

FPF Legislative Session Report

February 26- March 2, 2018



The eighth week of session started with a Rally to Tally for Gun Reform with thousands of citizens converging on Tallahassee. Strengthened mental health programs in schools, school security, and new gun restrictions continue to be major topics, which are changing the dynamic of the remaining committee process.

The week began with Chair Caldwell placing Representative Willhite's Workers' Compensation Benefits for First Responders, HB 227, on Monday's Committee agenda. The bill had an impressive 58 Co-Sponsors, which included Chair Caldwell, along with two Committees' Substitutes in support, Government Operations & Technology Appropriations and Government Operations, Transparency & Administration Subcommittee.

In light of the busy schedule, the Chair requested that supporters waive their testimony in support of the bill. This bill is extremely personal to Megan Vila and Jessica Relind. While they felt compelled to give a very short passionate testimony, the rest of us in attendance waived our time to speak in support of the bill. The league of cities also spoke announcing they were dropping their opposition to the bill due to the latest amendments.

The Government Accountability Committee voted HB 227 out with 19 yeas, 0 Nays. The Committee substitute text has been filed, which completes the committee process for HB 227, and the bill was placed on the House Special Order Calendar for Second Reading.

Chair Bradley also placed Senator Book's Workers' Compensation Benefits for First Responders, SB 376, on Tuesday's Appropriations Committee meeting agenda. Tuesday's Committee meeting had an extensive schedule, and Chair Bradley requested that those in attendance show great respect while they work through emotional issues and when possible, waive speaking time.

At the end of a very long day, Bradley moved SB 376 with just minutes left on the committee schedule. The bill quickly passed with a 20 Yeas, 0 Nays vote. The bill was quickly placed on the agenda for the Rules Committee on Thursday.

Rules Chair Benacquisto placed SB 376 on the agenda for Friday's Rules Committee, which had another extremely busy and emotional schedule. Like Chair Bradley, Senator Benacquisto expertly moved the bill through the Committee with a 12 Yeas, 0 Nays vote. The bill was promptly placed on the Special Order Calendar for Second Reading.

At virtually the same time Friday afternoon, the House and Senate took up HB 227 and SB 376 respectively, both passing without objection. HB 227 and SB 376 were placed on the Special Order Calendar for Third Reading and final passage for Monday.

It's unusual for the Senate to meet on a Saturday; however, the session clock is ticking. After the 58th day of Session (March 7), the House may only consider returning messages, conference reports, and concurrent resolutions. Therefore, Senate President Negron announced the Senate would convene on Saturday, March 3, 2018, from 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. for the purpose of hearing Senate Bill 7026, the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Act, on Second Reading. The bill would then be heard on Third Reading and available for a final vote on Monday, March 5, 2018.

Saturday morning, the Senate took up several bills in addition to the Public Safety, SB 7026, bill by Rules. These were quickly passed without objection and little to no debate. One bill that was in that group was SB 376 by Book which passed 33 Yeas, 0 Nays, with three Yea votes after the roll call, thereby passing 36 to 0. SB 376 has been sent to the House in messages. While Senator Book was on a roll, she offered an amendment to SB 382, Transportation Facility Designations, which added that a portion of Bruce B. Downs Boulevard between Cypress Preserve Drive and Amberly Drive in Hillsborough County be designated as "Stevie LaDue Giving Hope Highway." That portion of the roadway is in front of the Fire Station where Brother Steven LaDue served the community.

The House and Senate formally moved into final budget negotiations as all unresolved issues were bumped to Budget Chairs Senator Bradley and Representative Trujillo. Issues not resolved over the weekend will go to House Speaker Richard Corcoran and Senate President Joe Negron to decide. Big issues are: school safety initiatives, Florida Forever funding, and private prison operations.

The Fire Safety bills continue to move. HB 309 by Representative Antone has been placed on Monday's Special Order calendar for final passage. Senator Bracy's SB 394 was read a third time and passed out 36 Yeas, 0 Nays and has been sent to the House in messages.

Two local bills, HB 1141 Firefighters' Relief and Pension Fund of the City of Pensacola and HB 1139 City Pension Fund for Firefighters and Police Officers in the City of Tampa, were received by the Senate in messages and have been referred to Rules. The Rules Committee will bundle all the Local Bills together to be heard by the Senate at the same time.

While the clock is working against us, we are continuing to push Senator Flores' Cancer Bill's provisions in every opportunity available to obtain the costs and determine options available.

