

STATE / LOCAL WEEKLY REPORT

May 6- May 10, 2013

*The weekly report comprises a variety of media sources, including news articles, lobbyist reports and information gathered through the OIA.

LEGISLATIVE ISSUES

*The following update contains information provided by Jess McCarty

The following is a recap of the end of session key bills issues and appropriations of interest to Miami-Dade County following the end of session last Friday. With a couple of exceptions noted below, everything is still subject to action by the Governor as the Legislature transmits bills to him in the upcoming months.

1. **Ocean Outfalls - PASSED** - SB 444 by Sen. Diaz de la Portilla (companion bill HB 707 by Rep. Manny Diaz); allows 5% of treated flows to be discharged during peak flows resulting in an \$820 million savings to Miami-Dade ratepayers. The Governor signed SB 444 into law on April 24.

2. **Senior centers/Local Service Providers/senior meal programs - FUNDED** - The Conference Report on SB 1500 includes funding at \$7.5 million for senior centers, Local Service Providers and senior meal programs in Miami-Dade at line 416. Additional funding is provided at line 416 for:

- \$500,000 Little Havana Activity Center Adult Day Care
- \$500,000 City of Hialeah - Hot Meals
- \$200,000 Hialeah Gardens - Hot Meals
- \$250,000 Little Havana Activity Center - Local Services Program (LSP)
- \$1,000,000 Southwest Social Services - Badia Senior Center

3. **Early Learning/School Readiness – FUNDED** - The Conference Report on SB 1500 (Education conference, Rep. Fresen) includes an additional \$5 million in equity allocation funding for School Readiness programs earmarked for those Early Learning Coalitions that received funding reductions in Fiscal Year 12-13, including the Miami-Dade/Monroe Early Learning Coalition, which will receive an additional \$2,062,519.

4. **Elections - PASSED** - HB 7013 by the House Elections Committee (companion bill SB 600 by Sen. Latvala) passed both the House and Senate on the last day. HB 7013 increases early voting days, hours and sites; makes it a first degree misdemeanor to possess more than 2 absentee ballots except the voter's own ballot and ballots of immediate family members; allows voters to cure an absentee ballot without a signature, among other provisions. The Final version of HB 7013 did not include language allowing the Secretary of State to place Supervisors of Elections in "noncompliant status".

5. **Citizens Property Insurance - PASSED** - SB 1770 by Sen. Simmons (companion bill HB 909 by Rep. Wood) is intended to gradually reduce over time the number of policies in the state-run Citizens Property Insurance Corporation, but is substantially scaled back from the

original bills filed. SB 1770 does not increase the current 10% cap on annual Citizens' rate increases (early in the session, these bills would have increased the cap to 13% or 15% and contained other provisions that could have increased rates further). The final version of SB 1770 reduces the maximum amount of coverage available from Citizens from \$1 million to \$700,000 over three years and prohibits Citizens coverage for new buildings seaward of the coastal construction line. It also authorizes Citizens to set up a clearinghouse to shop new policies in the private market.

6. **County Medicaid Contributions - PASSED** - The Conference Report to SB 1520 moves County Medicaid Contributions from review of individual bills to a formula-based system. Initially the formula is based on Medicaid payments, but transitions to Medicaid enrollees over 7 years. The estimated fiscal impact on Miami-Dade is \$3.4 million in the first year and \$10.1 million over 7 years, and these amounts are in addition to the extra \$7 million in Medicaid payments over 5 years the Legislature imposed last session. The Conference Report on SB 1520 also places Miami-Dade's Medicaid contributions on an upward trajectory even though our Medicaid contributions have remained flat over the last decade or so. Five of our 6 Miami-Dade Senators voted against the Conference Report on SB 1520 on the Senate floor.

7. **Dolphins/Sun Life Stadium - DIED** - SB 306 by Sen. Braynon; HB 165 by Rep. Gonzalez; SB 1828; HB 7127 all died in messages from the Senate to the House when the House did not take up any of these bills. SB 306 and HB 165 would have provided a \$3 million annual sales tax incentive and authority to raise mainland bed tax from 6% to 7% to fund Sun Life Stadium renovation.

8. **SW 157 Avenue Canal Interconnect - FUNDED** - The Conference Report on SB 1500 includes \$1.1 million for the SW 157 Avenue Canal Interconnect project at line 1640c.

9. **Living wage preemption - DIED** - HB 655 by House Majority Leader Precourt passed but without the living/responsible wage preemption, which the Senate refused to accept. HB 655 as passed preempts local governments from regulating sick time and other employee benefits for private employers not doing business with local government. There are exceptions for domestic violence and sexual abuse leave ordinances.

10. **Wage theft preemption - DIED** - HB 1125 by Rep. Goodson passed the House but died in messages; SB 1216 by Sen. Bradley died on the Senate floor when consideration was temporarily postponed and the Senate never returned to the bill. In any event, both SB 1216 and HB 1125 included a grandfather for Miami-Dade's wage theft program.

11. **Florida Department of Transportation Package – DIED** – HB 7127 by Rep. Artiles (companion bill SB 1132 by Sen. Brandes) was the FDOT package and it died in the closing hours of session. HB 7127 included language creating a strategic airport investment initiative similar to FDOT's seaport program, and also included language leading to consolidation of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) statewide. Language keeping Miami-Dade as its own MPO was in HB 7127 throughout the session, but dropped out of the bill on the last day when the Senate adopted a 122-page strike-all amendment that also included the Dolphins/Sun Life Stadium language. HB 7127 died in returning messages to the House when the House did not take it up before the session ended.

12. **Miami-Dade express lane toll revenue - DIED** - Sen. Rene Garcia ran an amendment to the FDOT package, HB 7127, on the Senate floor that would have required all express lane toll revenues generated in Miami-Dade County to in Miami-Dade, but Sen. Brandes, the bill's

sponsor, would not accept the amendment and asked that the issue be further studied for possible inclusion in the FDOT package next session.

13. **Local preference preemption** – **DIED** - SB 684 by Sen. Hays; HB 307 by Rep. Tobia and HB 1017 by Rep. Fresen would have preempted county local preference programs and created a preference program where Florida businesses have preference over out-of-state in contracts by the state and local governments. These bills died in committee.

14. **In-house labor preemption** – **DIED** - SB 602 by Sen. Hukill and HB 687 by Rep. McBurney would have eliminated the ability of local governments to use in-house labor for construction projects in limits circumstances. These bills died in committee.

15. **Ban on internet cafes/maquinitas** – **PASSED** - HB 155 by Reps. Trujillo & Patronis (companion bill SB 1030 by Sen. Thrasher) clarifies state law to ban Internet cafes and maquinitas. HB 155 was signed into law by the Governor on April 10.

16. **Miami Military Museum** - **FUNDED** - The Conference Report on SB 1500 includes \$500,000 for the Miami Military Museum at line 3149.

17. **Film/TV Incentives** - **NOT FUNDED** - The Senate, House and Governor could not agree on additional funding for film and TV incentives. Film and TV incentives were funded last year in the amount of \$42 million, and these incentives were immediately used. There are no additional state funds for tax incentives to attract film and TV projects to Florida.

18. **FRS reform/closure of pension plan to new employees** - **DIED** - HB 7011 by Rep. Brodeur would have closed the FRS pension plan to new employees. HB 7011 passed the House on a party line vote, but died on the Senate floor by a vote of 18-22.

19. **Ban on texting while driving** - **PASSED** - SB 52 by Sen. Detert (companion bill HB 13 by Rep. Holder) bans texting while driving as a secondary offense. SB 52 passed in the closing days of session.

20. **Red light camera repeal** – **DIED** – HB 4011 by Reps. Campbell and Trujillo would have repealed authority for local government red light camera programs, but HB 4011 died in committee. Red light camera language did pass in HB 7125, the Department of Highway Safety & Motor Vehicles package, that further restricts red light camera enforcement on rights turns; allows a person who receives a red light camera notice of violation 60 days to request a hearing without paying a fee in advance; and provides a local hearing process for red light camera appeals.

21. **Health insurance/Affordable Care Act** – **DIED** - SB 1816 by Sen. Negron would have used up to \$50 billion in federal funds over the next decade available under the Affordable Care Act to provide premium assistance to people with incomes up to 138% of the federal poverty level. HB 7169 by Rep. Corcoran would not use federal funds and use \$237 million annually in state funds to cover low-income people by providing a \$2,000 voucher to buy insurance. The House and Senate could not reach agreement on a package both chambers could pass.

22. **Drones** – **PASSED** – SB 92 by Sen. Negron (companion bill HB 119 by Rep. Workman) requires a search warrant for the use of drones by law enforcement except in the case of emergencies, such as searches for missing children or escaped fugitives.

23. **Prohibition on firearms purchases by mentally-ill persons – PASSED** – HB 1355 by Rep. Barbara Watson (Senate companion bill SB 1000 by Sen. Gibson) expands the prohibition on mentally-ill persons purchasing a firearms to include persons who have had an involuntary examination under the Baker Act and who have voluntarily admitted themselves for outpatient or inpatient treatment if certain circumstances are met.

24. **Library grants - FUNDED** - The Conference Report on SB 1500 includes full funding of statewide library grants to local governments in the amount of \$24.7 million at line 3137.

25. **National Mortgage Settlement/Affordable Housing – PASSED/FUNDED** – SB 1852 by Senate Appropriations Committee (Companion bill HB 7111 by House Approps) passed the last week of session. SB 1852 includes a spending plan for Florida's \$200 million share of the National Mortgage Settlement, which was appropriated as follows:

- \$50 million for the State Apartment Incentive Loan Program (SAIL) (\$25 million for rental units for the elderly and \$25 million for rental units for extremely-low-income persons);
- \$10 million for Florida Housing Finance Corporation to fund the construction or rehabilitation of units through SAIL;
- \$40 million for the State Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP) program;
- \$10 million to fund a competitive grant program for housing for homeless persons;
- \$10 million to fund a competitive grant program for housing developments for persons with developmental disabilities;
- \$10 million for capital improvement grants for certified domestic violence centers;
- \$9.1 million for the Florida Prepaid Tuition Scholarship Program for Take Stock in Children to purchase a 2-year dormitory residence advance payment contract for eligible students;
- \$5.2 million for State Court System technology solutions that expedite foreclosure cases;
- \$16 million for the State Court System for supplemental resources to reduce the backlog of pending foreclosure cases;
- \$9.7 million to the Clerks of Court to assist the courts with processing foreclosure cases;
- \$10 million for legal aid services for low and moderate-income homeowners facing foreclosure;
- \$20 million for Habitat for Humanity of Florida for the acquisition and rehabilitation or reconstruction of existing housing stock for low-income affordable housing.

Elections

The House took up HB 7013, the Senate's elections package, Friday afternoon and adopted a strike-all amendment that made modifications to the Senate's version of HB 7013. HB 7013 then went back to the Senate and the Senate concurred in the House amendment. The same version of HB 7013 passed both chambers and **HB 7013 was presented to the Governor today** (the Gov. must act on this bill by 5/24/13).

The final version of HB 7013 included all of the Senate provisions related to expanded early voting sites, days and hours, and differed from the prior Senate version in the following ways:

- Removed provisions authorizing the Secretary of State to place a Supervisor of Elections on "non-compliant" status;
- Changed the crime of possessing more than 2 absentee ballots (other than the voter's own ballot or those of immediate family members) from a 3rd Degree felony to a 1st Degree misdemeanor;
- Required each Supervisor of Elections to post an election-preparedness report on the Supervisor's website rather than filing it with the Board of County Commissioners;
- Expanded late voter registration provisions for military voters to include voters who have returned from a "military deployment" or "activation," as opposed to a combat zone or forward-deployed area;
- Allowed voters seeking to cure an absentee ballot without a signature to submit the required affidavit through 5 p.m. on the day before the election instead of 5 p.m. on the Sunday before;
- Eliminated the Presidential Primary Date Selection Committee and provided instead that the primary dates will be on the first Tuesday that the major political parties' rules allow for allocating delegates without penalty;
- Provided that the gifts law and honoraria law apply to Committees of Continuous Existence ("CCEs") and reporting individuals or procurement employees through September 30, 2013, when CCEs are de-certified under the campaign finance bill;
- Changed the effective date of the bill from July 1, 2013 to January 1, 2014.

Dolphins Bill

The Dolphins bills died in messages from the Senate to the House when the House did not take up any of the bills with the Dolphins language on them prior to the end of session at around 7:15 pm last Friday.

The Senate had passed the Dolphins bill, SB 306, as well as SB 1828, which had the substance of SB 306 amended on to it. The Senate also amended part of the Dolphins bill (the framework for a competitive process to award state sales tax incentives) onto the FDOT package, HB 7127, which the Senate re-titled "an act related to economic development" to accommodate this amendment.

All three of these bills, SB 306, SB 1828 and HB 7127 died in messages from the Senate to the House when the House didn't hear any of these bills prior to the end of session.

Appropriations

On Thursday, The Governor was presented with the general appropriations act SB 1500 by Appropriations Committee (Relating to Appropriations) and HB 7007 by Economic Development and Tourism Subcommittee, Trujillo (Relating to Economic Development). The Governor has until May 24, 2013 to act on the bills:

SB 1500: General Appropriations; Providing moneys for the annual period beginning July 1, 2013, and ending June 30, 2014, to pay salaries, and other expenses, capital outlay - buildings, and other improvements, and for other specified purposes of the various agencies of state government, etc. APPROPRIATION: \$74,298,188,334 Effective Date: Except as otherwise

provided herein, this act shall take effect July 1, 2013, or upon becoming law, whichever occurs later; however, if this act becomes law after July 1, 2013, then it shall operate retroactively to July 1, 2013.

