



THE BERMAN BRIEFING

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF SENATE DISTRICT 31

FEBRUARY 2021

COVID-19 VACCINE UPDATE



**STATE SENATOR
LORI BERMAN**
Senate Democratic
Policy Chair

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COMMITTEES

Appropriations
Subcommittee on
Agriculture,
Environment, and
General Government

Finance & Tax

Education

Transportation

Ethics & Elections

At this time, 67 Publix locations in Palm Beach County are vaccination sites. To schedule an appointment at a Publix location, visit publix.com/covidvaccine.

You can also pre-register on myvaccine.fl.gov. It is our understanding that once the Health Care District clears the backlog of people who originally emailed "CHD50feedback", the HCD will then take appointments through the state's registration system.

Lastly, the Biden Administration announced it will begin shipping vaccines directly to pharmacies, such as CVS and Walgreens.

RACIAL JUSTICE PANEL: REGISTER AT [TINY.CC/AWALPT7](https://tiny.cc/awalpt7)

As Women, As Leaders: Discussing the Importance of Diversity and Equity

WHAT

Join our panelists in welcoming Dr. Janice Underwood and Danielle Andrews to continue our dialogue on advancing the principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion at the local and state level.

WHEN

February 12, 1-2:15pm

WHERE

Register at tiny.cc/awalpt7
or
Watch Live
facebook.com/LoriBerman
FLA

Special Guests



Dr. Underwood,
Virginia's Chief
Diversity Officer



Danielle Andrews,
FDACS Director of
Diversity and
Inclusion

Panelists



State Senator
Lori Berman,
District 31



Congresswoman
Lois Frankel,
District 21



Commissioner
Melissa McKinlay,
PBC District 6



Administrator
Verdenia Baker,
PBC



Dr. Delsa Bush,
PBSC Director of
Security



Leontyne D. Brown,
Corporate Marketing
and Social
Responsibility
Consultant



Dr. Andrea Guzman
Oliver, Asst. VP of
Student Outreach
and Diversity, FAU



Nik Harris,
FDACS LGBTQ
Consumer Advocate



Deputy Vice
Mayor
Shirley Johnson,
Delray Beach



Rabbi Jessica
Mates, Temple
Beth El of Boca
Raton



President Ava L.
Parker, PBSC



Assistant Chief
Tameca West,
WPBPD



Charlotte Wright
COO of Manifest
Church

TALLAHASSEE TALK

2021 Committee Week Schedule

As a reminder, the annual legislative session will begin on **March 2, 2021**. The week of February 8-12 was a light week focused on budget/appropriations, but at this time, all of the committees in which I sit have cancelled their respective meetings. In this case, for me, only one committee week remains prior to session. But know that the week of February 8-12 is still a committee week for other Members.

