

FPF Legislative Session Report

April 17-21, 2017



There are two weeks remaining in the regular session. Several issues and situations are making it challenging to deal with the remaining bills and the budget negotiations. We will continue to watch every issue that is moving from this point on because they all affect the conference process.

Monday night, while socializing at the Governors Club, Senator Artiles made some racial slurs and derogatory comments about several fellow Senators.

President Negrón issued a statement late Tuesday saying he was "appalled to hear that one Senator would speak to another in such an offensive and reprehensible manner." He also said, "Racial slurs and profane, sexist insults have no place in conversation between Senators and will not be tolerated while I am serving as Senate president."

Wednesday morning, Frank Artiles made a personal apology from the Senate floor saying he was sorry for his insulting words and racial slurs. He specifically addressed Senator Audrey Gibson, Senator Perry Thurston, and President Negrón.

However, prior to the apology, Senate President Negrón stripped Artiles of his chairmanship of Senate Communications, Energy and Public Utilities Committee and announced that an investigation is underway concerning a complaint seeking to remove Senator Artiles from office.

The Artiles incident consumed much of the energy in the Senate for a large portion of this week. Senator Galvano was tasked with a resolution to the situation in light of the intense backlash, which ultimately led to Senator Artiles' resignation on Friday morning, where he acknowledged his comments were a distraction to his colleagues and the legislative process.

As we reported, there is a philosophical difference between the Senate and the House over property taxes. The Senate budget will allow property taxes to rise with increasing land value. However, Speaker Richard Corcoran has said doing so is a tax increase and is refusing to accept that increase. The House budget will freeze property tax revenue.

President Negrón said he and Speaker Corcoran would need to reach a compromise. If they do not settle the budget by May 5th, it will push the Legislature into a special session. If there is

any hope of a budget deal, or at least a path to a quick special or extended session, the conference process must be successful and find provisions for both the House and Senate.

With the conference process in mind, there are two bills moving late in the Senate Committee process, which will be part of the budget conference process. Next Monday, the state employee healthcare bill and a new FRS bill that was filed Wednesday night will be heard. The new bill (SB 7030) changes the FRS default and includes the cancer bill provisions. We have been abundantly clear, we do not support the default change. We will be on the record opposing the bill next Monday.

Under the Senate rules, if these two bills pass, they will be part of the conference process. We made it clear that we will oppose the bill and would not consider trading the cancer presumption for the default change. These bills appear to be in the must pass category, so we suggested an amendment to study the options for restoring the COLA. The Committee Chair, Senator Baxley, has agreed to order the studies to provide the needed data to start discussions on the COLA restoration. With next Session starting in January, the committee process could start in early October.

We continue our efforts to clean up the impaired practitioner bills and the tax exemption for totally disabled first responders, and the needed amendments are being well received. The bills to repeal the high-rise condominium retro fitting of sprinkler systems continues to move with amendments to provide signage to alert firefighters and residents of the lack of sprinklers.

If the bills do not pass, there is no feasible way for the subject units to comply with the law within the established time period. However, it may be possible to amend these bills to provide for the notice and extend the time lines to provide a path to compliance without local government assuming the liability for not enforcing the current law. We will continue to work with the other groups on this safety issue to find some common ground.

In addition to Vice President Rocco Salvatori and Secretary/Treasurer Gilbert Marsh, we had 5th DVP Watler, 3rd DVP McCrystal, and President Tim Stromsnes, Reedy Creek Fire Fighters, that traveled to Tallahassee; their assistance is greatly appreciated.

RETIREMENT

HB 603 Relating to Publicly Funded Defined Benefit Retirement Plans (Fischer)

Companion Bill: SB 632 (Brandes)

FPF Position: Oppose

4/18/2017 HOUSE Favorable by Appropriations Committee; 18 Yeas, 8 Nays. 4/18/2017 HOUSE Now in Government Accountability Committee.

SB 7030 Relating to Retirement (Governmental Oversight and Accountability)

FPF Position: Oppose

Retirement; Establishing a presumption as to a firefighter's condition or impairment of health caused by certain types of cancer he or she contracts in the line of duty; authorizing renewed membership in the Florida Retirement System for retirees who are reemployed in a position eligible for the Elected Officers' Class under certain circumstances; revising criteria for eligibility of payment of death benefits to the surviving children of a Special

Risk Class member killed in the line of duty under specified circumstances, etc. Effective Date: 7/1/2017. 4/19/2017 SENATE Filed. 4/19/2017 SENATE On Committee agenda - Governmental Oversight and Accountability, 04/24/17, 3:00 pm, 401 S.