Here's a link to the final version of the SB 1500 as passed:
<http://static.lobbytools.com/bills/2013/pdf/1500ER.pdf>

Please click the link to view senate session summary on SB 1500:
http://static-lobbytools.s3.amazonaws.com/press/56465_senate_session_summary_s_1500_appropriations.pdf

HB 7007: General Economic Development: Establishes Economic Development Programs Evaluation; revises date on which DEO & Enterprise Florida, Inc., are required to report on business climate & economic development in state; provides for exemption from tax imposed under ch. 212, F.S., for certain machinery & equipment; requires DEO to analyze each economic development incentive application; requires DEO to publish on website specified information concerning state investment in economic development programs; provides for expansion of boundaries of enterprise zones that meet certain requirements; provides for state's guarantee of certain federal loans to local governments; creates Triumph Gulf Coast, Inc., as nonprofit corporation; requires corporation to create & administer Recovery Fund for benefit of disproportionately affected counties, etc. Effective Date: upon becoming a law

Here's a link to the final version of the bill as passed:
<http://static.lobbytools.com/bills/2013/pdf/7007ER.pdf>

Florida Association of Counties

Today, the Florida Association of Counties (FAC) held a teleconference/webinar to present its end session briefing. The general categories included: Health and Human Services, Finance and Tax, Administration, Public Safety, Growth Management & Transportation and Environment.

To access the power point presentation of FAC's legislative "wrap-up", please click the link:
<http://www.fl-counties.com/docs/pdfs/2013-legislative-briefing-051013-final1.pdf?sfvrsn=2>

LEGISLATIVE NEWS

2013 Session Summary: Economic Development

*Source Florida Current

Gov. Rick Scott received his top priority of a manufacturing tax cut, legislative leaders have pork projects to take home and **Major League Baseball** teams can qualify for more tax breaks for spring training facilities.

With a budget surplus to splash around for the first time in three years, there was something for everyone in this year's budget. Well, except for the **Miami Dolphins** and other professional sports franchises looking for taxpayer money for stadium upgrades.

Lawmakers voted to eliminate the sales tax on machinery and equipment purchased by manufacturers in the final week of session, albeit with a constitutionally questionable vote in the House.

Scott was not so fortunate in the economic incentives he requested, getting about 25 percent of the \$278 million he asked for in his budget recommendation. That leaves hefty local projects like \$50 million for a bike trail stretching from coast to coast across central Florida under threat of a line-item veto.

Although baseball teams will be eligible for state tax dollars to move from one side of the state to the other, the Dolphins, **Jacksonville Jaguars**, **Daytona International Speedway** and a budding Orlando soccer franchise came up short in their quest for taxpayer subsidies.

Lawmakers in both chambers also agreed early on to fund all of the **Department of Transportation's** \$9.1 billion budget request.

Policy Note: Economic Development Budget

Source: LobbyTools

Background:

In his budget recommendation, **Gov. Rick Scott** asked lawmakers for \$278 million in economic incentives to give to businesses that grow or move to Florida and meet job, wage and capital investment goals. Legislators in both chambers, while acceding to his request for teacher raises, don't appear keen on that level of taxpayer money for businesses.

Heading into budget conference meetings, the two chambers are far apart on incentive funding and nowhere close to Scott's recommendation. Other economic development agencies have competing funding levels as well.

The House's budget includes just \$73 million in incentives, while the Senate offers merely \$16.2 million.

Visit Florida, the state's tourism development wing, is funded at \$54 million by the Senate and \$63.5 million by the House. Scott asked for \$75 million.

The House includes Scott's request for \$10 million in financing incentives for **Space Florida**. The Senate initially did not have any additional financing money for Space Florida, but later included \$1 million.

Scott's extra \$6 million for **Quick Response Training Program** incentives is funded by the House but not by the Senate.

A \$36 million program favored by Scott to provide monetary awards for "transformational economic development" is not funded by either chamber.

There is no money for Scott's statewide business brand marketing campaign in the House budget. The Senate funds the program at \$1.5 million, half of what Scott requested.

2013 Session Summary:

Gov. Rick Scott will get only 25 percent of the \$278 million in economic incentives he asked from the Legislature, about \$45 million plus \$26.1 million in the current year's budget not expected to be used. That's down from this year's allocation of \$11 million for incentives and precludes Scott from using a hefty chunk of taxpayer money to lure a large, "game-changing" economic development project.

Lawmakers refused to spend any money on Scott's plan to market Florida's "business brand" and completely neglected a \$36 million proposal from Scott to provide monetary awards for "transformational economic development".

But Scott did receive the doubling of **Quick Response Training** incentives to \$12 million, a \$20 million boost to **Visit Florida's** budget and \$7 million of the \$10 million he requested for financing incentives for **Space Florida**.

There was little wrangling over the **Department of Transportation's** \$9.1 billion budget, however, as both chambers agreed early on in budget talks to completely fund its work program about 85 percent of its budget, which was another Scott request.

Policy Note: Economic Incentives

Source: LobbyTools

Background:

Florida has a variety of programs to use taxpayer money as encouragement for businesses to expand their existing operations or to move to the Sunshine State. Most of the programs involve tax breaks for performance requirements that businesses receive for adding jobs at an average wage and making a minimum capital investment in the state. Other programs, like the Quick Action Closing Fund, give companies upfront taxpayer money.

The incentives and the upfront money specifically, have been targeted by lawmakers for more accountability and transparency. They've been spurred by cases such as Digital Domain, a tech company that specialized in special effects for movie production companies, which received \$20 million from the state in 2009 before going bankrupt this past year.

Gov. Rick Scott asked lawmakers for \$278 million in economic incentives in his budget recommendation, a significant jump from the current budget of \$111 million. Meanwhile, lawmakers want to put more controls and increase reporting requirements for Scott's Department of Economic Opportunity, which administers the incentives with Enterprise Florida, public-private economic development arm. Bills to do so, SB 446, SB 406, SB 572, HB 7007, SB 1024 and HB 563 are moving through committees.

2013 Session Summary:

Lawmakers took a skeptical view of economic incentives this year, lowering the amount of total taxpayer money allotted to lure business to expand or relocate to Florida (see Economic Development Budget Policy Note). But they also imposed more-strict accountability measures to make sure businesses follow through on jobs and wages promised in incentive contracts.

Measures requiring more justification of the "economic benefits" of an economic development project, streamlining the reporting requirements for incentive programs and requiring more information about incentive projects to be posted online by the Department of Economic Opportunity were passed in HB 7007. Greater oversight measures, however, like requiring surety bonds from companies looking to pull down upfront incentives in the Quick Action Closing Fund and Innovation Incentive Fund programs, failed to make it to Gov. Rick Scott's desk.

Wary of defunct projects like Digital Domain that lost taxpayer money, lawmakers pushed for more accountability for incentive projects. But Scott's administration will be publicizing successful projects and contrasting those under former Gov. Charlie Crist's administration, such as Digital Domain, which went around the normal incentive vetting process.

For evidence, look no further than Scott's highly-publicized deal to bring the Hertz rental car company's headquarters to Fort Myers, bringing up to 700 jobs along for the ride. The company could receive up to \$84 million in tax credits and incentives over 20 years as part of the deal.

Also, despite an earlier recommendation from a Senate panel, the full Senate never voted to confirm Jesse Panuccio as DEO executive director. Panuccio will remain in the position until at least next year, giving the Senate another chance to confirm his appointment.

Updates:

May 7, 2013: Gov. Rick Scott announced the Hertz rental car company is moving its headquarters from New Jersey to Fort Myers. The company is eligible for up to \$84 million -- \$68 million of it to be parceled out over 20 years -- if it meets jobs, wage and capital investment goals. The incentive deal is projected to create 700 jobs.

May 3, 2013: The Senate adjourned on the final day of session without confirming Scott's appointment of Jesse Panuccio as DEO executive director. Panuccio will have to be reappointed by Scott and will have another shot at confirmation next year. Also, more accountability measures for incentives were passed in HB 7007 along with Scott's top priority of a manufacturing tax break, but stopped short of the stricter measures contemplated by lawmakers this session.

Policy Note: Internet Sales Tax

Source: LobbyTools

Background:

Retailers have complained for years about investing more in physical stores, employees and local taxes while still being saddled with a sales tax on merchandise that online merchants don't have to pay. Other states have made deals with **Amazon** to collect the tax as the behemoth online firm sets up a warehouse in a state and chases same-day delivery. Florida has yet to do so, however, and lawmakers in favor of bills to collect the tax want to offset it with other tax cuts.

The **Senate Commerce and Tourism Committee** has already inserted Scott's manufacturing tax cuts into its version of the Internet sales tax bill (**SB 316**). Also included in the bill are cuts to the communication services tax, which has the backing of **Senate President Don Gaetz**, who thinks a reduction in the tax on cable and telephone bills is the best way to return the Internet sales tax to taxpayers. The House, however, has been less enthusiastic about Internet sales tax bills than the Senate.

2013 session summary:

Lawmakers from both sides of the Capitol rotunda searched for ways to make the imposition of an Internet sales tax “revenue neutral” this year.

Yet despite **Gov. Rick Scott’s** earlier stance that he would sign a bill to collect sales taxes on online purchases if it was offset with other tax cuts, sponsors of the bill this year said his office quashed the measure’s momentum.

Sen. Nancy Detert’s bill, **SB 316**, initially included Scott’s manufacturing tax cut and a cut in communication services taxes on phone and cable bills as a way to offset the online sales tax. **Rep. Ritch Workman**, R-Melbourne, pushed the back-to-school sales tax holiday and the possible reduction in the overall sales tax to make the measure revenue neutral.

But both lawmakers told *The Florida Current* [Scott’s office didn’t want the bill](#).

Updates:

May 7, 2013: The **U.S. Senate** voted 69-27 for a national Internet sales tax bill. Florida **Sens. Bill Nelson** and **Marco Rubio** split their votes, with Nelson in favor and Rubio against. The measure has a shaky future in the House.

May 3, 2013: Lawmakers adjourned the 2013 legislative session without a floor vote in either chamber on the Internet sales tax cut. Sponsors of the bill in both chambers said **Gov. Rick Scott’s** office [put the brakes on the bill’s momentum](#).

Redistricting

*Source: Associated Press

The Florida Supreme Court was asked Thursday to end a political battle over whether state legislators ignored new standards designed to limit political influence in drawing up new districts for themselves.

Justices presided over a nearly hour-long clash between lawyers representing the Republican-controlled Florida Legislature and those representing several groups including the League of Women Voters.

The Legislature wants the court to throw out a lawsuit challenging new districts for the state Senate. The Supreme Court last year initially rejected the Senate map but then approved a revised version during a 30-day review period.

Raoul Cantero, a former justice representing the Senate, said those upset with the new maps should not get a chance to challenge them now in a trial court.

"The constitution provides for exclusive jurisdiction in the Florida Supreme Court and any evidence had to be brought in that case," Cantero told reporters after the hearing.

But Adam Schachter, a lawyer representing the groups challenging the redistricting plan, said a trial is needed so that evidence can be collected to determine if legislators violated the "Fair Districts" amendments that voters passed in 2010.

Those amendments mandate that legislators can't draw legislative or Congressional districts intended to protect incumbents or members of a certain political party, a practice that is known as "gerrymandering."

Schachter said if the Supreme Court threw out the lawsuit then, "Fair Districts will be nothing more than words on a paper."

The lawsuit has already turned up documents showing top GOP officials met in late 2010 to brainstorm redistricting with political consultants and legislative staffers. Lawyers for the League are pushing to interview actual legislators about why they drew districts a certain way.

Legislative lawyers, meanwhile, have unearthed emails showing that "Fair Districts" backers worked on a map submitted as part of one lawsuit where the "underlying goal" was to increase "safe Democratic seats" and the number of "competitive seats."

Justices did not indicate when they would rule. And the majority of the court sat stone-faced and silent during the proceedings on Thursday.

But Justice Charles Canady, who was appointed by former Gov. Charlie Crist, did not hide that he was skeptical of the lawsuit.

He said accepting the Fair Districts backers' point of view would mean bring a never-ending series of lawsuits.

Local News

Miami Beach

*Source: Miami Herald

Miami Beach commissioners discuss referendum on convention center

Shortly after a Miami Beach commissioner launched a petition drive to force the city to put its billion-dollar plan to redevelop its convention center district to a public vote, Mayor Matti Herrera Bower has countered with her own suggestion.

Bower put an emergency item on Wednesday's City Commission agenda that proposes to have the City Attorney draft a ballot question that would ask residents whether the city should enter into an agreement for the project.

She is suggesting two different ballot questions. The first would ask residents to approve development of just the convention center itself, a ballroom and a hotel. As an alternative, she suggests asking voters to approve "the lease and development of city property (within) the Project site for additional uses, including retail, entertainment, and residential uses."

Commissioner Jonah Wolfson tried to take the mayor's item off of the agenda, saying that it was added at the last minute and therefore residents don't know about the proposal.

Wolfson is behind a petition drive that proposes to change the city charter so that at least 60 percent of voters must approve the sale, lease or conveyance of almost all city land within the convention center district. Currently, only a majority vote is required, and only if the city hands over publicly owned parking lots on the convention center site.

The convention center site encompasses 52-acres in the heart of South Beach. The city is close to picking a team that would revamp the convention center and add a hotel to serve conventioners as well as a ballroom. The city is also considering turning over the surrounding public land to private developers who propose to build residential units and shopping.

Here's a link to the article: <http://www.miamiherald.com/2013/05/08/3387179/miami-beach-commissioners-discuss.html>

Miami Beach approves license-plate scanners for Venetian Causeway

The Miami Beach Police Department on Wednesday got City Commission approval to use \$95,000 from the department's forfeiture fund to buy and install license -plate readers along the Venetian Causeway.

Commissioners also agreed to buy a security camera to monitor the drawbridge on the islands.

Residents had asked for the additional camera after a man died while waiting for emergency rescue workers to arrive at his Venetian Islands home. His widow said in an email that the responders told her they were delayed because the bridge had been up.

