
CAPITOL CONNECTION

News and Views from
*Representative Trudi
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Florida, District 75
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LEGISLATION MAKING NEWS!

Although these are not my bills, I thought you might be interested in them since they have generated a lot of media attention:

HB 799 - this bill establishes the theft of copper and other nonferrous metals from a utility or communications services provider as a first degree felony, punishable by up to 30 years in prison and a \$10,000 fine. The theft of copper in Florida has caused issues such as power outages and communication failures, which can prove to be very costly for businesses and homeowners.

HB 173 - this bill will increase the penalties for people that traffic or distribute controlled substances in their homes. The problem of "grow houses" has exploded in Florida, which ranks second only to California in the number of these operations in the state.

THE BUDGET PROCESS

Unlike the federal government, the state of Florida's Constitution requires that the state incur no deficit and therefore have and maintain a balanced budget. As you can imagine when you have 160 legislators you get many different ideas as to how the budget should be balanced, which projects should be funded and which projects should not. Both the House and Senate have their own appropriation (budget) bills. In order to reach a compromise between the House and Senate budgets, the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives form a "Budget Conference". The conference includes members chosen by the leader of their chambers to represent them in the budget negotiations. In the following weeks, these conferences will convene to analyze, review, and revise the budget.

TRUDI'S THOUGHTS

We are now halfway through session and as we continue to pass legislation we will also start focusing more on the budget. As many of you are aware, this will be a very lean fiscal year. My colleagues and I must take up the difficult task of balancing the budget responsibly, which means reducing our spending. Florida's budget outlook is challenging. However, these challenges give us the opportunity to correct the state's spending habits and balance our budget with an eye towards the future. It allows us to prove to you, the voters why you elected us to represent you in Tallahassee.

QUOTABLE QUOTES

"It is not fair to ask of others what you are not willing to do yourself." Eleanor Roosevelt

Please send correspondence to Trudi.Williams@myfloridahouse.gov. All comments are reviewed by Representative Williams. To receive a response, please include your name, address and telephone number. To unsubscribe from this e-mail, send a blank e-mail to Trudi.Williams@myfloridahouse.gov with "unsubscribe" in the subject line.