

**OFFICIAL MEETING MINUTES
OF THE
LEGISLATIVE DELEGATION
PALM BEACH COUNTY, FLORIDA**

SEPTEMBER 11, 2019

**WEDNESDAY
1:11 P.M.**

**FITTEAM BALLPARK OF THE PALM BEACHES
WEST PALM BEACH, FLORIDA**

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

UNSCHEDULED ITEM

11.A. INVOCATION – Led by Vice Chair Rick Roth

III. WELCOME REMARKS

III.A. Representative Matt Willhite, Chair; Palm Beach County Legislative Delegation

Chair Willhite welcomed everyone and introduced Victoria Nowlan, Legislative Delegation (Delegation) Executive Director and Delegation Aide Teresa Hadjipetrou. He requested that members introduce themselves and their staff, and he thanked FITTEAM Ballpark of the Palm Beaches for hosting the meeting.

III.B. Mack Bernard, Mayor, Palm Beach County

Mayor Bernard welcomed the Delegation to District 7 and said that:

- No one should forget the victims of 9/11, the Armed Forces' men and women, and the first responders.
- Coordinators of relief drives for Hurricane Dorian should be commended.
- The Delegation should be commended for lobbying on behalf of the County and its residents.

III.C. Matt Saltus, General Manager, FITTEAM Ballpark of the Palm Beaches

Mr. Saltus said that:

- The ballpark's spring training venue was only successful if it sold many tickets to nonlocal guests, provided affordable family entertainment, helped local small business partners grow, and became the most civically-engaged community member.
- The 2019 spring training industry had an economic impact of almost \$70 million on the County, produced about \$43 million in direct spending, and created 750 jobs.
- The ballpark also hosted youth sports, weddings, and bar mitzvahs.

(CLERK'S NOTE: Item VI. was presented at this time.)

VI. COUNTY ELECTED OFFICIALS

VI.A. Dave Aronberg, State Attorney, Palm Beach

Mr. Aronberg said that:

- The county witnessed a 40% decrease in opioid overdose deaths in 2018, which was attributed to the Sober Homes Task Force and the Delegation members.
- A 21% decrease in opioid overdose deaths was projected for the first 6 months of 2019.
- Last year's Sober Homes and Substance Abuse Treatment bill needed a correction.
 - Background check language for employees or owners of sober homes was listed incorrectly in the bill.
- Current law stated that a husband or wife had the privilege of not testifying against each other.
 - An exception to the husband/wife privilege existed for crimes of abuse against a child but not against a grandchild or other relative.
 - The Delegation's support was requested in sponsoring a bill that would extend the exception when a grandchild or other child was abused.

(CLERK'S NOTE: Senator Bobby Powell Jr. and Representative Tina Polsky joined the meeting.)

- An antiquated statute regarding unnatural and lascivious acts was confusing, overly broad, and appeared to criminalize consensual conduct between adults.
 - The statute applied to second-degree misdemeanors, and juries could decide a verdict based on a lesser criminal offense even if the case contained greater charges.
 - Someone convicted of a lesser criminal offense based on the statute was not required to register as a sex offender.
 - The Delegation's support was requested in lobbying to eliminate the statute.
- Florida courts recently held that only battery and not domestic battery was a crime.
 - The legislature recognized the importance of classifying domestic battery as a crime.
 - More than 13 Florida statutes required that domestic battery crimes be treated differently than nondomestic crimes.
 - The Delegation's support was requested in lobbying to change the loophole in the law.
- The Delegation's support was requested to allow self-authentication of surveillance videos.
 - The State Attorney's Office was currently required to locate low-level witnesses to authenticate videos that should be self-authenticated like other business records.
- The Delegation's support was requested in requiring that the originator of a law enforcement body cam video, and not the State Attorney's Office, be responsible for redaction of any confidential material.
- The Delegation's support was requested in lobbying for a statute that would make needling or begging someone to change his or her post-arrest testimony an obstruction of justice.

(CLERK'S NOTE: Representative Emily Slosberg joined the meeting.)

