

The Skidmore Scoop

April 30, 2021

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Message from Tallahassee

The 2021 Legislative Session came to a close today after it met its constitutional obligation to pass a balanced budget. The 2021-22 Florida budget totals a record \$101.5 billion, the largest in State history. Despite anticipating devastating cuts to hospitals, nursing homes, Medicaid, education, and the environment due to the pandemic's impact on the State's sales tax collection, which funds General Revenue, federal funding buoyed the budget to allow for increased allocations across the board, including \$6 billion in reserves.

In the last week of Session, we took up controversial bills that dealt with difficult issues, such as transgender girls participating in sports, State preemption of local governments and voter referenda regarding sea ports, and NICA, which is a statutory organization that manages the Florida Birth Related Neurological Injury Compensation Plan used to pay for the care of infants born with certain neurological injuries.

My office will be sending out a more detailed and comprehensive Session Review in the coming weeks, but please don't hesitate to contact me should you have any specific questions you may have in the meantime.

Grant from Helios Education Foundation

This week, the Florida Department of Education (FDOE) announced a \$1.5 million grant from Helios Education Foundation to enhance enrollment opportunities for Florida College System students. The grant will incent students to enroll in programs that prepare them to transfer to a four-year institution or entry into employment. In addition to grants to state colleges, the Center will collaborate with the Florida College Access Network (FCAN) and Local College Access Networks (LCANs) to expand the reach of the grant through partnerships with K-12, postsecondary institutions, businesses, and community-based organizations.

Cinco De Mayo Savings for Pets

Palm Beach County Animal Care and Control will be offering promotional prices on a variety of services for pets, in addition to discounted pet adoption fees. Palm Beach County residents can take advantage of these savings from May 1st through May 9th, 2021:

Vaccine Clinic Hours (no appointment needed):

- Saturday, May 1 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
- Sunday, May 2 11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
- Tuesday, May 4 2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
- Wednesday, May 5 2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
- Thursday, May 6 2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
- Saturday, May 8 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
- Sunday, May 9 11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Location: 7100 Belvedere Road, West Palm Beach, FL 33411

One More Congressional Seat for Florida

This week, the United States Census Bureau (Bureau) announced that Florida will officially be receiving one additional seat in the U.S. House of Representatives, bringing Florida's total to 28 congressional seats. This is due to Florida's increase in population over the last decade, as captured by the 2020 census. The Bureau also announced that Florida's formal statewide population total is 21,538,187 residents, confirming Florida as the third most populous state in the country.

May is Mental Health Awareness and Trauma-Informed Care Month in Palm Beach County

Trauma, no matter when it occurs, affects individuals over their lifetime and can strike at the heart of a community. Birth to 22: United For Brighter Futures, in partnership with the Becoming a Trauma Sensitive Community Action Team, is working to address current mental health concerns and statistics through its countywide Get Your Green On campaign. The sixth annual Get Your Green On campaign aims to foster safe spaces to talk openly about mental health and trauma, and to raise awareness by encouraging individuals to display their visible support by wearing green, the official color of mental health awareness, on May 20th, 2021. To launch the awareness month, a virtual kickoff event hosted by the Children's Services Council of Palm Beach County will be held on April 30th, (<https://pbcgygo2021.eventbrite.com>), and the Palm Beach County Board of County Commissioners will issue a proclamation on May 1st, declaring the month Mental Health Awareness and Trauma Informed Care Month.

Contact Your State Representative

Committee Assignments

[Health & Human Services Committee](#)

[Government Operations Subcommittee](#)

[Health Care Appropriations Subcommittee](#)

[Professions & Public Health Subcommittee](#)

[Tourism, Infrastructure & Energy Subcommittee](#)

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