In addition to Vice President Rocco Salvatori and Secretary/Treasurer Gilbert Marsh, we had 5th DVP Watler and 9th DVP Vroman that traveled to Tallahassee. 8th DVP Bellamy also devoted some time this week at the office and the capitol. Their assistance is greatly appreciated.

Retirement

[HB 977 Retirement of Instructional Personnel & Administrative Personnel \(Fine\)](#)
[Companion Bill: SB 1240 \(Mayfield\)](#)

[FPF Position: Watch](#)

2/27/2018 HOUSE Placed on Special Order Calendar, 03/02/18. 3/2/2018 HOUSE Read Second Time; Placed on Third Reading, 03/05/18.

Safety and Health

HB 309 Fire Safety (Antone)

Companion Bill: SB 394 (Bracy)

FPF Position: Support

2/27/2018 HOUSE Placed on Special Order Calendar, 03/02/18. 3/2/2018 HOUSE Read Second Time; Placed on Third Reading, 03/05/18.

SB 394 Fire Safety (Bracy)

Companion Bill: HB 309 (Antone)

FPF Position: Support

2/27/2018 SENATE Placed on Special Order Calendar, 03/01/18. 3/1/2018 SENATE Read Second Time; Placed on Third Reading, 03/02/18. 3/2/2018 SENATE Read Third Time; Passed (Vote: 36 Yeas / 0 Nays). 3/2/2018 HOUSE In Messages.

SB 820 Fire Safety Inspectors (Powell)

Companion Bill: HB 637 (Jacquet)

FPF Position: Support

2/26/2018 SENATE Not Considered by Rules. 2/28/2018 SENATE On Committee agenda - Rules, 03/01/18, 9:00 am, 412 K. 3/1/2018 SENATE Favorable by Rules; 12 Yeas, 0 Nays. 3/2/2018 SENATE Placed on Calendar, on 2nd reading.

State Employees

HB 5005 Collective Bargaining (Appropriations Committee)

Companion Bills: SB 2500 (Appropriations), HB 5001 (Appropriations Committee), SB 2504 (Appropriations)

FPF Position: Watch

2/27/2018 SENATE Bill placed in Conference (Appropriations Conference Committee). 2/27/2018 HOUSE Bill placed in Conference (Appropriations Conference Committee).

Workers Compensation

HB 227 Workers' Compensation Benefits for First Responders (Willhite)

Companion Bills: SB 126 (Torres, Jr.), HB 629 (Asencio), SB 376 (Book)

FPF Position: Support

2/26/2018 HOUSE Favorable with CS by Government Accountability Committee; 19 Yeas, 0 Nays. 2/27/2018 HOUSE Committee Substitute Text (C3) Filed. 2/27/2018 HOUSE Placed on Calendar, on 2nd reading. 2/27/2018 HOUSE Placed on Special Order Calendar, 03/02/18. 3/2/2018 HOUSE Read Second Time; Amendment Withdrawn (400609); Placed on Third Reading, 03/05/18.

SB 376 Workers' Compensation Benefits for First Responders (Book)

Companion Bills: SB 126 (Torres, Jr.), HB 629 (Asencio), HB 227 (Willhite)

FPF Position: Support

2/27/2018 SENATE Favorable with CS by Appropriations; 20 Yeas, 0 Nays. 2/28/2018 SENATE Committee Substitute Text (C2) Filed. 2/28/2018 SENATE Now in Rules. 2/28/2018 SENATE On Committee agenda - Rules, 03/01/18, 9:00 am, 412 K. 3/1/2018 SENATE Favorable by Rules; 12 Yeas, 0 Nays. 3/1/2018 SENATE Placed on Calendar, on 2nd reading. 3/1/2018 SENATE Placed on Special Order Calendar, 03/02/18. 3/2/2018 SENATE Read Second Time; Placed on Third Reading. 3/3/2018 SENATE Read Third Time; Passed (Vote: 33 Yeas / 0 Nays). 3/3/2018 HOUSE In Messages.

Watch Bills

SB 272 Local Tax Referenda (Brandes)

Companion Bill: HB 317 (Ingoglia)

3/1/2018 SENATE On Committee agenda - Appropriations, 03/02/18, 9:00 am, 412 K – PCS. 3/2/2018 SENATE Favorable with CS by Appropriations; 11 Yeas, 7 Nays.

HB 1395 City of Marco Island, Collier County (Rommel)

2/27/2018 HOUSE Placed on Special Order Calendar, 03/02/18. 3/2/2018 HOUSE Read Second Time; Placed on Third Reading, 03/05/18.