Staff had not recommended approving the additional security camera because the city already has protocol for dealing with the bridge in emergency situations. But Commissioner Jerry Libbin suggested the city approve the residents' request "for the relatively small cost and great piece of mind." Libbin said the camera would cost about \$10,000.

Commissioner Ed Tobin suggested that homeowners work with the police department to come up with the best location to place the extra camera, which would be linked to the city's Public Safety Communications Unit.

The license plate readers would monitor cars entering Miami Beach. The cameras would read motor vehicle tags, and the tag information would be compared to a database of messages that would range from vehicles or drivers involved in felonies to traffic related offenses, according to a memo from Miami Beach City Manager Jimmy Morales to commissioners.

Here's a link to the article: <http://www.miamiherald.com/2013/05/08/3387059/miami-beach-approves-license-plate.html>

North Miami Beach

No outright winners in North Miami Beach election; runoffs ahead

*Source: Miami Herald

Since none of the candidates managed to get more than half of the votes needed in order to win their race outright the top two vote-getters for each of the city's two council seats will face each other in a runoff.

The runoff for the Seat 2 and Seat 4 council seats is slated to take place on May 21.

In the Seat 2 race, Anthony "Tony" DeFillipo and Hillel Hellinger will be vying for the seat vacated by Councilman Philippe Derosé, who did not seek reelection.

Out of a total of 2,092 votes cast, DeFillipo received 990 votes and Hellinger received 309 votes.

Hellinger said he was considering conceding.

Hellinger has refused to accept campaign contributions and said that money and personal obligations are factors he will have to consider before going into the runoff.

Also in the Seat 2 race, candidate Jean D. Berrouet got 305 votes, Margaret "Margie" Love received 201 and Jaime Miller got 230.

On Wednesday afternoon, there will be a recount in the Seat 2 race.

Councilwoman Beth Spiegel is set for a runoff with Yvenoline Dargenson for the Seat 4 position.

Spiegel, who got 931 votes, currently holds that seat; Dargenson received 558 votes.

Also in the Seat 4 race, Rene Alfonso got 167 votes and Muriel D. Kemp captured 367 votes.

Councilwoman Barbara Kramer was up for reelection and ran unopposed. Her name did not appear on the ballot, and she will retain her Seat 6 position.

Once elected, candidates will begin a four-year term.

Early voting will be provided on May 16 and May 17 from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Here's a link to the article: <http://www.miamiherald.com/2013/05/07/v-print/3386143/no-outright-winners-in-north-miami.html>

Cutler Bay

Cutler Bay mayor to kick off congressional campaign

*Source: Miami Herald

Cutler Bay Mayor Ed MacDougall, who has spent the past few months opposing the Miami Dolphins' now-defunct push for a subsidized stadium renovation, plans to challenge Democratic U.S. Rep. Joe Garcia.

MacDougall, a Republican who has already opened a fundraising account, will was scheduled to kick off his campaign Wednesday night.

MacDougall is the first candidate to file paperwork against Garcia for the 26th district, which stretches from Kendall to Key West. Former Miami-Dade Commission Chairman Joe Martinez said earlier this year he would also seek the seat but has yet to file. Both MacDougall and Martinez are former police officers.

The GOP sees a potential pickup opportunity in the swing district, which had been represented by Republicans before district lines were redrawn in 2012 to make it more competitive. Garcia won a two-year term after defeating U.S. Rep. David Rivera last year.

MacDougall traveled to Tallahassee recently with ally Norman Braman to speak against the Dolphins' proposal and tried to rally support for local politicians. The renovation push ended last week after state lawmakers failed to take action on Dolphins-backed legislation.

MacDougall, who was elected mayor in 2010 after four years as vice-mayor, said he intends to campaign on achievements in Cutler Bay, a town of about 40,000. Among them, he said, are bringing a high school to the town and joining with neighboring cities to form a green corridor.

Property owners in those municipalities may qualify for low-interest financing to install energy-saving equipment such as solar panels, which MacDougall said he installed in late January.

He listed education, energy and the environment as key issues he's interested in, as well as small government and job creation.

Of Garcia, he said: "He lives on Miami Beach, and I don't think he really has a feel for South Dade the way that I do."

Members of Congress are not required to live in the districts they represent.

Here's a link to the article: <http://www.miamiherald.com/2013/05/08/3387277/cutler-bay-mayor-to-kick-off-congressional.html>

Homestead

*Source: Miami Herald

The city of Homestead is seeking to evict La Ley Sports from the city's baseball complex.

It was originally built with \$21 million in county tourism tax dollars to host spring training for the Cleveland Indians. But Hurricane Andrew ruined those plans, and now the city is in a legal showdown with an operator whom officials had hoped would save the city about \$350,000 a year in maintenance.

Instead, no one has been able to figure out a way to maintain the complex at 1601 SE 28th Ave.

Homestead officials had pinned their hopes for running the complex on attorney John H. Ruiz, a Miami lawyer known for a Spanish-language television show called La Ley, or "the law." He founded La Ley Sports in 2010.

For months, Homestead officials have complained about past-due bills. In a lawsuit filed on April 19, the city claims that La Ley owes about \$350,000 for insurance and utility bills and property taxes. Some of it was due in 2012.

Ruiz entered a seven-year lease term in July 2011. By 2014, the company was to have started paying rent, a total of \$275,000 in rent, and an additional \$250,000 over the lease term for naming rights. It started well when he painted the pink structure red and blue, renamed it La Ley Sports Complex and invested in its infrastructure and technology.

La Ley also had an option to purchase the property for \$16 million. And the city waived a property-insurance requirement for about a year. Amid disagreements, the city has continued carrying the insurance at a cost to taxpayers of about \$10,000 a month.

In a separate lawsuit, Ruiz has said that Homestead overbilled him for utilities. The city in April 2012 admitted that it had billed La Ley \$22,000 for a dumpster that wasn't on the property.

Ruiz also claims that the city rented out a road on the property twice: both to him and to a neighboring charter school.

The relationship hit a new low when La Ley, without the city's knowledge, entered into an agreement to let Canadian company Gigante Baseball Group use the stadium to train teenage players recruited from Venezuela. After complaints from a former player, the Department of Children & Families investigated the "untidy" conditions.

Earlier this year, Ruiz complained that the city property was draining him. Homestead is not Ruiz's only creditor. Where he once used to help others avoid foreclosure, records show that he has struggled to keep his home and his La Ley office building.

According to the lawsuit filed by attorneys Eric Hockman and Joseph Serota, the city terminated the lease on March 12.

Here's a link to the article: <http://www.miamiherald.com/2013/05/05/3379222/homestead-looking-to-evict-la.html>

SAVE THE DATE:

MDCLC Monthly Board of Directors Meeting

When: Thursday, May 2, 2013

Where: Opa-Locka City Hall

Time: Reception 6:00 PM / Dinner Board Meeting 7:00PM

STATE / LOCAL WEEKLY REPORT

May 13- May 17, 2013

*The weekly report comprises a variety of media sources, including news articles, lobbyist reports and information gathered through the OIA.

LEGISLATIVE NEWS

Governor Visits PortMiami as Part of Victory Tour

Source: CBS /Lobby Tools

On Tuesday, Governor Rick Scott visited PortMiami as part of his Building Up Manufacturing Victory Tour.

The focus of the tour is to highlight the positives of recently passed legislation which eliminates the 6% sales tax on manufacturing equipment. Supporters of the tax incentive say it will result in a revenue increase because it encourages manufacturers to hire more workers and boost investment in the state.

HB 7007 Relating to Economic Development by Economic Development & Tourism Subcommittee and Trujillo was approved in the final days of the legislative session, sent to the governor's desk and was **signed into law today**.

"The governor has been very consistent since the beginning to saving money for companies so they can hire more people," Miami-Dade Commission Chairwoman Rebeca Sosa.

The proposal also eliminates a requirement that limits the current exemption on sales tax for manufacturing equipment to those who can show they've increased productive output by at least five percent. It also allows a manufacturer to receive a tax exemption for equipment upgrades at an existing facility.

Miami-Dade Mayor Carlos Gimenez said the sales tax break is just another step in making the county more competitive, not just throughout the state but the country.

"We are doing our part here at PortMiami, we've done the tunnel, we are going to connect the port to the rail and then finally the deep dredge which will allow more ships to come in," said Gimenez. "So all of those things are creating jobs, not just today but thousands of jobs in the future."

The change has been estimated to reduce sales tax collections by \$141 million a year. Lawmakers made the tax break good for three years, and delayed its implementation until April 2014.

Please click the link to view the Governors statement:

http://static-lobbytools.s3.amazonaws.com/press/56750_or_rick_scott_s_statement_on_portmiami_s_deep_dredge_project.pdf

Governor Rick Scott Announces 42 Reappointments to Boards and Commissions throughout the State

Please click the link to view the press release:

http://static-lobbytools.s3.amazonaws.com/press/56747_reappoints_42_to_boards_and_commissions_throughout_the_state.pdf

Senate President Gaetz Slams TaxWatch 'turkey' List

Source: Miami Herald / LobbyTools

Even before TaxWatch published its annual list of budget items they consider "turkeys," Senate leaders had gone out of their way to defend their decision to fund projects that may not have been in state agencies' initial budget requests. Today the group released a list of \$107 million in spending it believes Gov. Rick Scott should veto, just like it does every year in the days before the budget is signed.

Senate President Don Gaetz, R-Niceville, called the report "arrogance of the elite" and says the group is "irrelevant 364 days a year."

Please click the link to view the Senate President's statement regarding Florida TaxWatch:

http://static-lobbytools.s3.amazonaws.com/press/56742_statement_from_president_gaetz_regarding_florida_taxwatch.pdf

Internet Cafes

Source: Tampa Bay Times

House Bill 155 – Relating to Prohibition of Electronic Gambling Devices by Trujillo and Patronis was designed to sweep the state of illegal gambling cafes, and it worked. Internet cafes from Jacksonville to Key West have closed.

But the law's wide net appears to have caught some unintended prey: restaurants, bowling alleys and skating rinks. Chuck E. Cheese's and Dave & Buster's. Even Disney World may be a violator.

Experts say the language of the new law throws nearly all arcade games in the state of Florida into a gray area, leaving many business owners worried their games might not be legal. And to make matters worse, there appears to be no state agency where they can get a definitive answer to these questions.

Rep. Carlos Trujillo, R-Miami, a sponsor of the bill to outlaw Internet cafes, told the *Tampa Bay Times* he believes either the Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation or the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services is in charge of enforcement. But officials at each of those agencies say that's wrong.

The Florida Department of Law Enforcement said the law is the responsibility of the State Attorney's Office. The state attorney told the *Times* to talk to local law enforcement.

One possible reason for the confusion: The ban on Internet cafes came into being quickly in the wake of an investigation that led to the resignation of former Lt. Gov. Jennifer Carroll, who had ties to an Internet gaming organization authorities said was masquerading as a veterans charity. Lawmakers reacted with lightning speed.

"This bill was railroaded through the Legislature so fast — I mean warp speed — that there was no time taken to understand how this was being done," said Michael Wolf, an attorney for the Florida Arcade and Bingo Association. His group has filed a lawsuit challenging the law.

And while the law targeted Internet cafes, it also included rules that have existed for decades, but apparently were never enforced:

- All arcade games must be coin-operated, which means games operated by a swipe card are illegal.
- Prizes per game can't be worth more than 75 cents.
- Arcades must have at least 50 machines. Experts said this was created years ago to outlaw backroom gambling machines.

But the biggest concern is a new stipulation that requires all "amusement games or machines" to be games of "skill."

That word — skill — "from a legal standpoint, is a huge, huge change," said Marc Dunbar, an adjunct law professor at Florida State University and a lawyer who focuses on gaming and governmental law.

The law says machines cannot be "casino-style games in which the outcome is determined by factors unpredictable by the player or games in which the player may not control the outcome of the game through skill."

What exactly is a "casino-style" machine?

Dunbar thinks any game that is not purely skill-based, such as air hockey, basketball or Skee-Ball, is in question.

"Was that what the Legislature intended? I doubt it," he said. "But the words on the page are the words on the page."

Dave & Buster's, a restaurant-arcade with locations throughout Florida, told the *Times* it is working with law enforcement to understand the law.

Rep. Trujillo acknowledges the law casts a wide net. But Skee-Ball is fine, he said. So are hunting games and driving games.

"Is there one possible game that might not be in compliance? Maybe," he said. "But it's not going to shut down Chuck E. Cheese's."

To read more, click the link: <http://www.tampabay.com/news/business/internet-cafe-law-may-have-unintended-targets/2121416>

Weatherford Defends Healthcare Votes

Source: Bradenton Herald

Weatherford defended the recent session of the Legislature, which was criticized for not voting to participate in the federal Affordable Care Act passing up an estimated \$51 million.

"No matter what the newspaper said, we had a very successful session," he said. "We want everybody to have some form of insurance."

The problem is paying for it, Weatherford said.

In 1991, Florida had 900,000 people on Medicaid, costing \$4 billion a year, he said. Today, 3.3 million Floridians are on Medicaid, which costs \$23 billion.

"It is a runaway freight train when it comes to our budget," he said. "Imagine expanding it to another 900,000 to a million people."

Weatherford called the Affordable Care Act a bait-and-switch ploy.

"They say, 'We're going to pay for it for the first six to eight years, 100 percent up front. And then, after a while, we'll just figure it out,'" he said.

"We're setting ourselves up by creating a new entitlement for people without any real way of knowing how we're going to pay for it. If we can hold true and not build a dependency state, but build an opportunity state, 20 years from now we will be the shining light of this country."

To read more, click the link: <http://www.bradenton.com/2013/05/17/4529177/house-speaker-weatherford-defends.html>

Policy Note: Internet Sales Tax

Source: Florida Current

Background:

Retailers have complained for years about investing in physical stores, employees and local taxes while being saddled with a sales tax on merchandise that online merchants don't have to pay. Other states have made deals with Amazon to collect the tax as the behemoth online firm sets up a warehouse in a state and chases same-day delivery. Florida has yet to do so, however, and lawmakers in favor of bills to collect the tax want to offset it with other tax cuts.