Senator Powell asked how a potential conflict could be avoided if the creator of a body cam video attempted to hide something by redaction.

Mr. Aronberg said that someone in the law enforcement department, and not the same officer, would be in charge of the redaction. He added that deleting evidence pertinent to an investigation or a case was obstruction of justice.

Senator Lori Berman said that her domestic violence bill could incorporate some of Mr. Aronberg's requests.

VLB. Carey Haughwout, Public Defender, Palm Beach

Ms. Haughwout said that:

- Racial disparity indicated that imprisonment of African Americans on drug charges was 6 times greater than for white people, yet studies showed equal use of drugs by both races.
- African Americans were 5 times more likely than white people to be behind bars.

(CLERK'S NOTE: Representative Mike Caruso joined the meeting.)

- The Delegation's support was requested to:
 - create reform that increased the mandatory minimum sentencing for controlled substances;
 - make the new law on Hydrocodone retroactive for the 400 people currently incarcerated on Hydrocodone-related charges;
 - offer "safety valves" for first-time drug offenders with mandatory minimum sentences; and
 - apply the new law on Hydrocodone to other opioids.
- The legislature previously passed a bill that required a review of sentences based on the nature of crimes committed by juveniles who were sentenced to more than 25 years in prison.
 - The law had not been applied retroactively and was being litigated in court.

- The Delegation's support was requested to retroactively review lengthy sentences of children in prison.
- The Public Defender's Office supported the bill to decriminalize small amounts of marijuana, Senator Powell's bill on direct file reform, mandatory recording of interrogation by law enforcement, and increasing mental health funding for individuals in the criminal justice system.

Vice Chair Roth asked whether a retroactive review would change an inmate's sentence.

Ms. Haughwout said that:

- The retroactive effect would apply to individuals who were affected before the new law was passed.
- When a bill was passed, the legislature had to specify whether it was intended to be retroactive.

Senator Powell inquired about the negative effects having an incarcerated parent had on children and what the Delegation could do to help lower racial disparity.

Ms. Haughwout said that:

- Mandatory minimum sentencing was determined by the prosecuting authority and individual characteristics were not considered.
- Having an incarcerated parent left a child with the stigma of incarceration and the family in a stressful situation without moral and financial support.

VI. C. Commissioner Robert Weinroth, Palm Beach County, District 4

Commissioner Weinroth said that:

- 2 high-profile incidents recently occurred where delivery of appliances or furniture resulted in a woman being murdered in her home, and another woman being almost raped.
- Florida required Level 2 background checks of some individuals, but the Delegation's support was requested in sponsoring legislation to broaden the requirement.
- Both individuals involved in the incidents had criminal backgrounds, which would have been discovered through Level 2 background checks.

Senator Powell asked how to balance requiring Level 2 background checks that could prevent individuals from being able to work while at the same time protecting citizens.

Commissioner Weinroth stated that his intention was not to restrict the employment of people who served their time, but constituents deserved to know that individuals who worked in their homes were screened.

Representative Caruso said that he was sponsoring a bill to address the issue, but it was difficult to pass statewide regulation on businesses.

(CLERK'S NOTE: Item IV. was presented at this time.)

IV. ROLL CALL

DELEGATION MEMBERS:

State Representative Matt Willhite, Chair
State Representative Rick Roth, Vice Chair
State Senator Lori Berman
State Representative Mike Caruso
State Representative Joseph Casello
State Senator Gayle Harrell
State Representative Al Jacquet – Absent
State Representative MaryLynn Magar - Absent
State Representative Tina Polsky
State Senator Bobby Powell Jr.
Senator Kevin Rader – Absent
State Representative David Silvers – Absent
State Representative Emily Slosberg

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF:

Legislative Delegation Executive Director Victoria Nowlan
Legislative Delegation Aide Teresa Hadjipetrou
Deputy Clerk Julie Burns, Clerk & Comptroller's Office

V. DELEGATION BUSINESS

V.A. Election of Chair and Vice-Chair

Chair Willhite called for nominations for the office of chairperson.