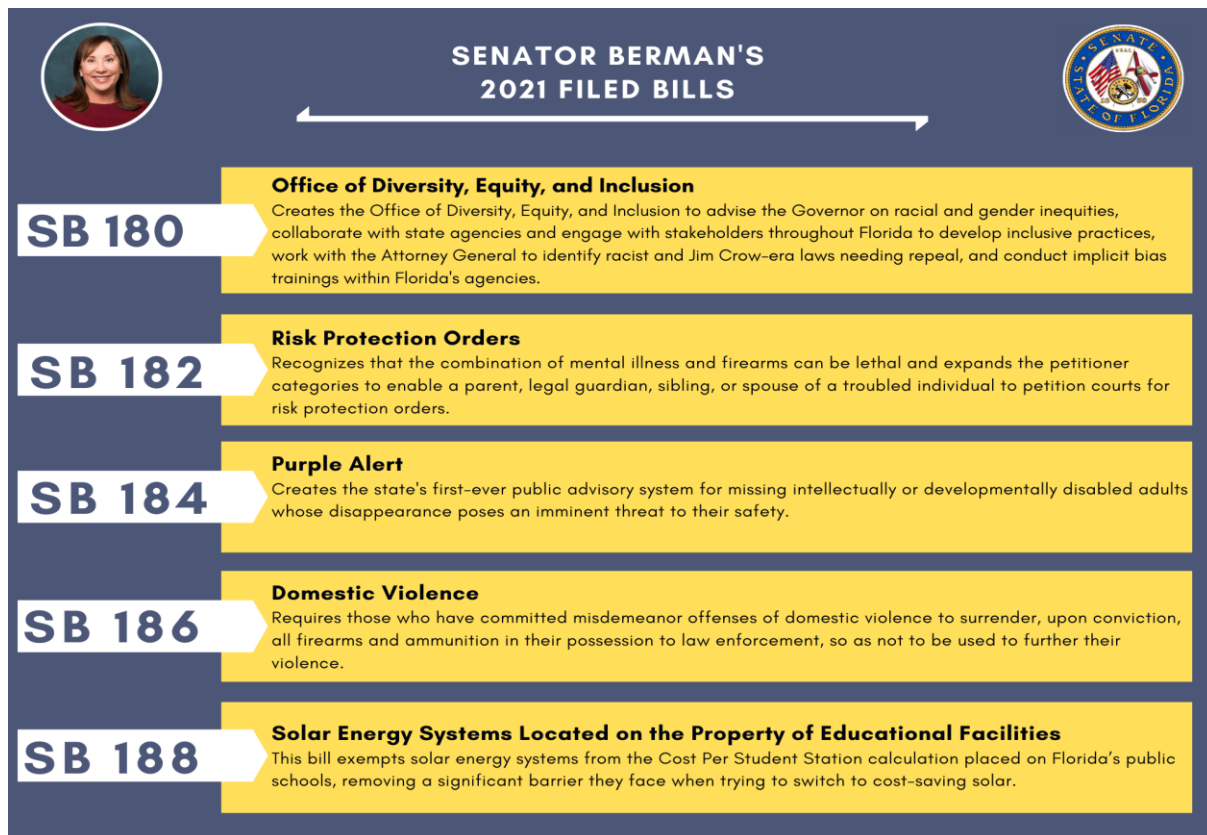
- February 15-19, 2021

2021 Committee Assignments

As I have shared in previous newsletters, I am proud to have been appointed to the following committees for the 2021-2022 legislative sessions:

- Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture, Environment and General Government
- Education
- Ethics & Elections
- Finance & Tax
- Transportation

Further, I am honored to be the Policy Chair for the Senate Democratic Caucus.



**SENATOR BERMAN'S
2021 FILED BILLS**

SB 180 **Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**
Creates the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion to advise the Governor on racial and gender inequities, collaborate with state agencies and engage with stakeholders throughout Florida to develop inclusive practices, work with the Attorney General to identify racist and Jim Crow-era laws needing repeal, and conduct implicit bias trainings within Florida's agencies.

SB 182 **Risk Protection Orders**
Recognizes that the combination of mental illness and firearms can be lethal and expands the petitioner categories to enable a parent, legal guardian, sibling, or spouse of a troubled individual to petition courts for risk protection orders.

SB 184 **Purple Alert**
Creates the state's first-ever public advisory system for missing intellectually or developmentally disabled adults whose disappearance poses an imminent threat to their safety.

SB 186 **Domestic Violence**
Requires those who have committed misdemeanor offenses of domestic violence to surrender, upon conviction, all firearms and ammunition in their possession to law enforcement, so as not to be used to further their violence.

SB 188 **Solar Energy Systems Located on the Property of Educational Facilities**
This bill exempts solar energy systems from the Cost Per Student Station calculation placed on Florida's public schools, removing a significant barrier they face when trying to switch to cost-saving solar.



SENATOR BERMAN'S 2021 FILED BILLS



SB 194

Crimes Evidencing Prejudice

Brings Florida's statutory definition of a disability in line with the Americans with Disabilities Act and defines crimes committed on the basis of gender and gender identity as crimes evidencing prejudice.

SB 196

Lactation Spaces in Courthouses

Requires all courthouses to have a designated space for women to breastfeed.

SB 200

Student Retention

Allows parents of K-8 students to retain their children in their grade level if they feel their child has not academically progressed enough and gives parents the flexibility to make the decision in the best interest of their child and provide a statutory option.

SB 224

Sales Tax Exemption

Exempting seniors from the sales tax on certain items that encourage independent living, including bed transfer handles, bed rails, grab bars, and shower seats, to improve quality of life and allow our seniors to "age in place".

SB 358

Water Safety

Asks parents of children entering any public or private school system to confirm that their child has had swimming lessons when entering the school system, and allows school authorities to identify students who may not know how to swim and will help put these parents in touch with free or low-cost programs to ensure their child has an opportunity to learn, presuming there is a desire.