The Senate Commerce and Tourism Committee has already inserted Scott's manufacturing tax cuts into its version of the Internet sales tax bill (**SB 316**). Also included in the bill are cuts to the communication services tax, which has the backing of Senate President Don Gaetz, who thinks a reduction in the tax on cable and telephone bills is the best way to return the Internet sales tax to taxpayers. The House, however, has been less enthusiastic about Internet sales tax bills than the Senate.

2013 Session Summary:

Lawmakers from both sides of the Capitol searched for ways to make the imposition of an Internet sales tax "revenue neutral" this year.

Yet despite Gov. Rick Scott's earlier stance that he would sign a bill to collect sales taxes on online purchases if it was offset with other tax cuts, sponsors of the bill this year said his office quashed the measure's momentum.

Sen. Nancy Detert's bill, SB 316, initially included Scott's manufacturing tax cut and a cut in communication services taxes on phone and cable bills as a way to offset the online sales tax.

Rep. Ritch Workman, R-Melbourne, pushed the back-to-school sales tax holiday and the possible reduction in the overall sales tax to make the measure revenue neutral.

But both lawmakers told The Florida Current Scott's office didn't want the bill.

Updates:

May 16, 2013: The Associated Press reports that Scott has rejected a deal to bring Amazon to Florida, in the form of two warehouses and 2,500 jobs. A spokeswoman for Scott did not give a reason for rejecting the deal, which would have allowed Amazon delay the collection of sales taxes in Florida until the warehouses were operational in February 2014, but still would have required the state to collect the sales tax on Internet purchases.

May 7, 2013: The U.S. Senate voted 69-27 for a national Internet sales tax bill. Florida Sens. Bill Nelson and Marco Rubio split their votes, with Nelson in favor and Rubio against. The measure has a shaky future in the House.

May 3, 2013: Lawmakers adjourned the 2013 legislative session without a floor vote in either chamber on the Internet sales tax cut. Sponsors of the bill in both chambers said Gov. Rick Scott's office put the brakes on the bill's momentum.

This week the Governor was presented with the following bills, which will require action by May, 24 - 25th :

Num	Title	Sponsor
SB 0406	Relating to Economic Development	Gardiner
	Economic Development; Establishing the Economic Development Programs Evaluation; requiring the Division of Alcoholic Beverages and Tobacco to certify the amount derived from the cigarette tax until a specified time; requiring the Department of Economic Opportunity to analyze each economic development incentive application; providing a certification process for an applicant to receive state funding for a facility for a spring training franchise; prohibiting tax levied under ch. 212, F.S., from being collected during a certain time period for the sale of specified items ,etc. APPROPRIATION: \$235,695 Effective Date: Except as otherwise expressly provided in this act, this act shall take effect upon becoming a law. 05/10/13 Signed by Officers and presented to Governor (Governor must act on this bill by 05/25/13)	
SB 1500	Relating to Appropriations	Appropriations
	Appropriations; Providing moneys for the annual period beginning July 1, 2013, and ending June 30, 2014, to pay salaries, and other expenses, capital outlay - buildings, and other improvements, and for other specified purposes of the various agencies of state government, etc. APPROPRIATION: \$74,298,188,334 Effective Date: Except as otherwise provided herein, this act shall take effect July 1, 2013, or upon becoming law, whichever occurs later; however, if this act becomes law after July 1, 2013, then it shall operate retroactively to July 1, 2013. 05/09/13 Signed by Officers and presented to Governor (Governor must act on this bill by 05/24/13)	
SB 1502	Relating to Implementing the General Appropriations Act	Appropriations
	Implementing the General Appropriations Act; Incorporating by reference certain calculations of the Florida Education Finance Program for the 2013-2014 fiscal year; providing for the distribution of capital improvement funding for lab schools; providing requirements governing the continuation of Phase 3 of the Department of Health's Florida Onsite Sewage Nitrogen Reduction Strategies Study; requiring that fees for service of process upon the Chief Financial Officer or Office of Insurance Regulation be deposited into the Administrative Trust Fund rather than the Insurance Regulatory Trust Fund, etc. Effective Date: Except as otherwise expressly provided in this act and except for this section, which shall take effect upon this act becoming a law, this act shall take effect July 1, 2013; or, if this act fails to become a law until after that date, it shall take effect upon becoming a law and operate retroactively to July 1, 2013. 05/10/13 Signed by Officers and presented to Governor (Governor must act on this bill by 05/25/13)	
SB 1512	Relating to Clerks of Court	Appropriations
	Clerks of Court; Transferring the Clerks of the Court Trust Fund from the Justice Administrative Commission to the Department of Revenue; specifying that only	

certain functions may be funded from fees, service charges, costs, and fines retained by the clerks of the court; providing for remission of certain excess collections to the department for deposit into the General Revenue Fund on specified dates; specifying the authorized budget for the clerks of the circuit court and the corporation for specified periods, etc. Effective Date: Except as otherwise expressly provided in this act and except for this section, which shall take effect upon this act becoming a law, this act shall take effect July 1, 2016.
05/10/13 Signed by Officers and presented to Governor (**Governor must act on this bill by 05/25/13**)

SB 1514 Relating to Education

Appropriations

Education; Renaming Brevard Community College as "Eastern Florida State College"; authorizing the state's program of education to receive state and federal funding that may be transferred between state agencies to provide for operations of the college-preparatory boarding academy; revising purposes, duties, and responsibilities of the Florida Virtual Campus; authorizing a school board or charter school board to distribute salary increases at any time before a specified month; authorizing a university board of trustees to expend reserve or carryforward balances from previous years' appropriations for deferred maintenance needs at a specified civic center, etc. Effective Date: Except as otherwise expressly provided in this act and except for this section, which shall take effect upon becoming a law, this act shall take effect July 1, 2013.
05/10/13 Signed by Officers and presented to Governor (**Governor must act on this bill by 05/25/13**)

SB 1516 Relating to Internal Revenue Code

Appropriations

Internal Revenue Code; Adopting the 2013 version of the code for the purposes of ch. 220, F.S.; incorporating a reference to a recent federal act into state law for the purpose of defining the term "adjusted federal income"; authorizing the executive director of the Department of Revenue to adopt emergency rules; providing for retroactive application, etc. Effective Date: This act shall take effect upon becoming a law and operate retroactively to January 1, 2013.
05/10/13 Signed by Officers and presented to Governor (**Governor must act on this bill by 05/25/13**)

SB 1518 Relating to Department of Children and Families

Appropriations

Department of Children and Families; Providing for the carrying forward, expenditure, and return of unexpended funds paid to entities contracting with the department to manage the delivery of behavioral health services; revising recurring core services funding for community-based care lead agencies, etc. Effective Date: July 1, 2013
05/10/13 Signed by Officers and presented to Governor (**Governor must act on this bill by 05/25/13**)

SB 1520 Relating to Medicaid

Appropriations

Medicaid; Providing that certain rural hospitals remain rural hospitals under specified circumstances; requiring the Agency for Health Care Administration to implement a prospective payment system for inpatient hospital services using diagnosis-related groups (DRGs); establishing the Statewide Medicaid Residency Program; amending

parameters for the disproportionate share program for specialty hospitals; limiting reimbursement to tuberculosis services provided under contract with the Department of Health, etc. Effective Date: July 1, 2013
05/10/13 Signed by Officers and presented to Governor (**Governor must act on this bill by 05/25/13**)

[SB 1522](#) **Relating to Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles** [Appropriations](#)

Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles; Revising and directing the distribution of the vehicle license tax surcharge into the State Transportation Trust Fund and the Highway Safety Operating Trust Fund, etc. Effective Date: October 1, 2013
05/10/13 Signed by Officers and presented to Governor (**Governor must act on this bill by 05/25/13**)

[SB 1660](#) **Relating to Quality Cancer Care and Research** [Flores](#)

Quality Cancer Care and Research; Establishing a Cancer Center of Excellence Award for providers that excel in providing cancer care and treatment in this state; requiring the Florida Cancer Control and Research Advisory Council and the Biomedical Research Advisory Council to jointly develop and periodically update performance measures, a rating system, and a rating standard in accordance with specified criteria for applicants to qualify for the award; providing that an award-winning cancer provider is granted preference in competitive cancer care solicitations for a specified period of time; revising the responsibilities of the councils with regard to the Cancer Center of Excellence Award program, etc. Effective Date: July 1, 2013
05/10/13 Signed by Officers and presented to Governor (**Governor must act on this bill by 05/25/13**)

[SB 1720](#) **Relating to Education** [Galvano](#)

Education; Revising actions to be taken by the Legislative Auditing Committee relating to audits of state universities and Florida College System institutions; requiring the Board of Trustees of the University of South Florida to enter into a lease agreement with the not-for-profit corporation operating the H. Lee Moffitt Cancer Center and Research Institute for the utilization of lands and facilities; revising requirements for the common placement test to assess basic computation and communication skills of students who intend to enter a public postsecondary education degree program; providing that the Board of Governors shall oversee the performance of state university boards of trustees in the enforcement of laws, rules, and regulations, etc. Effective Date: July 1, 2013
05/10/13 Signed by Officers and presented to Governor (**Governor must act on this bill by 05/25/13**)

[SB 1810](#) **Relating to Florida Retirement System** [Governmental Oversight and Accountability](#)

Florida Retirement System; Revising the employer contribution rates for the retiree health insurance subsidy; revising the required employer retirement contribution rates for members of each membership class and subclass of the Florida Retirement System, etc. Effective Date: July 1, 2013

05/10/13 Signed by Officers and presented to Governor (**Governor must act on this bill by 05/25/13**)

[HB 7013](#) **Relating to Florida Election Code**

[Ethics & Elections Subcommittee](#)

Elections: Revises qualifications for late voter registration; provides limitation on number of words for certain ballot summaries in joint resolutions proposed by Legislature; requires person to provide name, mailing address, & telephone number of registered agent of voting systems vendor to DOS under certain circumstances; authorizes DOS to suspend all sales or leases or use in election of defective voting system; revises list of permissible sites available for early voting; requires supervisor to provide elector with specific reason his or her ballot was rejected; revises methods of selecting canvassing board members; provides for date of Presidential Preference Primary. Effective Date: January 1, 2014.
05/10/13 Signed by Officers and presented to Governor (**Governor must act on this bill by 05/24/13**)

This week the Governor signed the following bills into law:

[SB 0004](#) **Relating to Public Records and Meetings/Commission on Ethics**

[Ethics and Elections](#)

Public Records and Meetings/Commission on Ethics; Creating an exemption from public records requirements for written referrals and related records held by the Commission on Ethics, the Governor, the Department of Law Enforcement, or a state attorney; creating an exemption for records relating to a preliminary investigation held by the Commission on Ethics; creating an exemption from public meetings requirements for portions of proceedings of the Commission on Ethics in which the referrals are discussed or acted upon; providing for future repeal and legislative review of the exemption under the Open Government Sunset Review Act, etc. Effective Date: May 1, 2013
05/15/13 Approved by Governor; Chapter No. 2013-038

[HB 7007](#) **Relating to Economic Development**

[Economic Development & Tourism Subcommittee, Trujillo](#)

General Economic Development: Establishes Economic Development Programs Evaluation; revises date on which DEO & Enterprise Florida, Inc., are required to report on business climate & economic development in state; provides for exemption from tax imposed under ch. 212, F.S., for certain machinery & equipment; requires DEO to analyze each economic development incentive application; requires DEO to publish on website specified information concerning state investment in economic development programs; provides for expansion of boundaries of enterprise zones that meet certain requirements; provides for state's guarantee of certain federal loans to local governments; creates Triumph Gulf Coast, Inc., as nonprofit corporation;

requires corporation to create & administer Recovery Fund for benefit of disproportionately affected counties, etc. Effective Date: upon becoming a law - **05/17/13 Approved by Governor**

Local News

Hialeah

Former Hialeah Mayor Julio Robaina and Wife Surrender To Authorities on Tax Evasion Charges

*Source: Miami Herald

In 2010, while looking into Hialeah's "shadow banking" industry, federal prosecutors pressed the city's mayor about allegations that he had collected exorbitant cash interest payments on more than \$1 million in loans he made to friends and acquaintances. Julio Robaina denied wrongdoing.

On Thursday, a federal grand jury indicted Robaina and his wife on charges of conspiring to evade income taxes, making loans at sky-high interest rates, failing to report secret cash payments and lying to federal authorities.

He made the statements at issue in August 2010, while preparing an unsuccessful run to become Miami-Dade County mayor.

Robaina, 47, and his wife Raiza Villacis Robaina, 39, who operated two loan companies, are accused of receiving the undisclosed cash payments as interest on the personal loans they made to friends, including convicted Ponzi schemer Luis Felipe Perez. The loans were doled out as part of an informal banking system operating below the radar in Hialeah.

The indictment alleges the couple tried "to enrich themselves by concealing, disguising and failing to report the true and correct amount of their income to the Internal Revenue Service."

Husband and wife surrendered to authorities early Friday and are scheduled to make their initial court appearance later in the day, before U.S. Magistrate Judge Andrea Simonton. They proclaimed their innocence through Julio Robaina's defense attorney on Thursday.

Read more here:

<http://www.miamiherald.com/2013/05/16/v-print/3400890/former-hialeah-mayor-julio-robaina.html>

Miami Beach

Miami Beach commissioners ponder taxpayers' share of convention center redevelopment

*Source: Miami Herald

On Tuesday, Portman-CMC developers' model for the redevelopment of the Miami Beach Convention Center was showcased.

After months of being presented with stunning designs of what a redeveloped Miami Beach Convention Center district could look like, commissioners on Wednesday got their first serious look at costs associated with the massive project.

After a full day of meetings, only one thing was clear: Commissioners want more time to “digest” the financials.

