
CAPITOL CONNECTION

News and Views from
*Representative Trudi
Williams*



Florida, District 75
April 4, 2005, Issue 4

TRUDI'S BILL TRACKER

- **HB 817**, which authorizes the creation of Southwest Florida's first ever engineering school at Florida Gulf Coast University, passed unanimously in the Colleges and Universities Committee and is now in the Education Appropriations Committee.
- **HB 405**, which redefines the term "compensation" to include certain supplementary payments made to firefighters, paramedics, and emergency medical technicians, thereby bringing their retirement compensation in line with that of other civil servants, passed unanimously in the Governmental Appropriations Committee and is now in the Local Government Council.
- **HB 759 CS**, which protects the environment while eliminating redundant review by numerous agencies, thereby saving taxpayers millions of dollars, passed unanimously in the Environmental Regulation Committee and is now in the Agriculture and Environmental Appropriations Committee.
- **HJR 159**, which closes the loophole that prevents hundreds of thousands of individuals from exercising their constitutional right to vote during each election cycle, is now in Ethics and Election Committee and should be placed on the agenda soon.

LEGISLATIVE RECAP

Committees continued to meet this past week and consider legislation filed by House members on a host of issues. As part of the 60 day legislative session, committees will continue to meet through the first half of the session with focus gradually shifting to action on the House floor. Several bills have passed in the House including HB 473 (Water Management District Security), HB 635 (Citrus Canker Eradication), HB 323 (DUI Traffic Safety Courses), and HJR 1177 (Ballot Initiative regarding term limits) to name a few.

TRUDI'S THOUGHTS....

This was a very difficult week for me, both on a personal front as well as on the legislative front. I lost a very dear friend of mine, Bill Baxter, who was General Council for the Army Corps of Engineers in Jacksonville. He will be greatly missed by all that knew him. In addition to his passing, the House lost one of its "freshman" members, Rep. David Coley, to cancer, and continued to struggle with the issue of Terry Schiavo right up until her death. The loss of such a great spiritual leader as the Pope also greatly affected me and added to the sadness of this past week. As a legislator, I have learned that no matter how hard you try, you cannot always have an impact on those issues most important to you. I have also learned to listen carefully to each side of an argument, but to ultimately go where my heart and head lead me. I would like to thank each of you who have contacted me through e-mail, phone calls, letters and even visits to the office here in Tallahassee. I can tell you, without hesitation, that your input, suggestions, and even criticism, has assisted me in better serving our state more effectively. Thank you.

QUOTABLE QUOTES

"To know what is right and not to do it is the worst cowardice." - Confucius