Senator Gayle Harrell nominated Vice Chair Roth.

Representative Caruso seconded the nomination.

UPON A ROLL CALL VOTE, Vice Chair Roth was elected as the Legislative Delegation Chair.

(Representative Willhite turned the gavel over to Chair Roth.)

Chair Roth called for nominations for the office of vice chairperson.

Senator Berman nominated Representative David Silvers for the office of vice chairperson.

Representative Willhite seconded the nomination.

UPON A ROLL CALL VOTE, Representative Silvers was elected as the Legislative Delegation Vice Chair.

Chair Roth announced that Representative Silvers was elected as vice chairperson.

V.B. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE FOLLOWING MEETING:

- **January 28, 2019**

MOTION to approve the January 28, 2019 minutes. Motion by Gale Harrell, seconded by Lori Berman, and carried 9-0. Al Jacquet, MaryLynn Magar, Kevin Rader, and David Silvers absent.

UNSCHEDULED ITEM

V.C. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chair Roth announced that:

- The deadline for submitting local bills to the Delegation's office was Friday, September 20, 2019, by 12:00 p.m.
- The local bill hearing would be held on Thursday, October 3, 2019, from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at the Norton Museum in the City of West Palm Beach.
- Anyone with local bill questions should contact Victoria Nowlan, Delegation Executive Director.

- Replays of today's meeting would be shown Thursday, September 12, 2019 and Friday, September 13, 2019 at 6:00 p.m., and Sunday, September 15, 2019 at 1:30 p.m. on PBCTV, which was available on Comcast Channel 20, AT&T Channel 99, Flotwire Communications Digital Access Channel 20, Atlantic Broadband Cable TV Channel 76, and streamed 24/7 on the County's Web site, pbcgov.com.

(CLERK'S NOTE: Representative Polsky left the meeting.)

Representative Willhite said that:

- Ms. Nowlan previously sent the Delegation members a letter requesting that they support the Princess line of cruise ships (Princess) in its humanitarian efforts to send relief supplies to Bahamian residents that were affected by Hurricane Dorian.
- Princess representatives submitted requests for funding to the State and the federal government, and the Delegation was asked to support that endeavor.
- A letter from the Delegation to the State and federal government should be sent requesting that they support and fund the initiative.

MOTION to approve sending the State and the federal government a letter indicating the Delegation's support of Princess' State and federal government funding request. Motion by Matt Willhite, seconded by Emily Slosberg, and carried 8-0. Al Jacquet, MaryLynn Magar, Tina Polsky, Kevin Rader, and David Silvers absent.

Senator Powell announced that on September 24, 2019, he, Representative Al Jacquet, the Manifest Church, and other entities would host a town hall meeting to discuss the texting-while-driving bill.

VII. PRESENTERS

(CLERK'S NOTE: The presentations were taken out of agenda order.)

VILA. William M.B. Fleming, Jr., President, Palm Beach Atlantic University

Mr. Fleming said that:

- The Palm Beach Atlantic University had a \$426-million annual impact on State and local communities.

(CLERK'S NOTE: Representative Polsky joined the meeting.)

- Last year, the Effective Access to Student Education (EASE) Grant for each Florida resident attending independent colleges and universities was \$3,500, but the grant was reduced to \$2,841 at the end of the May 2019 legislative session.
- During the early 2020 legislative session, the Delegation's support was requested in advocating to increase the EASE grant amount.

VII.B. LeAnn Ducat, Informed Choice CT

Ms. Ducat said that:

- She was the parent of a medically fragile child who was injured by vaccines that were designed to protect him.
- Senate Bill (SB) 64's sponsor falsely claimed that exemption of vaccines for religious reasons could cause a public health crisis.
- The affidavits provided to the Delegation stated that nonvaccinated children posed no threat to others, and removing the religious exemption was not in the best interest of public health.
- She commended Senator Harrell for not allowing SB 64 to move forward.

