



# The Delegation Digest 2017-2018 Legislative Session

Palm Beach County Legislative Delegation

## Committee Week

December 4-8, 2017

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## Week Recap

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The legislature held its final committee week to hear bills and appropriations leading up to the 2018 legislative session, which begins on January 9. Delegation members and staff were busy last week in committees presenting legislation, appropriations, and policy priorities for the upcoming Session.



*House Chamber floor decorated with a Christmas tree and Menorah for the holiday season  
(photo courtesy of Rep. Matt Willhite)*

## Bills and Policy

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The House Select Committee on Hurricane Response and Preparedness met on Monday to review policy recommendations submitted to the committee for legislative consideration. Committee member Rep. Michael Grant on behalf of Rep. Rick Roth submitted two recommendations. The first recommendation would exempt from sales tax the purchase of any equipment that uses natural or petroleum gas to generate emergency electric energy at nursing homes and assisted living facilities. The second recommendation would exempt from the sales tax the purchase of generators used on farms.

HB 517 - State Employees' Prescription Drug Program by Rep. MaryLynn Magar was heard in the House Health and Human Services committee on Tuesday. The bill requires the Department of Management Services to implement formulary management cost-saving measures and removes provisions that prohibit the department from implementing restricted prescription drug formulary or prior authorization program in state employees' prescription drug program. The bill passed favorably out of committee and is now in House Appropriations committee.

Wednesday, the House Criminal Justice subcommittee heard HB 491 - Theft by Rep. Rick Roth, which extends the mandatory \$10,000 fine to theft of commercially farmed animals or bee colonies of a registered beekeeper. The bill was reported favorably and is now in House Judiciary committee.

HB 421 - Homestead Waivers by Rep. Lori Berman provides language that that may be included in a deed that creates a presumption that the spouse knowingly and intelligently waived his or her right to inherit such homestead property. The bill passed favorably out of the House Civil Justice & Claims subcommittee on Thursday and is now in House Agriculture & Property Rights subcommittee

The House Children, Families & Seniors Subcommittee passed out of committee, HB 721 - Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services by Rep. David Silvers Thursday. The bill requires county jails to continue to administer psychotropic medications as were prescribed at mental health treatment facilities upon a facility client's discharge. The bill also requires county jails to send all medical information for individuals in their custody who will be admitted to state mental health treatment facilities. The bill is now in House Health Care Appropriations subcommittee.

## **Local Bills**

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Two local bills, sponsored by Rep. Matt Willhite, were filed this week. The first, HB 889 - West Palm Beach Police Pension Fund revises retirement pension calculations for the City of West Palm Beach police department and corrects scrivener's errors. HB 901 - Acme Improvement District and Pine Tree Water Control District transfers land from Acme Improvement District to Pine Tree Water Control District. Both local bills have been referred to the House Local, Federal, & Veterans Affairs subcommittee.

## **Member Highlights**

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Sen. Bobby Powell held a press conference on Tuesday to discuss his legislation, SB 936 - Juvenile Justice. The bill aims to reduce the number of children who are direct filed and prosecuted as adults. SB 936 would create a fitness hearing where a child could request the judge send the case back to juvenile court. Additionally, it would prevent youth prosecuted as adults from losing their future civil rights and eliminates direct file for 14-and 15-year-olds altogether.

On Thursday, Rep. Lori Berman had a joint press conference announcing her resolution for Medicaid Expansion under the Affordable Care Act in Florida. Rep. Berman's resolution HJR 911 - Expansion of Medicaid Coverage proposes an amendment to State Constitution to expand Medicaid coverage to include persons under age 65 with income equal to or below 138 percent of federal poverty level. If passed the proposed amendment would come before the voters.

## Appropriations

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Last week a number of committees heard House appropriations project bills.

Wednesday, the House Agriculture and Natural Resources Appropriations subcommittee heard member's water and environmental appropriations project bills. All the bills passed favorably out of the committee including these delegation sponsored projects:

- HB 2179 Palm Beach County Lake Worth Lagoon Monitoring and Administration by Rep. Bill Hager  
[Appropriations Project Details](#)
- HB 2183 Hypoluxo Septic to Sewer Conversion by Rep. Bill Hager  
[Appropriations Project Details](#)
- HB 2193 J.W. Corbett Levee Construction Phase II by Rep. Rick Roth  
[Appropriations Project Details](#)
- HB 2277 Palm Beach Zoo and Conservation Society Water Quality and Recreation by Rep. David Silvers  
[Appropriations Project Details](#)

Higher Education Appropriations subcommittee heard several state college and university-funding requests Wednesday. The following delegation sponsored requests were heard and reported favorably out of the committee:

- HB 2165 Florida Atlantic University - Medicinal Chemistry Core Group by Rep. MaryLynn Magar  
[Appropriations Project Details](#)
- HB 2363 Florida Atlantic University - Genomics and Precision Medicine by Rep. Bill Hager  
[Appropriations Project Details](#)

## Palm Beach County Legislative Delegation

Delegation Chair  
Rep. Bill Hager

Delegation Vice Chair  
Rep. Matt Willhite

### Senators

Joe Negron  
District 25

Kevin Rader  
District 29

Bobby Powell, Jr.  
District 30

Vacant  
District 31

### Representatives

Joseph Abruzzo  
District 81

MaryLynn Magar  
District 82

Rick Roth  
District 85

Matt Willhite  
District 86

David Silvers  
District 87

Al Jacquet  
District 88

Bill Hager  
District 89

Lori Berman  
District 90

Emily Slosberg  
District 91

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*The Palm Beach County Legislative Delegation Office is a non-partisan office that serves all thirteen members of the Florida Senate and House of Representatives representing Palm Beach County in Tallahassee. The delegation office is responsible for: scheduling and coordinating all delegation meetings in Palm Beach County and Tallahassee; developing the delegation's legislative program including local bills, appropriation requests, and county and municipal legislative priorities; providing legislative assistance and research to the delegation during the legislative session; and serving as a liaison between the delegation and local governments and community organization.*