

NAPLES FLORIDA WEEKLY®

IN THE KNOW. IN THE NOW.

WEEK OF FEBRUARY 23-MARCH 1, 2017

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Water, guns and sanctuary cities are among the many major issues Florida legislators will face in the ...



GUNS



IMMIGRATION



WATER



MARIJUANA

INSIDE:



Who represents you? Our pullout poster includes names, emails and numbers of everyone making decisions for you.
A11

2017 Legislative SESSION

BY EVAN WILLIAMS

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STARTING ON MARCH 7, 160 POLITICIANS WHO REPRESENT THE melting-pot interests of more than 20 million Florida residents will meet in Tallahassee. Over the next 60 days, the sole requirement of the Florida Legislature — 40 state senators and 120 house members — along with Gov. Rick Scott, is to approve a state budget for the 2017-18 fiscal year.

They will also propose thousands of potential new rules and policies. Some of those bills will make it to the floor of the

SEE SESSION, A10 ►



Lovely!

The Naples Players poised to present full-scale production of a classic. **C1** ►



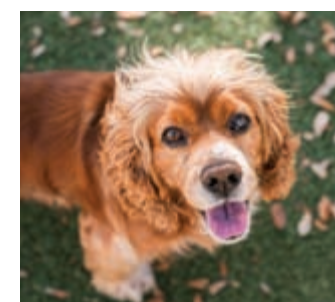
In the groove

Feeling the love for the David Lawrence Center, and more fun around town. **C28-31** ►



FASFA focus

A new program helps students apply for college aid. **B1** ►



Find a new friend

See who's up for adoption at Humane Society Naples. **A30** ►

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Health forum focuses on women's changing concerns

BY LINDSEY NESMITH

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The Collier County Medical Society hosts its ninth annual Women's Health Forum from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Saturday, March 4, at St. John the Evangelist Church. "Better Health ... Better Life!" will have a variety of speakers, breakout sessions with 24 local physicians and 21 vendor booths specializing in women's health issues. A healthy continental breakfast is



included.

As women grow older, menopause brings a new learning curve that requires them to relearn how their bodies function and how to manage them. "If you

don't take it upon yourself to have a healthy lifestyle, you're going to be more miserable," says Dr. Catherine Kowal, a rheumatologist who is chair of the forum and vice president of CCMS. "You have to understand how to look at your own body and say, 'Hey, I have to worry about this and I have to worry about that,'" she adds.

Forum topics include osteoporosis, fitness and exercise, bioidentical hormone

SEE WOMEN, A29 ►

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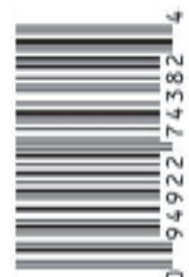
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COURTESY PHOTO

SESSION

From page 1

House and Senate for debate, and finally to Gov. Scott's desk for his approval or veto.

We checked in with lawmakers who represent us in South Florida and asked them to respond briefly by phone or in writing to questions about where they stand on four major issues they are set to face this year: how to fix our water problem, the rights of gun owners, immigrants in "sanctuary cities," medical marijuana, and whom they voted for in the presidential election.

We contacted each member of the delegation in *Florida Weekly's* distribution area a number of times by phone and email, eight senators and 17 house members whose districts cover all or part of Lee, Charlotte and Collier counties on the southwest coast and Palm Beach County on the southeast coast. Many didn't respond to our questions. Here is a brief explanation of our questions followed by what those who did respond, three South Florida senators and five representatives, told us.

WATER

• **What's the best way to clean up our water?**

• **Do you support a plan to buy land south of Lake Okeechobee in the Everglades Agricultural Area for water storage?**

Because of how South Florida was developed over the last century, it faces one of the world's largest and most complicated engineering problems: Everglades restoration, or restoring the historic flow of clean water north from near Orlando down into Lake Okeechobee and then south through the Everglades into Florida Bay.

As it stands, heavy rains force officials to discharge massive amounts of polluted water from the lake to ensure its aging dike doesn't collapse. The water is polluted by phosphorus and nitrogen from urban development, agriculture, leaky septic systems and other sources north of the lake. And instead of following south as it did historically, through land now used mostly to farm sugar, it is discharged to the west and east down the Caloosahatchee and St. Lucie rivers, causing algal blooms that harm the environment and the economy in coastal communities.

In Gov. Scott's \$83.5 billion proposed budget for 2017-18, he set aside \$225 million to complete water storage reservoirs that are crucial for Everglades restoration, allowing water to be contained and cleaned. But a 2015 University of Florida Water Institute study found that an enormous amount of storage beyond what all current plans call for — including the official Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP) — is needed to the north, south, east and west of Lake Okeechobee to fix our water problem.