VII.C. Suzanne Cabrera, Housing Leadership Council of Palm Beach

Ms. Cabrera said that:

- The Housing Leadership Council of Palm Beach was created to ensure community workforce housing.
- The Sadowski Affordable Housing Trust Funds (Sadowski) should be used to prevent an affordable housing crisis instead of disaster recovery or to fill budget gaps.
- Of the \$217 million that the County collected from doc stamps during the past 8 years, the legislature only returned about \$90 million for affordable housing.
- The Delegation's support was requested to ensure that the Sadowski funds were used as originally intended.

VII.D. Larry Rein, CEO, ChildNet, Inc.

Mr. Rein stated that:

- ChildNet Inc. operated the foster care system countywide.
- The Delegation's support of Jordan's Law, a bill that would attempt to end or reduce child abuse, was requested.
- Governor Ron DeSantis, the legislature, the Department of Children and Families (DCF), and other lead agencies were preparing a new funding model based on the number and needs of children in the foster care system.
- Child welfare professionals were participating in work groups and making recommendations to the agencies.

VII.E. Al Perlman, Florida Life Care Residents Association

Mr. Perlman said that:

- He was chapter president of the Florida Life Care Residents Association, which promoted and protected the rights and interests of residents living in continuing care retirement communities (CCRC) statewide.
- The Delegation should be commended for helping to get passage of House Bill 1033/SB 1070, which better protected residents and providers of Florida CCRCs.

VII.F. Douglas Bingham, Scripps Research

Mr. Bingham said that:

- Scripps Research Institute (Scripps) had a \$3-billion cumulative economic impact on the State and local communities.
- Scripps was hoping to partner with the State to help fund an endowed professorship and the purchase of a microscope for Scripps' future molecular imaging center.

Chair Roth asked how much it would cost to fund the endowed professorship chair.

Mr. Bingham responded that it would cost \$2 million.

VII.G. Ann Margo Cannon, Constituent

Ms. Cannon said that:

- She commended Senator Harrell for not supporting SB 64.
- Individuals nationwide were being stripped of their religious and medical exemptions, and some State legislators were not being completely transparent about the intent of SB 64.
- She commended State Attorney Dave Aronberg for his sober home efforts.

VII.H. Yvette M. Avila, Constituent

Ms. Avila said that:

- The County was allowing medical doctors to be negligent and discriminatory towards families who exercised their religious freedom for medical exemptions.
- Nonprofit and for-profit organizations were endorsing false information to support services, such as continued health, education, and social services, and taxpayer funds were being inappropriately allocated to fund the above-mentioned situations.
- It was the Delegation's responsibility to allow constituents the ability to abide by their civic and spiritual laws.

VII.I. Nancy Chanin, League of Women Voters Palm Beach County

Ms. Chanin said that:

- In the last election, nearly 65% of the electorate voted to approve Amendment 4, but legislators argued that the new law needed clarification.
- SB 7066 required certain convicted felons who were returning as residents to pay court costs and fees before their sentences could be considered completed.
- A lawsuit filed against SB 7066 stated that the bill made restoration of voting rights contingent upon an inmate's wealth.
- Within 1 year of an inmate's scheduled release date, inmates should be educated about the voter registration process.

- A centralized database should be created so that former felons could access information regarding their financial obligations.
- The League of Women Voters Palm Beach County asked that the Delegation support facilitating and maximizing the voter registration process for returning citizens.

Chair Roth said that the Delegation had advised individuals who believed that their voting rights were restored to check their status with the Supervisor of Elections office and register to vote. He added that it was the obligation of Florida's Secretary of State to confirm whether individuals fulfilled their sentence terms.

VII.J. Catherine Cabanzon, Floridians for Dental Access Coalition

Ms. Cabanzon said that:

- She worked on dental access initiatives with several agencies, including the Coalition for Persons with Disabilities.
- A bill being drafted for the 2020 legislative session would add a dental mid-level provider known as a dental therapist.
- Most doctors had mid-level providers, such as nurse practitioners or physician's assistants, and 12 states allowed dentists to hire dental therapists.
- Dental therapists would:
 - be educated at accredited institutions;
 - take a clinical state exam by sitting next to a dentist and performing the tasks required for the exam; and
 - be licensed and regulated by the Board of Dentistry.