At the Commission meeting on Wednesday, City Manager Jimmy Morales indicated that commissioners aren't likely to vote on a plan on June 5, as originally scheduled.

Miami Beach is in the final stages of choosing between two teams, South Beach ACE, headed by New York-based Tishman Hotel & Realty and Portman-CMC, headed by Atlanta-based Portman Holdings to execute one of the biggest urban revitalization projects in the country. Where there is now 52-acres of parking lots, an aging convention center and almost no landscaping, the city wants a team of master developers and architects to create a new urban core that connects neighborhoods, overhauls the convention center and adds an affordable hotel to serve convention-goers.

The competition has attracted some of the most well-regarded architecture firms in the world. ACE has Rem Koolhaas and his firm, the Office for Metropolitan Architecture on their side; Portman has enlisted Bjarke Ingels and his firm, the Bjarke Ingels Group.

The city envisions paying for improvements to the parts of the convention center district that will remain in the public's hands, such as the convention center and road improvements. The cost of any private development, such as retail space and rental housing, would fall to developers, who would pay to lease the publicly-owned land they propose to build on.

In proposals submitted to the city, Portman says it can get the entire job done for \$1.15 billion. ACE says it will take \$1.2 billion. Ultimately, Portman's plan would require \$73.4 million less in public investments than ACE's, according to a breakdown by the Strategic Advisory Group, the city's consultant handling the convention center deal.

According to the group's comparison:

- Portman's convention center, which would cost \$498 million, is less expensive than ACE's, which would cost \$506.2 million. Dan Tishman of the ACE group, however, says his team is building is a “fancier, more complicated project.”
- Portman would make \$81 million more in lease payments to the city. Representatives from ACE say the difference is largely explained by the fact that Portman proposes to lease more space for retail development, and that local businesses don't want so much competition built at the convention center site. Portman says the difference in square-footage isn't that big, because ACE doesn't include a “food and beverage” building, which would serve the hotel, in its count.

The city could pull from a few pots of money to pay for the development.

Miami Beach already gets about \$4.5 million a year from the county's convention development tax. Another \$54 million in already-issued bonds is also at the city's disposal. Additionally, voters in August 2012 approved a hotel tax increase of up to one penny specifically to pay for improvements to the convention center — but that new tax would have to be passed by the City Commission, and would not take effect until the city has a plan in place for the redevelopment, according to an opinion by the city attorney's office. The city could also use \$90 million in funds from its redevelopment agency, according to the analysis by the advisory group.

Costs could also be defrayed by lease payments made to the city by developers, and the taxes their new buildings would generate.

Commissioners will take another look at the numbers at a finance meeting on Wednesday.

Read more here: <http://www.miamiherald.com/2013/05/15/3399725/miami-beach-commissioners-ponder.html>

Pinecrest

Pinecrest may buy land for new park

*Source: Miami Herald

The Pinecrest Village Council on Tuesday agreed to buy four and a half acres on Southwest 72nd Avenue and 96th Street for a possible park.

The council unanimously agreed to offer \$2.5 million for the land. Council members have not concluded what the property's use will be, but they talked about a passive park with nature trails that permits dogs.

In an April survey conducted by the village, 52 percent of residents said there is no need for more green space or parks in the village. But several residents at Tuesday's council meeting expressed support for the council's decision.

The council has not decided how the property will be funded, but City Manager Yocelyn Galiano Gomez said it will either be funded by reserve funds, the city's savings or over a period of time.

In other action Tuesday, the council:

- Agreed to meet with the homeowners association of Kings Bay in Coral Gables to compromise on a location for a fire station. Pinecrest, Palmetto Bay and Miami-Dade Fire Rescue want to build a new station on Ludlam Road between 136th and 144th streets, near Kings Bay, but the neighborhood association is concerned about the potential for noise and the effects on property values.
- Agreed to hold a workshop to discuss a proposed restaurant in Pinecrest Gardens. But council members did not immediately set a date.

- Agreed to look further into a possible roundabout at the intersection of Southwest 67th Court and 136th Street to alleviate traffic concerns and improve aesthetic appeal. The next step will be a traffic analysis to determine whether the traffic circle would really ease traffic flow at the site.

Read more here: <http://www.miamiherald.com/2013/05/16/v-print/3401111/pinecrest-may-buy-land-for-new.html#storylink=cpy>

Doral

Doral's city attorney heads for Miami Beach

*Source: Miami Herald

City Attorney Joe Jimenez will start as an assistant city manager for the Beach on June 3. As part of the legal team appointed to represent Doral, Jimenez has worked with the city for four years.

Having worked closely before with Jimmy Morales, Doral's former city attorney and now Miami Beach's city manager, Jimenez said he relishes the opportunity to continue a working relationship that has lasted eight years.

The Doral City Council unanimously appointed GrayRobinson, P.A., as the city's new legal counsel at a special council meeting Friday. John Herin will be the new city attorney.

Herin is familiar with Doral. He worked as an assistant city attorney with Morales in Doral for two years before joining GrayRobinson last year.

Jimenez's exit marks the fourth Doral official to take a job with Miami Beach since December. Eric Carpenter, former public works director, is now leading the Beach's public works. Former Assistant City Manager Mark Taxis now has the same position in the Beach. Morales joined the Beach in April.

Jimenez's last day in Doral is May 29.

Read more here: <http://www.miamiherald.com/2013/05/13/3395452/dorals-city-attorney-heads-for.html>

North Miami

Election News

*Source: NBC

The top two vote-getters, Kevin Burns and Lucie Tondreau, advanced to a June 4 runoff for mayor, city spokesperson Pam Solomon said. Former mayor Burns received 2,254 votes (33.2

percent) in Tuesday's election, while Tondreau had 1,870 votes (27.6 percent), according to unofficial Miami-Dade Elections Department results.

Anna Pierre, a registered nurse who claimed she was being endorsed by Jesus Christ, finished last among the seven candidates with 56 votes, or just 0.83 percent.

Smith Joseph was third in the mayoral race with 1,561 votes and 23 percent of the field, followed by Gwendolyn "Gwen" Boyd (555 votes, 8.2 percent), Jean Rodrigue Marcellus (374 votes, 5.5 percent), and Modira Escarment (116 votes, 1.7 percent) in sixth place.

North Miami's election also did not produce winners in its two City Council races, as no one earned the 50 percent plus one votes needed for victory, Solomon said.

As a result, Carol Keys and Mary Irvin will compete in a runoff for the District 2 seat on June 4, with one of them to replace Councilman Michael Blynn, who finished third on Tuesday. In District 3, Philippe Bien-Aime and Jacques Despinosse will go head to head.

Sweetwater

Election News

*Source: NBC

On Tuesday, Isolina Marono defeated Deborah Centeno to win the Group 4 seat on the Sweetwater City Commission. Marono received 1,065 votes while Centeno had 406, according to unofficial results.

Marono, the mother of Mayor Manny Marono, was appointed on an interim basis last year to fill the seat left vacant by the late Vice Mayor Ariel Abelairas . Her victory for a four-year term Tuesday came in the only contested election in Sweetwater, as commissioners Orlando Lopez (Group 1), Jose Bergouignan (Group 2) and Jose Diaz (Group 3) retained their seats without opposition.

SAVE THE DATE:

MDCLC Monthly Board of Directors Meeting

When: Thursday, May 2, 2013

Where: Opa-Locka City Hall

Time: Reception 6:00 PM / Dinner Board Meeting 7:00PM

STATE / LOCAL WEEKLY REPORT

May 20- May 24, 2013

*The weekly report comprises a variety of media sources, including news articles, lobbyist reports and information gathered through the OIA.

LEGISLATIVE NEWS

HEALTH INSURANCE

Nelson urges veto of Florida bill suspending state power to set health insurance rates

Source: Palm Beach Post

Democratic U.S. Sen. Bill Nelson urged Florida Gov. Rick Scott to veto legislation his fellow Republicans advanced that suspends for two years the state's authority to set health insurance rates.

Nelson, a former state insurance commissioner, said in a Wednesday letter to Scott that allowing the bill (SB 1842) to become law would put consumers at risk of sky-high rate hikes.

Proponents of the legislation, however, said it is merely aimed at helping the state comply with evolving regulatory requirements under the federal health care overhaul.

Group or individual health plans in place as of 2010 will still be subject to rate review by state regulators, under SB 1842. But the host of new coverage options expected to be created when a major part of the Affordable Care Act takes effect in January will have rates controlled by federal agencies, although Atwater's office will still review the proposals.

Democrats have been angered by the Republican-ruled Legislature's long reluctance to enact provisions of the Affordable Care Act. They also said the new measure will give consumers the runaround in dealing with any issue with health insurance rates.

"We can do better for consumers," said Rep. Jose Rodriguez, D-Miami, said during the April hearing.

Read more here:

http://www.mypalmbeachpost.com/news/news/state-regional-govt-politics/nelson-urges-veto-of-florida-bill-suspending-state/nXzQM/?icmp=pbp_internallink_textlink_apr2013_pbpstubtomypbp_launch

Fasano questions 'suspicious timing' of \$52 million Heritage deal

Source: Miami Herald

Rep. **Mike Fasano** is the latest official to raise questions about a \$52 million take-out deal between an upstart St. Petersburg insurance company and Citizens Property Insurance Corp.

Fasano, R-New Port Richey, penned a letter to the state's Insurance Commissioner on Friday questioning whether Heritage Property and Casualty Insurance had already violated a May 17 consent order from the Office of Insurance Regulation. Heritage has firmly denied the accusation.

Fasano alleged that Heritage had been contacting insurance agents and policyholders prior to May 23, when the company officially received approval to take out some 60,000 policies in a \$52 million deal. That would be a violation of the OIR's consent order, Fasano said, citing a part of the agreement that bans Heritage from contacting "any potential policyholder, including sending communication regarding this depopulation" prior to the deal being signed.

Heritage firmly denies that it has been contacting policyholders, and said the company contacted agents last week as part of a standard procedure to alert them to an upcoming potential takeout. The company's chairman, Bruce Lucas, said there was nothing untoward about that.

As evidence, Fasano presented a letter and email received by Pasco County Supervisor of Elections **Brian Corley** with regards to a takeout offer from Heritage. A May 17 letter from Corley's insurance agent informs him that Heritage has "selected" his policy for an "upcoming takeout." The proposed takeout was approved by Citizens' board of governors on May 22, in a 3-2 vote. Corley received an email response from a Heritage employee on May 22, prior to the vote, saying that Heritage "offers a better policy" than Citizens.

Fasano's letter came just hours after former state Sen. **Dan Gelber** wrote a letter to **Gov. Rick Scott** about the \$52 million deal. Gelber urged Scott to return \$110,000 Heritage donated to the governor's reelection campaign effort.

Scott's office did not immediately respond to a request for comment, but the governor's chief of staff has denied that Scott influenced the board of Citizens on behalf of a political contributor.

See the letter from Fasano here:

http://miamiherald.typepad.com/files/fasanolettertooir_heritagedeal_5.24.13.pdf

POLICY NOTE: State Lands

Source: LobbyTools

BACKGROUND:

Florida's conservation land-buying program was the largest such program in the nation from 1990 through 2008, when it received \$300 million a year. But funding for the program has been cut sharply since then.

The program is a top legislative priority each year for environmental groups, who say the program protects wildlife habitat and water quality and boosts the economy by attracting visitors and new residents to Florida. But they have faced opposition from some skeptical legislators who suggest the state already owns too much land.

Environmentalists also support the call for spending more on conservation easements, which involve paying agricultural landowners not to develop their property. But they are wary of proposals to sell state land or trade it for conservation easements.

SB 584 and **HB 901** would have required state agencies, cities and counties to sell an equal amount of conservation land before they could buy more land.

HB 33 and **SB 466** would have allowed landowners to trade conservation easements on their property for the acquisition of neighboring state lands.

The bills faced opposition from environmental groups, which supported a proposed state constitutional amendment that would provide an estimated \$500 million a year towards land acquisition and improvement.

HB 7087, a **Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services** bill, would establish the department as lead agency over the 74,000-acre **Babcock Ranch** in southwest Florida.

Gov. Rick Scott has requested \$25 million for the **Florida Forever** program in fiscal year 2013-14 along with \$50 million from the sale of state lands not needed for conservation. The Legislature approved 2013-14 budget provides \$70 million for **Florida Forever**, including \$50 million from land sales, \$10 million in general revenue and \$10 million from a trust fund.

HB 1145 would require the **Florida Department of Environmental Protection**, when selling land, to consider a comparable sales analysis or a broker's opinion of value, as opposed to only an appraisal, when setting prices. The bill also provides that parcels must be initially offered for sale through competitive bidding. But any parcels that aren't sold may be unloaded through "any reasonable means," including through real estate services, auction or negotiated direct sales.

2013 SESSION SUMMARY:

Environmentalists had to take some comfort in the bills involving state lands that died during the 2013 legislative session, even if some of them may be back. **SB 584**, requiring the sale of conservation land before more could be bought, died when it was temporarily postponed in a

committee stop. **Sen. Alan Hays**, R-Umatilla and bill sponsor, promised he'd be back with legislation.

HB 33, allowing state lands to be given away in exchange for conservation agreements on private lands, was temporarily deferred after the **Department of Environmental Protection** said it was opposed to it. The 2013-14 state budget includes \$70 million for **Florida Forever**, but \$50 million would come from the sale of state lands. Some environmentalists question whether the state can find that much land to sell. **HB 7087**, a **Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services** bill dealing with **Babcock Ranch**, is going to the governor. So is **HB 1145**, which provides alternatives for the state when selling land.