Environmental groups, Sen. Joe Negron, a District 25 Republican, and others support a \$2.4 billion plan to buy about 60,000 acres of land south of Lake Okeechobee. The proposed bills on this project (Senate Bill 10 / House Bill 761) would be paid for in part with up to \$1.2 billion in Florida Forever bonds, Amendment 1 money that voters approved for environmental needs, and federal dollars. That could provide a large chunk of the necessary storage to the south. Sugar companies and their supporters have resisted selling the land, saying it will cost jobs in already struggling communities and pointing out that it will not on its own end the polluted discharges.

GUNS

• **Do you support new gun control rules and how would they improve public safety?**

• **Should guns be allowed in the following places under concealed carry: theaters, courthouses, airport passenger terminals, legislative meetings, on college and university campuses, in government meetings, and in career centers?**

Sen. Greg Steube has proposed a series of bills that would allow gun owners under concealed carry rules to bring their weapons to college and university campuses, inside courthouses, airport passenger terminals, legislative and government meetings, and into career centers. He also proposed new rules (SB 610) that could make businesses that ban guns on their property liable if there is a shooting because people wouldn't be able to fire back. Other proposals (SB 254 / HB 167) seek to ban assault weapons.

SANCTUARY CITIES

• **Do you support legislation that would crack down on so-called "sanctuary cities" in Florida, including by imposing financial penalties?**

Immigration policy became a touchstone of the 2016 presidential campaigns. Sen. Aaron Bean, R-Fernandina Beach and Rep. Larry Metz, R-Yalaha have proposed bills (SB 786 / HB 697) that would impose financial and other penalties on local governments and agencies that adopt policies that don't fully comply with federal immigration rules.

MARIJUANA

• **How should Amendment 2 be implemented?**

In November, voters approved Amendment 2, making medical marijuana legal for a wider array of conditions in Florida. Now lawmakers have the task of implementing it, including marijuana production and distribution in Florida. That could affect how businesses obtain licenses to enter a profitable new industry in the state, or not. The Florida Medical Marijuana Act (SB 614) could further open up the marijuana industry here while a competing proposal (SB 406) seeks to limit it, at least at first.

IN ADDITION

• **What is your single most important goal for the session?**

• **Which candidate did you vote for in the presidential election?**

SEN. BOBBY POWELL
D-DISTRICT 30

What is the best way to clean up our water?

"The best way to clean up the water is by making sure that we invest resources into what we also have right now, the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan, and also place funding in areas where we can properly clean and restore water so that when it does come out

we've established and used the best processes to make sure that water is as clean as it can be."

Do you support a plan to buy land south of Lake Okeechobee in the Everglades Agricultural Area for water storage?

"I think right now everything's on the table."

Do you support new gun control rules and how would they improve public safety?

"Perhaps we allow local municipalities their own rules to say where guns can and cannot go. And I also believe we probably shouldn't have guns in government buildings or government functions in public places. At this point I don't know of any legislation that I would be 100 percent supportive of, but that could change."

Should guns be allowed in the following places under concealed carry: theaters, courthouses, airport passenger terminals, legislative meetings, on college and university campuses, in government meetings, and in career centers?

"No.
"If there's a mass shooting and someone else grabs a gun and they're shooting too, if the police come how do they identify the original offending party?"

Do you support legislation that would crack down on so-called "sanctuary cities" in Florida, including by imposing financial penalties?

"No... I just believe in doing what's right and I don't think that's the best way to handle immigration issues. However, I think it's more of a federal issue."

How should Amendment 2 be implemented?

"It depends. I'll see that early in the process and right now as a member of the Health Policy Committee, we're formulating the process so I can't delve too deep into it because it's progressive, it's changing."

What is your single most important goal for the session?

"As you know, national and state politics right now has become hectic and it is incumbent upon those of us in leadership to lead by example and to serve our constituents in a manner that provides security, safety, and confidence to them."

Which candidate did you vote for in the presidential election?

"I made sure that I supported the Democratic candidate in every race."

Do you have anything else to add?

"It's important to note that this month is Black History Month and it's a date that many people take a chance to look at the state politics and know the history... One of the most important bills we've been able to move so far is our direct file legislation, which is a bill that will curb the number of juveniles who are processed in the adult prison system. Florida has been a leader in the nation in terms of sending youth to adult prison and we're working diligently in the state Senate and the state House to change that."

SEN. GREG STEUBE
R-DISTRICT 23

What is the best way to clean up our water? Do you support a plan to buy land south of Lake Okeechobee in the Everglades Agricultural Area for water storage?

"I'm open to looking at all the plans and seeing what's best for the state of Florida and moving forward... Personally

I don't know where I'm at on that specific issue because I'm not in a position that I'm going to be voting or having an option to see that bill until it gets to the floor."

Do you support new gun control rules and how would they improve public safety?

"I don't support gun control laws; I support law-abiding citizens (having) the ability to carry firearms... more freedom to carry firearms where they feel appropriate if they have a license."

