, capping local government spending provides needed relief to non-homesteaded properties, which currently have no protection against runaway taxes or spending. *(cont'd on next column)*



Gov. Crist and Rep. Galvano worked together on property tax relief.

Phase II - On January 29, 2008, if 60% of Florida voters agree, property taxes will be reduced by another \$16 billion in the form of a super homestead exemption. The new exemption applies to any home on which you have filed for a homestead exemption and stays with you if you choose to move. The average savings for a homeowner under this plan will be 44% or \$1306. It is important to note that no homeowner will lose the current Save Our Homes exemption unless they choose the new super homestead exemption.

Although we made progress, we still have more work to do in order to make property taxes more affordable.

Manatee County Budget Highlights

Dream Oaks Camp for Special Needs Children	\$50,000
Norma Lloyd Park	\$200,000
Palmetto Estuary Preserve	\$200,000
One Stop Community Resource Center	\$500,000
Wares Creek Flood Control Project	\$1,000,000
SR 70 Improvements	\$1,080,000
Manatee Rural Health ER Diversion	\$2,000,000
Port Manatee Improvements	\$7,000,000
Manatee County Technical Institute	\$7,200,000
Manatee Memorial Hospital	\$7,700,000
Manatee Community College	\$26,500,000



Governor Crist signs the Arnold Act into law.

DUI Offenders Face Increased Penalties

HB 25, better known as the "Adam Arnold Act," strengthens sentencing for offenders who leave the scene of an accident involving death or personal injury. The law uses a ranking chart of "offensive severity" in sentencing to ensure that judges may not give a downward departure sentence lower than the minimum sentence.

Adam Arnold was 16 years old when he was tragically killed. The offender left the scene of the accident and was given three years probation for the accident that took the life of Adam Arnold. With the passage of the Arnold Act, violators will now be prosecuted to the full extent of the law.

Keeping Athletes Drug-Free

Use of steroids to enhance athletic performance is not limited to professional athletics. In recent years, there has been great alarm at the rise of steroid use among high school athletes. HB 461, creates a deterrent to prevent students from using these illegal and potentially harmful substances. The new law requires a one year random anabolic steroid test for high school athletes who participate in football, baseball and weightlifting.



Battling Childhood Obesity

Childhood obesity has increased at an alarming rate in recent years, due in large part to the increasingly sedentary lifestyle of many children. This year we passed HB 967, which requires more physical education for students in our state. Public elementary students must now participate in 150 minutes of physical education weekly. It also encourages students in middle and high school to participate in 225 minutes weekly.