Representative Caruso asked about the type of tasks that would be performed by a dental therapist.

Ms. Cabanzon said that during training they could perform basic fillings and baby teeth extractions.

VII.K. Maty Ellen Pinsker, Constituent

Ms. Pinsker said that:

- She opposed SB 64, because it directly violated the First Amendment regarding religious beliefs and expressions, the Florida Religious Freedom Restoration Act, the Nuremberg Code, and the informed consent section of the American Medical Association Code of Medical Ethics.
- The American Medical Association offered religious and philosophical exemptions to its members.
- Vaccines contained wi-38 human diploid cells derived from the tissues of aborted fetuses and many other neurotoxins that were developed in the 1960s.
- The Delegation had a moral and ethical obligation to protect constituents and preserve their religious and personal freedoms.

VII.L. Erin M. Olszewski, Nurses for Vaccine Safety Alliance, Inc.

Ms. Olszewski said that:

- She would protect children and adults that she swore to defend when she was a soldier from an unsupportive legislative bill that threatened their religious freedoms.
- A sworn affidavit from Teresa Deisher PhD offering known scientific facts about fetal DNA contaminants in current vaccines would be submitted to the Delegation.

VII.M. Ezra Krieg, Constituent

Mr. Krieg said that:

- The Sadowski funds were to be used exclusively for affordable community housing, and the Delegation's support and leadership were needed to ensure that the funds were used only for that purpose.
- Some of the largest counties in the state contributed significant dollars to the Sadowski fund, but they received very little back for affordable housing.
- The Delegation should join other large county delegations and demand that Sadowski funds be used as intended.

VII.N. Helen Trainor, NAMI, Palm Beach County, Mental Health America of Palm Beach

Ms. Trainor said that:

- The first priority of Mental Health America of Palm Beach was to request that the Office of Insurance Regulation (OIR) require that health insurance companies offer mental health and substance abuse benefits in the same manner and to the same extent as other illnesses.
- An existing 10-year-old federal law required the parity of mental health insurance coverage but had not been enforced.
 - A nationwide effort prompted some states to pass legislation enforcing the coverage.

Jeremy Morris, CEO, Mental Health America of Palm Beach, said that:

- Florida currently had 7 first-episode psychosis (FEP) sites to offer support to those experiencing early mental illness symptoms.
- A coalition was formed to support DCF's initiative to fully fund the 7 sites and to increase their number throughout Florida.

Chair Roth asked how to remove the stigma involving mental illness so that individuals could receive early care.

Ms. Trainor said that the proposed bill requiring parity of insurance coverage for mental health would also cover substance abuse illnesses.

Representative Joseph Casello asked how the Delegation could persuade insurance lobbyists that insurance coverage was necessary for individuals with mental illness.

Ms. Trainor said that the OIR was unsure whether it could enforce the federal law, but the proposed bill would give it the authority to do so. She added that Representative Silvers and Senator Darryl Rouson sponsored a similar bill last year.

VII.O. Ivan Hernandez, Cannongate Property Owners Association, Inc.

Mr. Hernandez said that:

- His homeowners' association (HOA) held a general meeting on November 17, 2018, and several HOA members claimed that the HOA's election proceedings were illegally conducted.

- None of the previous HOA members petitioned to arbitrate the validity of the election.
- He and another homeowner filed a petition for arbitration to the Division of Florida Condominium, Timeshares, and Mobile Homes (Division).
- The Division's chief arbitrator proposed to dismiss the petition for lack of standing based on its general rule that an HOA member was not an elected candidate and was not directly aggrieved or harmed.
- He and another homeowner filed a declaratory statement to the Division's director requesting an opinion on the legal viability of the Division's general rule.
- The Division stated that it did not have the authority to issue declaratory statements to HOAs and members governed by Florida Statutes, Chapter 720.
- He requested that Senator Powell sponsor a bill modifying Florida Statutes, Chapters 718 and 720 regarding HOAs, and reintroduce in 2020 the portion of SB 610 providing criminal penalties for fraudulent voting activities in HOA elections.