This week the Governor signed the following bills into law:

<u>SB 1502</u>	Relating to Implementing the General Appropriations Act 05/20/13 Approved by Governor; Chapter No. 2013-041	<u>Appropriations</u>
<u>SB 1504</u>	Relating to State Employees 05/20/13 Approved by Governor; Chapter No. 2013-043	<u>Appropriations</u>
<u>SB 1512</u>	Relating to Clerks of Court 05/20/13 Approved by Governor; Chapter No. 2013-044	<u>Appropriations</u>
<u>SB 1514</u>	Relating to Education 05/20/13 Approved by Governor; Chapter No. 2013-045	<u>Appropriations</u>
<u>SB 1516</u>	Relating to Internal Revenue Code 05/20/13 Approved by Governor; Chapter No. 2013-046	<u>Appropriations</u>
<u>SB 1518</u>	Relating to Department of Children and Families 05/20/13 Approved by Governor; Chapter No. 2013-047	<u>Appropriations</u>
<u>SB 1520</u>	Relating to Medicaid 05/20/13 Approved by Governor; Chapter No. 2013-048	<u>Appropriations</u>
<u>SB 1522</u>	Relating to Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles 05/20/13 Approved by Governor; Chapter No. 2013-049	<u>Appropriations</u>
<u>SB 1660</u>	Relating to Quality Cancer Care and Research 05/20/13 Approved by Governor; Chapter No. 2013-050	<u>Flores</u>
<u>SB 1720</u>	Relating to Education 05/20/13 Approved by Governor; Chapter No. 2013-051	<u>Galvano</u>
<u>SB 1802</u>	Relating to State Employee Health Insurance	<u>Governmental Oversight and Accountability</u>

05/20/13 Approved by Governor; Chapter No. 2013-052

SB 1810	Relating to Florida Retirement System	Governmental Oversight and Accountability
05/20/13 Approved by Governor; Chapter No. 2013-053		
HB 5401	Relating to Transparency in State Contracting	Government Operations Appropriations Subcommittee
05/20/13 Approved by Governor; Chapter No. 2013-054		
HB 5501	Relating to Weights and Measures Instruments and Devices	Agriculture & Natural Resources Appropriations Subcommittee
05/20/13 Approved by Governor; Chapter No. 2013-055		
HB 5503	Relating to Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission	Agriculture & Natural Resources Appropriations Subcommittee
05/20/13 Approved by Governor; Chapter No. 2013-056		
HB 7003	Relating to Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children	K-12 Subcommittee
04/10/13 Approved by Governor; Chapter No. 2013-020		
HB 7007	Relating to Economic Development	Economic Development & Tourism Subcommittee
05/17/13 Approved by Governor; Chapter No. 2013-039		
HB 7013	Relating to Elections	Ethics & Elections Subcommittee
05/21/13 Approved by Governor; Chapter No. 2013-57		
HB 7017	Relating to Terms Of Courts	Civil Justice Subcommittee
04/17/13 Approved by Governor; Chapter No. 2013-025		
HB 7059	Relating to Driver Licensing	Economic Affairs Committee
04/02/13 Approved by Governor; Chapter No. 2013-001		

Local News

Miami

Source: Miami Herald

Today, Miami Mayor Tomás Regalado penned his first veto in almost four years. He rejected a commission decision to allow retired employees tapped for four of the city's highest-paying posts to collect a paycheck and a pension at the same time, if they return to work after retiring.

In a one-paragraph statement, Regalado said Thursday's 3-2 commission vote was "flawed and unfair" to the city's rank-and-file employees.

"It sets bad public policy in its narrow application," the mayor wrote.

Commissioners voted to allow city employees who retire and come back to collect a paycheck and their pension at the same time, if they land one of four high-paying constitutional positions: city manager, auditor general, city clerk and city attorney.

Commission Chairman Marc Sarnoff, who proffered the bill, and Commissioners Michelle Spence-Jones and Wifredo "Willy" Gort, voted in favor. Commissioners Francis Suarez and Frank Carollo voted against

Some critics speculated the bill was crafted for a pair of outgoing senior assistant city attorneys who are set to retire at the same time as City Attorney Julie Bru at the end of September. Under the new law, if either Assistant City Attorney Maria Chiaro or Warren Bittner got Bru's job, their yearly compensation would exceed \$350,000.

Several residents and the city's fire and police unions have spoken out against the new law.

Regalado had 10 days to issue the veto. The commission must take it up at its next scheduled meeting. A four-fifths vote is needed to override the mayor's decision.

Read more here: <http://www.miamiherald.com/2013/05/24/3414677/miami-mayor-regalado-veto-double.html#storylink=cpy>

Miami Commission: Some city execs can retire, come back, collect both pension and salary

Source: Miami Herald

On Thursday, Miami commissioners voted to allow some of the city's senior-most executives to return to work after retirement and collect a pension on top of their salaries.

Before the 3-2 vote, Commissioner Wifredo "Willy" Gort and Commission Chairman Marc Sarnoff denied accusations that the change was crafted for two top assistant attorneys who are set for retirement in September, the same time City Attorney Julie Bru leaves the city and who might want to apply for her job.

Sarnoff, Gort and Commissioner Michelle Spence-Jones voted for the item, and Commissioners Francis Suarez and Frank Carollo voted against it.

The new ordinance means that city retirees can be rehired for one of the city's four constitutional positions, city manager, clerk, city attorney and auditor and earn a salary while also collecting their pensions.

If longtime assistant city attorney Warren Bittner became city attorney at his current salary of \$210,000, he would earn \$368,000 a year with the addition of his pension. Another veteran assistant city attorney, Maria Chiaro would earn \$381,000 through salary and pension if she became city attorney.

Both are currently in an early retirement program called DROP, or Deferred Retirement Option Program, which allows employees to "retire" but continue working at full pay for a specific length

of time while accruing their pension, which they collect in a lump sum when they finally retire for good.

Sarnoff sponsored the change, arguing the four positions require experienced hands. He said it could result in savings since commissioners set the salaries of the four constitutional officers, and those salaries could be negotiated downward.

Suarez, who is running for mayor, said the change is unfair to rank-and-file workers who won't have the same opportunity.

Salaries of the city's four constitutional positions have dropped significantly in recent years as commissioners negotiated new terms. City Manager Johnny Martinez makes \$195,000. City Clerk Todd Hannon makes \$125,000. City Auditor Ted Guba makes \$145,000, and City Attorney Julie Bru makes \$228,000.

Sarnoff denied he was sponsoring the ordinance for any one person.

The city says it is conducting a national search for a new city attorney. Gort announced that a committee will whittle down the candidates and the commission will make the final choice.

Also against the legislation were leaders of the city's police and fire unions, whose personnel have taken tremendous pay and benefit cuts the past five years as the city struggled to plug budget shortfalls.

Also Thursday, after months of testy negotiations, commissioners finally agreed 4-1 on a redistricting plan that levels the population in the city's five districts. Carollo was the only "no" vote.

In other business, commissioners gave unanimous, final support to a large mixed-use development along the Miami River, just west of the county criminal courthouse.

River Landing Development intends to spend more than \$200 million at 1480 NW North River Dr., where the Mahi Shrine now stands, to build stacked big-box retailers, and a pair of towering buildings that would be divided by a 90-foot promenade down the middle.

The nine-acre setting along the north side of the Miami River, which would offer a wide boardwalk, also will have 444 residences, 1.6 million square feet of commercial space and 2,418 parking spaces.

Read more here: <http://www.miamiherald.com/2013/05/23/v-print/3412871/miami-commission-some-city-execs.html#storylink=cpy>

Hialeah

Former Hialeah mayor Julio Robaina pleads not guilty to tax evasion

*Source: Miami Herald

Former Hialeah Mayor Julio Robaina pleaded not guilty this morning in Miami federal court to charges that he defrauded the U.S. government by failing to report potentially millions of dollars in income on tax returns, including receiving cash payments on high-interest loans he made to a convicted Ponzi schemer.

About 30 supporters of the former mayor showed up in court to lend their support, and Robaina thanked them afterward outside the courthouse as they stood behind him.

His wife, Raiza, charged with the same offenses, did not enter a plea Friday because it remains to be seen whether her husband's lawyer can represent her, too.

If convicted, the Robainas each face up to five years in prison.

A federal grand jury indicted Robaina, 48, and his wife, 39, on charges of failing to report receiving cash payments on loans totaling more than \$1 million, and other business income. Both are also charged with lying to federal agents about Robaina's involvement in his wife's two lending businesses, and he alone was charged with lying about receiving the undisclosed cash.

The couple are accused of receiving the cash as interest on personal loans they made to friends, including convicted businessman Luis Felipe Perez, who borrowed \$750,000 at what he says was a 36 percent interest rate.

The IRS began investigating Robaina's finances while authorities were making their case against Perez, who is serving a 10-year prison sentence.

Under federal law, if a person receives an interest payment on a loan, that income must be reported to the Internal Revenue Service and it may be subject to taxes.

The Robaina companies — RVR Holdings and MR Holdings — sued delinquent borrowers such as Perez, Blanco and others from 2008-10, seeking about \$1.4 million in unpaid principal plus interest. That litigation came under greater scrutiny when Robaina launched his candidacy for Miami-Dade mayor in 2011. He lost to Carlos Gimenez.

To read more here: <http://www.miamiherald.com/2013/05/24/v-print/3414318/former-hialeah-mayor-julio-robaina.html>

Biscayne Park

*Source: Miami Herald

Biscayne Park is considering annexing 71 acres east of the village, referred to as Biscayne Park East, in an attempt to generate revenues and decrease the overall tax rate for current residents.

According to a recent report, Biscayne Park East is bounded by Northeast 121st Street on the north, 117th Terrace/118th Street on the south, Biscayne Boulevard on the east, and the Florida East Coast Railway on the west. This area includes a commercial area south of the eastern

extension of Northeast 118th Street to a point where 16th Avenue intersects with Biscayne Boulevard. About 1,200 people live in the area, which has a total value of \$74 million.

As an alternative, the village also is considering annexing a smaller area, with the same east-west boundaries but extending only from the south side of 121st Street to the north side of 119th Street. This area has two housing units, one of which is under construction. It also has two office buildings, a bank, and some light industrial buildings.

In either scenario, City Manager Ana Garcia says it will be a win/win situation for area residents.

“Existing residents will not in any way see any reductions in the services they have become accustomed to receiving. On the contrary, the additional revenues received from the proposed annexation area will enhance the proposed area as well as generate much needed revenue for the existing Biscayne Park area,” said Garcia.

In addition to the added revenue, the city also wants to reduce its tax rate of \$9.50 per \$1,000 in taxable property value. If the city approves of the annexation, the tax rate could drop to \$6.

“The housing market downturn caused us to lose a large amount of our revenues that mostly come from property taxes,” said Garcia.

The anticipated revenue from the annexation of Biscayne Park East is more than \$800,000. No workshops have been scheduled however the annexation should be discussed at the next commission meeting at 7 p.m. on July 9 at the Ed Burke Recreation Center, 11400 NE Ninth Ct.

Read more here: <http://www.miamiherald.com/2013/05/22/v-print/3410436/biscayne-park-may-annex-adjoining.html#storylink=cpy>

Pinecrest / Palmetto Bay

Thursday evening, the Villages of Pinecrest and Palmetto Bay held a public meeting to address concerns expressed by area residents over a proposed land acquisition and development project by the Miami-Dade Fire Rescue Department.

Mayors Cindy Lerner and Shelly Stanczyk hosted the meeting which was held at Palmetto Bay's council chambers. Miami-Dade County Deputy Mayor Chip Iglesias and MDFR Chief David Downey participated in the discussion in order to dispel misconceptions and quell concerns over the proposed fire station. Also in attendance were MDFR support staff and OIA.

Years ago, MDFR determined there was a public need for a fire station in this area to respond to underserved regions of Pinecrest and Palmetto Bay. MDFR identified two acres within an adjacent USDA property, which had the support of both municipalities and members of Miami-Dade's congressional delegation. Most recently, residents from a community across from the identified property expressed apprehension and brought the process to a halt.

While the meeting's objective was met, the Village Mayors along with Miami-Dade County will continue to work with its residents in order to reach a successful conclusion.

El Portal

El Portal to annex two nearby areas

*Source: Miami Herald

The village is planning to annex two nearby areas.

The first area includes only one property, Horace Mann Middle School at 8950 NW Second Ave., village manager Jason Walker in an email. There are no residents in this area.

The second area's boundaries are the village's southern boundary (roughly Northeast 83rd Court) on the north, Biscayne Boulevard to the east, the Little River to the west and the city of Miami to the south (83rd Street) and west (the Little River). There are 35 registered voters in this area.

Walker said the second area will bring in tax revenue for the village.

"Area B will bring approximately \$30,000 in additional revenue," he said.

The application was submitted earlier this year, but it will take six to nine months to get it approved.

Walker said Area A "is surrounded on each side by the village and we would like to have zoning control on any potential zoning request that may be submitted" by Miami-Dade County Public Schools. "Area B was originally annexed by the village in 1939 through the state of Florida."

Walker added that the village was unable to locate the ordinance that accepted the annexed area in 1939, so the county requested that El Portal reapply.

Read more here: <http://www.miamiherald.com/2013/05/23/v-print/3413426/el-portal-to-annex-two-nearby.html#storylink=cpy>

Key Biscayne

Key Biscayne's Cape Florida makes Top 10 beaches list

*Source: Miami Herald

In an announcement that coincides annually with the unofficial start of summer, coastal expert Stephen P. Leatherman on Friday released the 23rd version of his Top 10 Beach List, placing Main Beach in East Hampton at the top.

Leatherman, a professor at Florida International University, has visited beaches around the world and uses criteria like water and sand quality, as well as safety and environmental

management, to compile his annual list. Once a beach reaches the pinnacle of No. 1, it is retired from future consideration, he said.

Coopers Beach in nearby Southampton, N.Y., was the No. 1 pick in the 2010 survey. Sarasota's Siesta Beach was tops in 2011 and Coronado Beach in California earned the top spot in 2012.

The other nine on Leatherman's 2013 list after Main Beach are: Kahanamoku Beach, Waikiki, Hawaii; St. George Island State Park, Fla.; Hamoa Beach, Maui, Hawaii; Waimanalo Bay State Park, Oahu, Hawaii; Barefoot Beach Preserve County Park, Bonita Springs, Fla.; **Cape Florida State Park, Key Biscayne**; Cape Hatteras, Outer Banks, N.C.; Coast Guard Beach, Cape Cod, Mass.; and Beachwalker Park, Kiawah Island, S.C.