EMS ISSUES

[HB 61 Relating to Emergency Services for an Unintentional Drug Overdose \(L. Lee Jr.\)](#)
[Companion Bill: SB 558 \(Passidomo\)](#)

[FPF Position: Watch](#)

4/20/2017 HOUSE Placed on Special Order Calendar, 04/25/17.

[HB 229 Relating to Programs for Impaired Health Care Practitioners \(Byrd\)](#)
[Companion Bill: SB 876 \(Young\)](#)

[FPF Position: Watch](#)

4/18/2017 HOUSE Placed on Special Order Calendar, 04/19/17. 4/19/2017 HOUSE Read Second Time; Amendment Adopted (978295); Placed on Third Reading, 04/20/17. 4/19/2017 HOUSE Engrossed Text (E1) Filed. 4/20/2017 HOUSE Read Third Time; Passed (Vote: 119 Yeas / 0 Nays).

[HB 249 Relating to Drug Overdoses \(Rommel\)](#)
[Companion Bill: SB 588 \(Passidomo\)](#)

[FPF Position: Support](#)

4/20/2017 HOUSE Placed on Special Order Calendar, 04/25/17.

[SB 588 Relating to Drug Overdoses \(Passidomo\)](#)
[Companion Bill: HB 249 \(Rommel\)](#)

[FPF Position: Watch](#)

4/12/2017 SENATE On Committee agenda - Criminal Justice, 04/17/17, 1:30 pm, 37 S. 4/17/2017 SENATE Favorable with CS by Criminal Justice; 7 Yeas, 0 Nays. 4/18/2017 SENATE Committee Substitute Text (C2) Filed. 4/19/2017 SENATE Now in Rules. 4/20/2017 SENATE On Committee agenda - Rules, 04/25/17, 2:00 pm, 110 S.

[SB 876 Relating to Programs For Impaired Health Care Practitioners \(Young\)](#)
[Companion Bill: HB 229 \(Byrd\)](#)

[FPF Position: Watch](#)

4/18/2017 SENATE Favorable with CS by Appropriations Subcommittee on Health and Human Services; 7 Yeas, 0 Nays. 4/20/2017 SENATE Now in Appropriations. 4/20/2017 SENATE On Committee agenda - Appropriations, 04/25/17, 9:00 am, 412 K – PCS.

GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS

[HB 139 Relating to Local Tax Referenda \(Ingoglia\)](#)
[Companion Bill: SB 278 \(Steube\)](#)

[FPF Position: Watch](#)

4/17/2017 HOUSE On Committee agenda - Government Accountability Committee, 04/19/17, 8:00 am, 17 H. 4/19/2017 HOUSE Favorable with CS by Government Accountability Committee; 20 Yeas, 0 Nays. 4/20/2017 HOUSE Committee Substitute Text (C2) Filed. 4/20/2017 HOUSE Placed on Calendar, on 2nd reading. 4/20/2017 HOUSE Placed on Special Order Calendar, 04/25/17.

[SB 278 Relating to Local Tax Referenda \(Steube\)](#)
[Companion Bill: HB 139 \(Ingoglia\)](#)

[FPF Position: Watch](#)

4/17/2017 SENATE Favorable with CS by Community Affairs; 6 Yeas, 1 Nay. 4/18/2017 SENATE Committee Substitute Text (C2) Filed.

[HB 455 Relating to Tax Exemptions for First Responders and Surviving Spouses \(Metz\)](#)

[Companion Bill: SB 764 \(Baxley\)](#)

[FPF Position: Support](#)

4/18/2017 HOUSE Favorable with CS by Appropriations Committee; 25 Yeas, 0 Nays. 4/19/2017 HOUSE Committee Substitute Text (C2) Filed. 4/21/2017 HOUSE Placed on Calendar; on 2nd reading.

[SB 764 Relating to Tax Exemptions for First Responders and Surviving Spouses \(Baxley\)](#)

[Companion Bill: HB 455 \(Metz\)](#)

[FPF Position: Support](#)

4/17/2017 SENATE Now in Appropriations. 4/20/2017 Bill to be Discussed During the Office of EDR's Revenue Estimating Impact Conference, 04/21/17, 9:00 am, 117 K (No Votes Will Be Taken). 4/20/2017 SENATE On Committee agenda - Appropriations, 04/25/17, 9:00 am, 412 K – PCS.

[SB 1108 Relating to Public Records/Firefighters and their Spouses and Children \(Artiles\)](#)

[Companion Bill: HB 383 \(Willhite\)](#)

[FPF Position: Support](#)

4/17/2017 SENATE Placed on Special Order Calendar, 04/19/17. 4/19/2017 SENATE Temporarily Postponed on Second Reading. 4/19/2017 SENATE Retained on Special Order Calendar.