(CLERK'S NOTE: Senator Powell and Representative Slosberg left the meeting.)

Senator Berman recommended that Mr. Hernandez speak with Senator Jason Pizzo because he previously handled condominium and homeowner legislation.

VII.P. Justin Katz, Palm Beach County Classroom Teachers Association

Mr. Katz said that:

- The Best and Brightest Teacher Scholarship Program awarded bonuses to teachers based on taking the Scholastic Aptitude Test or the American College Testing and achieving a certain score.
- The program should be eliminated, and the funds should be placed into the Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP) and divided among school districts based on student population.
- He requested the Delegation's support to eliminate the program and place the funds into the FEFP.

Chair Roth requested that Mr. Katz provide the Delegation with information concurrent with his presentation.

Representative Polsky said that her proposed amendment regarding the matter did not pass, and she urged the Delegation and fellow politicians to support the initiative.

Representative Casello asked how teachers were rated.

Mr. Katz stated that:

- Parameters for the teacher evaluation system were described by State law written around 2011, and local school districts had discretion to negotiate some of the parameters.
- Teacher evaluations involved classroom observations by a supervisor, a student growth score metric, and a professional growth plan.

Representative Caruso asked whether Mr. Katz received a bonus.

Mr. Katz said that he received a bonus after achieving the required score, but many older teachers were unable to take the test.

Representative Willhite asked whether teachers' bonuses were factored into their retirement pensions.

Mr. Katz said that unlike FEFP funds, bonus funds did not count towards teachers' pensions, and teachers were taxed an additional 7% on bonuses because they were considered income.

VII.Q. Jorge Pesquera, President/CEO, Discover the Palm Beaches

Mr. Pesquera said that:

- From January to June 2019, the County welcomed 4.4 million visitors, a 2 1/2% increase over the 8 million total visitors from last year.
- 13 hotels were under construction, and 11 more were in the final planning stages.
- The hotels would provide 3,000 new hotel rooms and thousands of jobs.
- The Tourist Development Council (TDC) selected a consulting firm to conduct a convention center district expansion study, which would:
 - offer a transformational opportunity for the City of West Palm Beach's downtown area and the county as a whole;

- allow enhanced competitiveness in the marketplace, and;
- continue to drive economic activity.
- Representative Mel Ponder and Senator Ed Hooper would be sponsoring bills to continue Visit Florida, the State's official tourism marketing corporation, to 2028.
- The Delegation's support was requested to keep Visit Florida fully funded, protect tourism development taxes, and support beach renourishment.

Chair Roth asked for an estimate of funds collected through annual tourism taxes.

Mr. Pesquera responded that about \$54 million was collected and divided among entities such as the Cultural Council, the Sports Commission, and Discover the Palm Beaches (Discover).

Representative Casello asked how much was allocated to Discover last year.

Mr. Pesquera stated that Discover received about 30% or approximately \$18 million of the bed taxes, and the TDC agencies combined received between \$28 million to \$30 million.

Representative Casello asked what additional sources constituted Discover's remaining budget.

Mr. Pesquera said that Discover also received approximately \$2 million in in-kind support from hotels, attractions, and call-up advertising, and some revenue from royalty publications and partnerships or memberships.

VII.R. Rachel Eade, Constituent

Ms. Eade said that:

- She and her community sought protection of religious freedom.
- Under SB 64, the right to public education would be jeopardized.
- The Delegation's help was needed to draft legislation that would support religion, implement philosophical values about religious freedom, and protect the integrity of patient/ doctor relationships.