Read more here: <http://www.miamiherald.com/2013/05/24/v-print/3414417/nys-main-beach-tops-annual-survey.html#storylink=cpy>

SAVE THE DATE:

MDCLC Monthly Board of Directors Meeting

When: Thursday, June 6, 2013

Where: **Melreese Country Club** located at 1802 NW 37th Avenue

Time: Reception 6:00 PM / Dinner Board Meeting 7:00PM

STATE / LOCAL WEEKLY REPORT

May 27- May 31, 2013

*The weekly report comprises a variety of media sources, including news articles, lobbyist reports and information gathered through the OIA.

LEGISLATIVE NEWS

Environmental Issues

Source: Lobbytools

Gov. Rick Scott on Thursday signed 36 bills into law including a trio of bills facing environmental opposition.

He signed **HB 999**, an environmental permitting bill, along with **SB 1808** dealing with water quality standards and **SB 682** dealing with coal ash waste.

During the session, **Rep. Jimmy Patronis**, R-Panama City, described his HB 999 as a "Christmas tree." He also said such legislation he has introduced the past three years brings warring factions on permitting issues together to resolve their differences.

But environmental groups rallied against the measure and eventually got it stripped of language placing a moratorium on local fertilizer regulations and exempting stormwater utilities from local wetlands ordinances.

Former U.S. Sen. **Bob Graham**, D-Miami Lakes and chairman of the Florida Conservation Coalition, said Thursday HB 999 still contains an objectionable provision ratifying 30-year no-bid farming leases approved by the Cabinet in January.

"It's a better bill than it was by eliminating those (fertilizer and wetlands) provisions and the other deletions that occurred along the process," Graham told *The Florida Current*. "But it's still in my judgment not advancing the public interest of protecting Florida's natural resources."

SB 1808 ratifies an agreement between the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection to implement water quality standards called numeric nutrient criteria.

Sierra Club Florida and the Florida Wildlife Federation opposed the bill and have been battling the agencies in federal court, saying the state water quality rules allow studies and exceptions that will delay the cleanup of springs and other waterways.

The Florida Chamber of Commerce said it supported HB 999, SB 1808 and **HB 319**, which extends a requirement that developers be allowed to pay only their "proportionate" share requirement for roads under growth management fee systems.

The chamber said the governor was eliminating costly and redundant environmental regulations and clarifying the state's transportation concurrency laws.

"As Florida prepares to pass New York to become the third largest state in the nation, the smart growth leadership measures Governor Scott has signed into law will help ensure Florida is poised for positive economic growth and competitiveness," said **David Hart**, executive vice president of the Florida Chamber of Commerce.

Sierra Club Florida and **Audubon Florida** were among opponents requesting a veto of SB 682. The bill defined "beneficial uses" of coal ash, which can contain arsenic and other toxic metals, in response to EPA reviewing rules on the use of the material.

Some environmentalists said coal ash posed a contamination threat but bill supporters, including groups representing electric utilities, said the uses would be safe and would save customers \$2.5 billion a year in disposal costs.

There also were notable bills that didn't face opposition including **SB 1806** dealing with setting pollution loads for waterways and **HB 277** dealing with renewable energy.

HB 277 would partially implement a 2008 constitutional amendment that exempts renewable energy improvements from property tax assessments.

A portion exempting wind resistance improvements was stripped from the bill to win support in the **House Finance & Tax Subcommittee**. But **Rep. Michelle Rehwinkel Vasilinda**, D-Tallahassee, said she appreciated the governor signing the bill she sponsored and hopes to come back with the wind resistance legislation next year.

"The people of Florida passed the constitutional amendment," she said. "They used their common sense. We needed to use ours."

Policy Notes: Economic Incentives

Source: Florida Current

Background:

Florida has a variety of programs to use taxpayer money as encouragement for businesses to expand their existing operations or to move to the Sunshine State. Most of the programs involve tax breaks for performance requirements that businesses receive for adding jobs at an average wage and making a minimum capital investment in the state. Other programs, such as the Quick Action Closing Fund, give companies upfront taxpayer money.

The incentives and the upfront money specifically, have been targeted by lawmakers for more accountability and transparency. They've been spurred by cases such as Digital Domain, a tech company that specialized in special effects for movie production companies, which received \$20 million from the state in 2009 before filing for bankruptcy protection this past year.

Gov. Rick Scott asked lawmakers for \$278 million in economic incentives in his budget recommendation, a significant jump from the current budget of \$111 million. Meanwhile, lawmakers want to put more controls and increase reporting requirements for Scott's Department of Economic Opportunity, which administers the incentives with Enterprise Florida, public-private economic development arm.

2013 session summary:

Lawmakers took a skeptical view of economic incentives this year, lowering the amount of total taxpayer money allotted to lure business to expand or relocate to Florida (see Economic Development Budget Policy Note). But they also imposed more-strict accountability measures to make sure businesses follow through on jobs and wages promised in incentive contracts.

Measures requiring more justification of the "economic benefits" of an economic development project, streamlining the reporting requirements for incentive programs and requiring more information about incentive projects to be posted online by the Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) were passed in HB 7007. Greater oversight measures, however, like requiring surety bonds from companies looking to pull down upfront incentives in the Quick Action Closing Fund and Innovation Incentive Fund programs, failed to make it to Gov. Rick Scott's desk.

Wary of defunct projects like Digital Domain that lost taxpayer money, lawmakers pushed for more accountability for incentive projects. But Scott's administration will be publicizing successful projects and contrasting those under former Gov. Charlie Crist's administration, such as Digital Domain, which went around the normal incentive vetting process.

For evidence, look no further than Scott's highly publicized deal to bring the Hertz rental car company's headquarters to Fort Myers, bringing up to 700 jobs along for the ride. The company could receive up to \$84 million in tax credits and incentives over 20 years as part of the deal.

Also, despite an earlier recommendation from a Senate panel, the full Senate never voted to confirm Jesse Panuccio as DEO executive director. Panuccio will remain in the position until at least next year, giving the Senate another chance to confirm his appointment.

Updates:

May 30, 2013: Gov. Rick Scott signed HB 4013, removing overall caps on the tax rebate incentives that can be awarded in the Qualified Target Industry and Qualified Defense and Space Contractor programs. The current program caps rebates for the QTI program at \$1.5 million per fiscal year and for the QDSC program at \$2.5 million per year, and \$7 million for the duration of the contract. The bill, however, keeps in place a cap on 25 percent of the total tax refunds allotted per fiscal year. HB 4013 takes effect July 1.

Governor Signs Texting and Driving Ban into Law

Source: OIA/ CBS

On Tuesday, Governor Rick Scott signed Florida's texting and driving ban into law, at Alonzo and Tracy Mourning Senior High School in North Miami, FL.

The signing event was well attended and included community leaders such as Miami-Dade Board of County Commissioners Chairwoman Rebeca Sosa, and Miami-Dade Delegation members Florida Representatives Barbara Watson, Frank Artiles and Manny Diaz Jr. The bill's sponsor state Representative Doug Holder was also in attendance.

"Just the fact that it's going to be illegal to text and drive, that's going to stop our teenagers, stop citizens from texting and driving," said Governor Scott.

"When people text and drive, they're 23 times more likely to have an accident," noted Representative Doug Holder who co-sponsored the bill.

Some people said the new law isn't strong enough.

The law which goes into effect in October makes texting and driving a secondary offense, which means you have to be pulled over for something else.

Attorney Yehuda Bruck handles traffic tickets in court and predicts the law will be tough to enforce and prosecute.

Florida Highway Patrol Trooper Joe Sanchez disagrees saying it's not hard to enforce.

"It's a secondary violation. When you're texting you're going to fail to keep a single lane, you're going to speed, you're going to run a stop sign," Trooper Sanchez said. "That's the primary law. If you're texting the officer will just write you another ticket for \$30."

Representative Slosberg says the fight isn't over. "We'll start off next year, we'll figure out how we are going to enhance this bill.

For now, the Governor is calling the law a good first step.

Drivers who text take their eyes off the road for almost five seconds, according to the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, which regulates the trucking industry. At 55 mph, a driver can cross the equivalent of a football field while not looking.

There were 256,443 reported crashes in Florida in 2012. In 4,841 of those crashes, a driver had been texting or otherwise using an "electronic communication device" while driving, according to a preliminary report from the Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles.

Holder vaunted as option for Lt. Gov

Source: Herald Tribune

Florida Gov. Rick Scott has been tight-lipped in his search for a new lieutenant governor, avoiding speculation about anyone under consideration and saying only that he expects to name someone soon.

But that hasn't stopped Sarasota County Republicans from trying to influence the process in their own way.

Sarasota GOP chairman Joe Gruters announced a petition drive this week to push Scott to select state Rep. Doug Holder as his second-in-command. Gruters' announcement came shortly after Scott left after speaking at an event in Venice Monday.

Gruters said Holder, an Osprey Republican, deserves serious consideration because he has strong support in the local community and is well-respected in GOP circles.

Gruters said he had already spoken to Scott about selecting Holder.

Holder said he was caught off guard by the gesture. He said he would be open to talking to Scott about the position but has not brought it up himself to Scott. "What an unexpected surprise," Holder said.

Scott has been without a lieutenant governor since Jennifer Carroll resigned in March because of a past business relationship with an Internet cafe operator who is under federal investigation. She has said she has done nothing improper and is not under investigation.

Scott has not acknowledged any potential candidates to replace Carroll, though Holder's name has been among those suggested on political blogs. Other names that have surfaced include former U.S. Rep. Allen West, former Florida House Speaker Allan Bense, state Sen. Anitere Flores of Miami and state Rep. Jimmy Patronis of Panama City. How seriously Scott is vetting any of those potential candidates is unclear.

Holder would appear to be a long shot for the position. Demographically and geographically, he would not bring much to Scott's re-election ticket in 2014. Both politicians are older white men from Southwest Florida. Still, Holder's experience in the Florida Legislature could have appeal, given Scott's early struggles in winning over some members of the Legislature.

Holder, first elected in 2006, is in his final term as a member of the Florida House. He has filed to run for the Florida Senate in 2018.

Read more here: <http://politics.heraldtribune.com/2013/05/29/holder-vaunted-as-option-for-It-gov/>

Hurricane Season

Source: OIA / Associated Press

On Thursday, Governor Rick Scott joined Miami-Dade County Mayor Carlos Gimenez, BCC Chairwoman Rebeca Sosa, Commissioner Jose “Pepe” Diaz, Commissioner Jean Monestime, Steve Bovo and other elected officials at the Miami-Dade Emergency Operations Center to urge residents to prepare for hurricane season.

Additionally, Scott indicated that federal sequester budget cuts is his biggest concern for the upcoming hurricane season.

Scott says the cuts threaten to strain Florida's readiness capability. According to the governor, the cuts mean nearly 1,000 Florida National Guardsmen and technicians will have to take furloughs during the summer.

Scott says he's talked with Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano and Federal Emergency Management Agency chief Craig Fugate about his concerns.

Also on Friday, Congresswoman Debbie Wasserman-Shultz and Joe Garcia were briefed at the Emergency Operations Center on the upcoming Hurricane Season. The briefing was given by the National Hurricane Center, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, National Guard and Red Cross, as well as Miami-Dade and Broward Counties EOC Directors. Congresswoman Wasserman-Shultz asked each organization how they would be impacted by the sequester cuts. She stated her commitment in helping them avert any negative impacts to public safety.

Bills signed into law by the Governor this week:

(Should you need further info, please call OIA)

HB 0021	Relating to Background Screening for Noninstructional Contractors on School Grounds	Perry
05/30/13 Approved by Governor; Chapter No. 2013-073		
SB 0052	Relating to Use of Wireless Communications Devices While Driving	Detert
05/28/13 Approved by Governor; Chapter No. 2013-058		
SB 0056	Relating to Infant Death	Hays
05/30/13 Approved by Governor; Chapter No. 2013-062		
HB 0093	Relating to Homelessness	Reed
05/30/13 Approved by Governor; Chapter No. 2013-074		
HB 0113	Relating to Distribution of Materials Harmful to Minors	Diaz (M)
05/30/13 Approved by Governor; Chapter No. 2013-075		
HB 0135	Relating to Spaceport Territory	Goodson
05/30/13 Approved by Governor; Chapter No. 2013-076		
HB 0277	Relating to Assessment of Residential & Nonhomestead Real Property	Rehwinkel Vasilinda
05/30/13 Approved by Governor; Chapter No. 2013-077		