SENATOR BERMAN'S 2021 FILED BILLS



SB 688

Waivers of Exemptions of Applicable Assets

protects Florida residents from unintentionally assigning, pledging, or waiving their rights to assets (such as retirement accounts, annuities and other assets) that are protected under Florida law by requiring that any pledge agreement must specifically identify those types of protected assets in order to constitute an intentional assignment, pledge, or waiver.

SB 720

State Renewable Energy Goals

This critical legislation will require that by the year 2040, 100% of Florida's electricity generation be sourced from renewable energy and that we be carbon neutral by 2050. It will create thousands of good-paying, clean energy jobs and position Florida as a nationwide leader in building a clean future.

SB 832

Town of Lake Clarke Shores, Palm Beach County

Annexes a section of unincorporated Palm Beach County known as "Edgewater Park" into the Town of LCS, creating a seamless delivery of municipal services that are currently shared with PCB, including police, road maintenance, and soon, septic-to-sewer conversion.

SB 940

Specialty License Plates/Disease Prevention & Early Detection

Creates a new specialty license plate for "Disease Prevention & Early Detection" with proceeds benefiting Miami-based Women's Breast & Heart Initiative.

SB 1036

Florida Family Caregiver Task Force

Establishes the Florida Family Caregiver Task Force within the Department of Health to study and make findings regarding the necessary supports for family caregivers and youth caregivers who are assisting the aging or adults with disabilities.



SENATOR BERMAN'S 2021 FILED BILLS



SB 1038

Insurance Coverage for Breast Cancer Tests and Procedures

As a five-year breast cancer survivor, I am keenly aware of how important it is to seek important diagnostic testing following a questionable mammogram. This bill will ensure insurance providers don't charge unlimited amounts for these associated tests in an effort for patients to receive early diagnoses and treatment, keys to saving lives.

SB 1044

Victims of Crimes of Sexual Violence or Sexual Exploitation

Provides that a victim of any crime of sexual violence or sexual exploitation has the right to prevent the disclosure of identifying information or records and prohibits a person or entity in possession of such information from disclosing that information or records without obtaining express written consent.

SB 1050

School Bus Safety

Authorizes school districts to install cameras on district school buses to ensure the safety of students.

SR 1056

Amblyopia Awareness Month

Amblyopia is the most common cause of vision loss in children and can cause permanent vision loss if not detected and treated early. This bill designates August 2021 as "Amblyopia Awareness Month" in Florida to bring this disease to light.

SB 1070

Estates and Trusts

Creates the "Florida Uniform Directed Trust Act" addressing trusts that grant a trust administration power to a person other than a trustee, and creates the "Community Property Trust Act" that allows spouses to transfer property into a Florida Community Property Trust.

LEGISLATION OF CONCERN

HB 1: Combating Public Disorder

A misnomer in name and necessity, House Bill 1 passed its first committee last week. The governor announced the legislation in response to Black Lives Matter protests around the country. The bill threatens to increase penalties and silence the voices of peaceful protesters. It is meant to cast a chill over civil disobedience as many march for racial justice. Over 70 members of the public spoke, the vast majority in opposition, in a very emotional and dramatic hearing. The best scenario for this bill would be that which was proposed by Representative Grieco: "You can shred it."

SB 48: Educational Scholarship Programs

This bill is a flawed attempt to move the state's current school choice programs into educational savings accounts to allow families to use the money for tutoring, tuition and transportation costs to/from these private schools. SB 48 would take Florida down the continued path of unconstitutionally funding religious education with public taxpayer dollars. COVID has already placed unprecedented burdens on school districts, teachers, parents and students and we're seeing enough issues with the "COVID slide" in learning. Our focus needs to remain on

prioritizing public education when our state budget is already under enormous risk of cuts. Not only this, but no changes to accountability or assessment are made under these new voucher programs and existing issues, including a lack of teacher certification and potential misuse of state funds, demonstrate the need to halt this bill in its tracks. Public taxpayer dollars should not be used without proper public oversight and transparency.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Black history is American history. During Black History Month, and every month, we ought to celebrate the unsung achievements of Black Americans whose accomplishments and contributions to our country often go unnoticed. They have, in the words of former President Ford, contributed to every area of endeavor in our society.



All the best,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lori Berman". The signature is written in black ink and includes a horizontal line extending to the right from the end of the name.

Lori Berman
State Senator, District 31