VII.S. Ian Shtulman, Constituent

Mr. Shtulman said that:

- Currently, a medical exemption was written by a child's pediatrician or pediatric specialist.
- Medical exemptions were an essential part of vaccine law in all 50 states and protected children who could not be safely vaccinated based on a medical doctor's thorough family history, genetic testing, examination, and a child's previous vaccine reaction.
- Proponents of SB 64 claimed that it would eliminate religious exemptions while maintaining medical exemptions.
- SB 64 would also create a third-party medical advisory board directed by the State to oversee and strike down medical exemptions written by a child's pediatrician.
- SB 64 would send a message that:
 - Doctors did not know enough about medicine to determine whether a child could be safely vaccinated.
 - The State would force doctors to perform a procedure that they believed was unsafe.
 - The only time a medical doctor could write a medical exemption was if a child was already injured.
- A letter written by a local medical doctor stated that a third-party interference with the doctor/patient relationship was unsafe.
- Forcing a doctor to subject a child to harm was a violation of the doctor's oath to do no harm.

Chair Roth requested that Mr. Shtulman provide the Delegation with a copy of the letter, and he asked whether the doctor who wrote the letter would be available if the Delegation had follow-up questions.

Mr. Shtulman responded that the doctor would be available to speak.

VII.T. Ruth Mageria, CROS Ministries

Ms. Mageria said that:

- CROS Ministries' (CROS) mission was to serve the hungry in Palm Beach and Martin counties through community collaboration.
- CROS' gleaning program recruited, trained, and sent volunteers to farmers' fields where fresh produce was picked instead of wasted.
- A large percentage of gleaning efforts happened along SR 441 between the cities of Lantana and Delray Beach and included the Glades region.
- The Delegations' support was requested in securing funding to increase the Glades gleaning operations.

VIII. PUBLIC COMMENTS

VIII.A.

DISCUSSED: SB 64.

Aracelly Martinez requested the Delegation's support in opposing SB 64.

VIII.B.

DISCUSSED: SB 64.

Lisa Bernstein said that removing religious exemptions in SB 64 was unacceptable and unconstitutional, and individuals should not be required to have neurotoxins injected into their bodies.

VIII.C.

DISCUSSED: Mental and Behavioral Health Funding.

Rick Sartory said that:

- The Delegation should be commended for supporting mental health funding for law enforcement.
- DCF funded an organization called the Southeast Florida Behavioral Network (SFBN), which managed and provided best practices and measurement metrics for behavioral and substance abuse services in a 5-county area.
- The Delegation was invited to attend a lunch-and-learn seminar on September 13, 2019 at SFBN's office in the Town of Jupiter.

VIII.D.

DISCUSSED: Prison Reform.

Chris Castoro said that:

- The 96,000 individuals incarcerated in Florida cost taxpayers \$2.7 billion.
- Minimum mandatory sentencing should be reduced from 85% to 65%.
- The legislature should establish a First Step Act, which helped reduce recidivism by incentivizing prisoners to take part in evidence-based programs.

VIII.E.

DISCUSSED: Juvenile Justice Reform.

Kathy Quarles said that:

- Florida prosecuted more children as adults for felony offenses than any other state.
- Last year, 900 children were sentenced through the adult criminal justice system without due process.
- Florida was 1 of 14 states that gave prosecutors discretionary power to transfer children to adult court and 3 of 14 states that did not allow a judicial review of cases involving minors.
- The Delegation's support was requested to consider any bills that would raise the age in which children were prosecuted as adults.

Representative Caruso inquired about the age at which most states prosecuted children as adults.

Ms. Quarles said that the states that passed juvenile justice reform raised the age to 16.

VIII.F.

DISCUSSED: Religious Exemption.

Avi Billet said that:

- Rabbis interpreted laws based on biblical sources and law codes hundreds of years old.

- 2 rabbi interpreters of Jewish law said that if someone believed that the risk of medical intervention was not worth the reward, they could be religiously exempted from undergoing any procedure, such as vaccinations.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

At 3:51 p.m., the chair declared the meeting adjourned.

APPROVED:


Chair/Vice Chair