<u>SB</u> <u>0284</u>	Relating to School Emergencies	<u>Negron</u>
05/30/13 Approved by Governor; Chapter No. 2013-063		
<u>SB</u> <u>0286</u>	Relating to Design Professionals	<u>Negron</u>
04/24/13 Approved by Governor; Chapter No. 2013-028		
<u>SB</u> <u>0294</u>	Relating to Controlled Substances	<u>Bradley</u>
04/24/13 Approved by Governor; Chapter No. 2013-029		
<u>HB</u> <u>0319</u>	Relating to Community Transportation Projects	<u>Ray</u>
05/30/13 Approved by Governor; Chapter No. 2013-078		
<u>SB</u> <u>0338</u>	Relating to Theft of Utility Services	<u>Simpson</u>
04/24/13 Approved by Governor; Chapter No. 2013-030		
<u>SB</u> <u>0342</u>	Relating to Rental of Homestead Property	<u>Thrasher</u>
05/30/13 Approved by Governor; Chapter No. 2013-064		
<u>HB</u> <u>0375</u>	Relating to Onsite Sewage Treatment and Disposal Systems	<u>Roberson</u>
05/30/13 Approved by Governor; Chapter No. 2013-079		
<u>SB</u> <u>0406</u>	Relating to Economic Development	<u>Gardiner</u>
05/21/13 Bill to be Discussed During the Office of EDR's Revenue Estimating Impact Conference, 05/23/13, 9:00 am, 117 K (No Votes Will Be Taken)		
<u>HB</u> <u>0407</u>	Relating to Criminal Gang Prevention	<u>Ingram</u>
05/30/13 Approved by Governor; Chapter No. 2013-080		
<u>HB</u> <u>0411</u>	Relating to Children's Initiatives	<u>Fullwood</u>
05/30/13 Approved by Governor; Chapter No. 2013-081		
<u>HB</u> <u>0423</u>	Relating to Tax On Sales, Use & Other Transactions	<u>Adkins</u>
05/30/13 Approved by Governor; Chapter No. 2013-082		
<u>HB</u> <u>0437</u>	Relating to Community Development	<u>Davis</u>
05/30/13 Approved by Governor; Chapter No. 2013-083		
<u>SB</u> <u>0452</u>	Relating to OGSR/Joshua Abbot Organ and Tissue Registry/Donor Information	<u>Health Policy</u>
05/30/13 Approved by Governor; Chapter No. 2013-065		
<u>HB</u> <u>0461</u>	Relating to Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Students	<u>Rooney</u>
05/30/13 Approved by Governor; Chapter No. 2013-084		
<u>SB</u> <u>0468</u>	Relating to Property and Casualty Insurance Rates, Fees, and Forms	<u>Hukill</u>
05/30/13 Approved by Governor; Chapter No. 2013-066		
<u>HB</u> <u>0487</u>	Relating to Specialty License Plates/Freemasonry	<u>Stone</u>
05/30/13 Approved by Governor; Chapter No. 2013-085		
<u>HB</u>	Relating to Marshal of Supreme Court	<u>Roberson</u>

0571	05/30/13 Approved by Governor; Chapter No. 2013-086		
HB 0609	Relating to Bullying in the Public School System	Fullwood	
	05/30/13 Approved by Governor; Chapter No. 2013-087		
SB 0628	Relating to Driver Licenses	Joyner	
	05/30/13 Approved by Governor; Chapter No. 2013-067		
SB 0682	Relating to Fossil Fuel Combustion Products	Simpson	
	05/30/13 Approved by Governor; Chapter No. 2013-068		
HB 0701	Relating to Electronic Benefits Transfer Cards	Smith (J)	
	05/30/13 Approved by Governor; Chapter No. 2013-088		
HB 0801	Relating to Certified School Counselors	Eagle	
	05/30/13 Approved by Governor; Chapter No. 2013-089		
HB 0841	Relating to Powers of Attorney	Powell	
	05/30/13 Approved by Governor; Chapter No. 2013-090		
HB 0969	Relating to Recreational Vehicle Parks	Raburn	
	05/30/13 Approved by Governor; Chapter No. 2013-091		
HB 0999	Relating to Environmental Regulation	Patronis	
	05/30/13 Approved by Governor; Chapter No. 2013-092		
HB 1071	Relating to Health Care Accrediting Organizations	Antone	
	05/30/13 Approved by Governor; Chapter No. 2013-093		
HB 1157	Relating to Health Flex Plans	Powell	
	05/30/13 Approved by Governor; Chapter No. 2013-094		
HB 1193	Relating to Taxation Of Property	Beshears	
	05/30/13 Approved by Governor; Chapter No. 2013-095		
HB 1325	Relating to Victims of Human Trafficking	Spano	
	05/30/13 Approved by Governor; Chapter No. 2013-098		
HB 1327	Relating to Pub. Rec./Crim. Hist./Human Trafficking Victims	Spano	
	05/30/13 Approved by Governor; Chapter No. 2013-099		
SB 1768	Relating to OGSR/Personal Information/Paratransit Services	Transportation	
	05/30/13 Approved by Governor; Chapter No. 2013-069		
SB 1770	Relating to Property Insurance	Banking and Insurance	
	05/29/13 Approved by Governor; Chapter No. 2013-060		
SB 1802	Relating to State Employee Health Insurance	Governmental Oversight and Accountability	
	05/20/13 Approved by Governor; Chapter No. 2013-052		

<u>SB 1806</u>	Relating to Total Maximum Daily Loads	<u>Environmental Preservation and Conservation</u>
05/30/13 Approved by Governor; Chapter No. 2013-070		
<u>SB 1808</u>	Relating to Numeric Nutrient Criteria	<u>Environmental Preservation and Conservation</u>
05/30/13 Approved by Governor; Chapter No. 2013-071		
<u>SB 1810</u>	Relating to Florida Retirement System	<u>Governmental Oversight and Accountability</u>
05/20/13 Approved by Governor; Chapter No. 2013-053		
<u>SB 1830</u>	Relating to Ad Valorem Taxation	<u>Appropriations</u>
05/30/13 Approved by Governor; Chapter No. 2013-072		
<u>SB 1850</u>	Relating to Public Records/Citizens Property Insurance Corporation Clearinghouse	<u>Banking and Insurance</u>
05/29/13 Approved by Governor; Chapter No. 2013-061		
<u>HB 4013</u>	Relating to Tax Refund Programs	<u>Santiago</u>
05/30/13 Approved by Governor; Chapter No. 2013-096		
<u>HB 7065</u>	Relating to Everglades Improvement and Management	<u>State Affairs Committee</u>
05/28/13 Approved by Governor; Chapter No. 2013-059		
<u>HB 7143</u>	Relating to OGSR Direct-support Organization for Department of Veterans' Affairs	<u>Government Operations Subcommittee</u>
05/30/13 Approved by Governor; Chapter No. 2013-097		

Local News

Miami

Election News

Source: Miami Herald

Miami City Commissioner Francis Suarez is gaining support among fellow city leaders dissatisfied with current Mayor Tomas Regalado.

Miami Commissioner Francis Suarez, who is vying to unseat mayor Tomás Regalado in the upcoming November election, now has the support of three of his four colleagues, in addition to that of the county mayor.

Commissioners Marc Sarnoff, Michelle Spence-Jones and Wifredo “Willy” Gort, as well as Miami-Dade County Mayor Carlos Gimenez, will host a fundraising party for Suarez next week. Their support for Suarez over an incumbent mayor speaks to the wide disapproval among many local leaders of Regalado’s tenure. Regalado won his 2009 race with more than 70 percent of the vote.

Regalado said he knows he's made choices that haven't sat well with the commission. As an example, he pointed to his decision last week to veto a plan favored by Sarnoff, Spence-Jones and Gort to allow some high-ranking retired municipal employees to return to the city's payroll while collecting their pensions.

That Spence-Jones supports Suarez for mayor is no surprise. She's a long-time political enemy of Regalado and recently sued him in federal court for allegedly conspiring to remove her from office.

Sarnoff supported Regalado's first bid for mayor four years ago and said he considers him "an excellent custodian for the city at a time when it didn't have the bank account we thought it had." However, Sarnoff said he is supporting Suarez's candidacy because he shares his "vision of what a modern city needs."

Gort chose not to explain his decision to back Suarez. He only said that he's "committed to this event, and that's it."

Commissioner Frank Carollo, who is focused on his own reelection campaign, said he doesn't know whether he'll back either of the two candidates.

According to the most recent financial reports from April, Suarez had received some \$259,000 in contributions since he announced his candidacy in January. He raised another \$719,000 for his electioneering communications organization (ECO), which he launched last year. For his part, Regalado has raised \$321,000 for his campaign, which he started last summer, and another \$93,000 to the ECO he launched this year.

Read more here: <http://www.miamiherald.com/2013/05/28/v-print/3421454/3-colleagues-back-miami-commissioner.html#storylink=cpy>

Hialeah

Street Naming

Source: Miami Herald

A stretch of a Miami-Dade street will be renamed in honor Operation Pedro Pan, the 1960s exodus that spirited 14,048 unaccompanied children out of Fidel Castro's Cuba to Miami.

Operation Pedro Pan Avenue will be unveiled on June 14th by Miami-Dade Commissioner Esteban Bovo Jr. The ceremony, open to the public, will take place at 11:30 a.m. in Hialeah, in the stretch that will be renamed at West 12th Avenue between 44th and 49th Street.

The children who took part in the exodus, now adults in their 50s and 60s, have been working in recent years to highlight and preserve the history of the mission that brought them clandestinely to America between 1960 and 1962.

Homestead

Source: Miami Herald

On Thursday, the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission held its annual open house and discussed the safety performance of the Turkey Point nuclear power plant. Earlier this month the NRC announced it is increasing oversight of the facility operated by Florida Power & Light after three unplanned shutdowns in the first three months of this year. Regulators say the shutdowns of one of the South Miami-Dade plant's two reactors posed no threat to public safety.

NRC staff was available to answer questions from the public about plant operations during the meeting, which took place at 1 p.m. at Keys Gate Golf Club in Homestead.

Coral Gables

Source: Miami Herald

UM a step closer to pedestrian bridge across U.S. 1 / Andalusia Avenue garage

A small side street opposite the University of Miami went from being a city to a county street Tuesday, clearing the way for the county to build a long-sought pedestrian bridge across U.S. 1. The bridge could be ready by spring 2015, according to the county.

Coral Gables commissioners unanimously agreed to transfer control of Mariposa Court to Miami-Dade County. The bridge would rise about 17 feet above U.S. 1 and reach from the Metrorail's University Station onto a redesigned Mariposa Court, which runs alongside the eastern boundary of the University Centre strip mall.

Since 1989, eight UM students have been struck trying to cross U.S. 1 to get to the retail spots at the center. Three died, Eric Adams in 1990, Aaron Baber in 1998 and Ashley Kelly in 2005 and the bridge would be named for them.

State and federal agencies have allocated about \$6 million for the bridge. There will be no cost to Coral Gables. The county would assume all risks, assume full responsibility for drainage and maintenance, and the city would be indemnified against any suits, said Gables City Attorney Craig Leen.

Coral Gables and Miami-Dade County began discussions of a deal for the pedestrian bridge earlier this year that would not involve University Centre because its owners refused a county offer of \$1.8 million to anchor the bridge on a far eastern corner of their property and to compensate for the loss of five parking spaces.

Hernandez expects construction to last a year and begin in the spring of 2014 once a redesign of the bridge is completed and approved.

Read more here: <http://www.miamiherald.com/2013/05/28/v-print/3421297/um-a-step-closer-to-pedestrian.html#storylink=cpy>

Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce Goals Conference

This week the GMCC held its annual Goals Conference. Each year the GMCC holds a two day conference in order to develop a program and vision that will help move the community forward. Among the events, workshops were held that focused on community development and civic leadership. Of particular interest, a workshop on governmental affairs was held to encourage GMCC stakeholders to propose and vet the legislative priorities for the upcoming legislative sessions. Panel Participants included Florida State Senator Gwen Margolis and State Representative Jose Felix Diaz, as well as Congresswoman Fedrika Wilson and Miami-Dade Commissioner Jean Monestime.

Another workshop of interest was One Community One Goal. The purpose of the One Community One Goal initiative is to create a plan of action for growing jobs and investment in Miami-Dade County, while working towards becoming the global destination for business. Serving on the panel was Miami-Dade Mayor Carlos Gimenez.

An installation ceremony took place for the new leadership for the 2013-2014 Chamber Year. Additionally, award presentations were given as follows: The M. Athalie Range, Miami Pioneer for Progress Award was presented to Charlotte Gallogly, President, World Trade Center Miami, "who has been a true pioneer, demonstrating innovation and leadership in our community". In addition, the Henry M. Flagler Community Builder Award was presented to Manny J. Rodriguez, Regional Manager, FPL, "whose vision and leadership have made a significant contribution to the Greater Miami community, making it a better place to live, work and play".

Today, Mayor Carlos Gimenez announced a new initiative named Actively Investing in Miami-Dade, A.K.A. the A.I.M. Initiative, which is focused on developing the proper measures for ensuring Miami-Dade's future workforce meets the needs that will propel the county into a top global community. To read more, please see the press release below:

Press Release:

Mayor Carlos A. Gimenez Announces Initiative Focused On The Development, Recruitment And Retention Of Miami-Dade County's Future Workforce

(MIAMI, May 31, 2013) – Miami-Dade County Mayor Carlos A. Gimenez today announced Actively Investing in Miami-Dade – the A.I.M. Initiative – , which is focused on developing, recruiting, and retaining the future workforce needed to make Miami-Dade a top global community. The A.I.M. Initiative is a comprehensive strategy that coordinates Miami-Dade County's efforts in the areas of talent development and retention.

The announcement was made at the Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce's (GMCC) 2013 Goals Conference at Jungle Island in Miami. In announcing the new initiative, the Mayor called upon local businesses to join him in a community-wide effort to expand job and internship opportunities for local students.

“It is my priority to work closely with our business community and our educational institutions to develop local students and give them a chance to succeed as productive members of our local workforce,” said Mayor Gimenez. “It’s up to us to give them the tools – and the encouragement – to continue making Miami-Dade their home after graduation.”

The GMCC and the Beacon Council are working with the Mayor and the County to push forward strategies linked to talent development, recruitment, engagement, and retention.

The Beacon Council’s One Community One Goal initiative, which is Co-Chaired by the Mayor, has emphasized that the way communities invest in learning and skills development is a key factor to consider when building an infrastructure that supports healthy communities, businesses, industries, and quality of life. The A.I.M. Initiative’s various County mentorships, internships, and opportunities for future employment are designed to provide real and valuable work experiences, helping young professionals to develop the analytical skills and entrepreneurial drive that are sought out in all industries and business settings. For more information on the A.I.M. Initiative, please visit www.miamidade.gov/aim.

SAVE THE DATE:

MDCLC Monthly Board of Directors Meeting

When: Thursday, June 6, 2013

Where: **Melreese Country Club** located at 1802 NW 37th Avenue

Time: Reception 6:00 PM / Dinner Board Meeting 7:00PM