[STATE EMPLOYEES](#)

[SB 1020 Relating to Collective Bargaining Impasses \(Powell\)](#)

[FPF Position: Watch](#)

4/18/2017 HOUSE Placed on Special Order Calendar, 04/19/17. 4/19/2017 HOUSE Substituted for HB 7081; Read Second Time; Placed on Third Reading, 04/20/17. 4/20/2017 HOUSE Read Third Time; Passed (Vote: 119 Yeas / 0 Nays).

[HB 7007 Relating to State Group Insurance Program \(Health & Human Services Committee\)](#)

[Companion Bill: SB 900 \(T. Lee\)](#)

[FPF Position: Watch](#)

4/19/2017 SENATE On Committee agenda - Governmental Oversight and Accountability, 04/24/17, 3:00 pm, 401 S.

[HB 7081 Relating to Collective Bargaining Impasses \(Government Accountability Committee\)](#)

[Companion Bill: SB 1020 \(Powell\)](#)

[FPF Position: Watch](#)

Collective Bargaining Impasses: Revises notice requirements for issues at impasse. Effective Date: July 1, 2017. 3/17/2017 HOUSE Filed (Formerly PCB GAC2). 3/20/2017 HOUSE Referred to Appropriations Committee. 3/20/2017 HOUSE Now in Appropriations Committee. 3/27/2017 HOUSE On Committee agenda - Appropriations Committee, 03/29/17, 11:30 am, 212 K. 3/29/2017 HOUSE Favorable by Appropriations Committee; 16 Yeas, 7 Nays. 3/29/2017 HOUSE Placed on Calendar, on 2nd reading. 4/13/2017 HOUSE Placed on Special Order Calendar, 04/18/17. 4/18/2017 HOUSE Placed on Special Order Calendar, 04/19/17. 4/19/2017 HOUSE Read Second Time; Substituted for SB 1020; Laid on Table, Refer to SB 1020.

WORKERS COMPENSATION

SB 1088 Relating to Workers' Compensation for First Responders (Torres, Jr.)

Companion Bill: HB 1019 (M. Miller)

FPF Position: Support

4/17/2017 SENATE Favorable by Banking and Insurance; 7 Yeas, 0 Nays. 4/18/2017 SENATE Now in Appropriations Subcommittee on General Government.

SB 1582 Relating to Workers' Compensation Insurance (Bradley)

Companion Bill: HB 7085 (Insurance & Banking Subcommittee)

FPF Position: Watch

4/19/2017 SENATE Favorable by Rules; 10 Yeas, 0 Nays. 4/20/2017 SENATE Placed on Calendar, on 2nd reading.

HB 7085 Relating to Workers' Compensation (Insurance & Banking Subcommittee)

Companion Bill: SB 1582 (Bradley)

FPF Position: Watch

4/18/2017 HOUSE Read Second Time; Amendment Withdrawn (130035); Amendments Failed (717177, 684061, 952503, 735145); Amendments Adopted (360611, 759369); Placed on Third Reading. 4/18/2017 HOUSE Engrossed Text (E1) Filed. 4/19/2017 HOUSE Read Third Time; Passed (Vote: 82 Yeas / 37 Nays). 4/20/2017 SENATE In Messages. 4/20/2017 SENATE Received; Referred to Rules.

MISCELLANEOUS

HB 465 Relating to Firefighter Emeritus (Raburn)

FPF Position: Watch

4/17/2017 HOUSE On Committee agenda - Government Accountability Committee, 04/19/17, 8:00 am, 17 H. 4/19/2017 HOUSE Favorable with CS by Government Accountability Committee; 23 Yeas, 0 Nays. 4/20/2017 HOUSE Committee Substitute Text (C2) Filed. 4/20/2017 HOUSE Placed on Calendar, on 2nd reading. 4/20/2017 HOUSE Placed on Special Order Calendar, 04/25/17.

HB 653 Relating to Community Associations (Moraitis)

Companion Bill: SB 744 (Passidomo)

FPF Position: Watch

4/17/2017 HOUSE Favorable by Government Operations & Technology Appropriations Subcommittee; 11 Yeas, 2 Nays. 4/17/2017 HOUSE Now in Commerce Committee. 4/22/2017 HOUSE On Committee agenda - Commerce Committee, 04/24/17, 9:00 am, 212 K.

SB 744 Relating to Community Associations (Passidomo)

Companion Bill: HB 653 (Moraitis)

FPF Position: Watch

4/19/2017 SENATE Favorable with CS by Judiciary; 7 Yeas, 0 Nays. 4/21/2017 SENATE Committee Substitute Text (C2) Filed. 4/21/2017 SENATE Now in Rules.