Why do you believe guns should be allowed in the following places under concealed carry: theaters, courthouses, airport passenger terminals, legislative meetings, on college and university campuses, in government meetings, and in career centers?

Sen. Steube said people should be able to defend themselves "instead of relying on law enforcement to come. Obviously, they can't be everywhere."

He pointed out guns are already allowed in theaters unless that private business restricts it, and cited a statistic that concealed-carry license holders are 10 times less likely to commit a crime with their weapon than a law enforcement officer.

"If we're 10 times less likely to commit a crime than law enforcement, why is there any reason you're going to prohibit my ability to defend myself and my family?" Sen. Steube said.

He attributed the figure to Dr. John R. Lott, an economist, expert on guns and crime, and Fox News columnist. Dr. Lott said that figure is true in Texas, but that "the gap in Florida is somewhat smaller." Both groups committed crimes with their guns at exceedingly low rates, according to Dr. Lott's research for his Crime Prevention Research Center.

Do you support legislation that would crack down on so-called "sanctuary cities" in Florida, including by imposing financial penalties?

"I do support Sen. Bean's bill, yes."

How should Amendment 2 be implemented?

"I believe the licenses shouldn't be limited in number and the free market should dictate who could obtain and who should go in business that produces that product. We need to have a strong regulatory scheme in place that law enforcement supports and that's why I've co-sponsored Sen. (Jeff) Brandes's bill (SB 614, Florida Medical Marijuana Act)."

What is your single most important goal for the session?

"To make sure that our laws allow people more freedom whether that's in their business or their Second Amendment rights, more freedom and more liberty, not the government telling them what they can do with their guns and their business."

Which candidate did you vote for in the presidential election?

"Donald Trump, our president. I was a big public supporter for Trump."

SEN. KATHLEEN PASSIDOMO
R-DISTRICT 28

What is the best way to clean up our water?

"The issue is very complicated and there is no magic bullet. There's no simple answer. First of all, I think that we need to go back and look at what the scientists say. And the most recent study that I've read that I feel is the most compelling is the University of Florida 2015 Water Institute study.

"I take the same position that they are

SEE SESSION, A12 ►

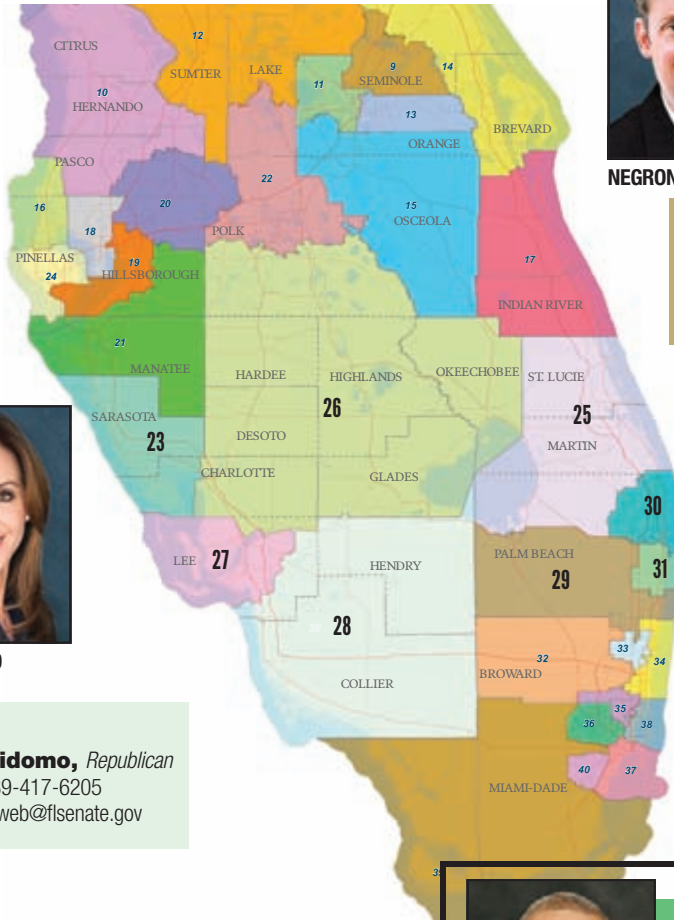
Who represents you in Tallahassee?

It's OK if you haven't been paying attention — if perhaps a few elections have passed you by and maybe you've fallen behind. Names have changed, and you're just not sure anymore who exactly your representative and senator in the Florida

Legislature are. It happens to the best of us. This could be the year, however, where you jump back on the wagon, hone in on an issue or two that you want to follow and pay attention to the votes that are being cast in your name.

The state makes it easier than ever to track how your operatives in the capital voted and where bills end up. Use our color-coded maps, then follow through with online tools accessible at leg.state.fl.us. ■

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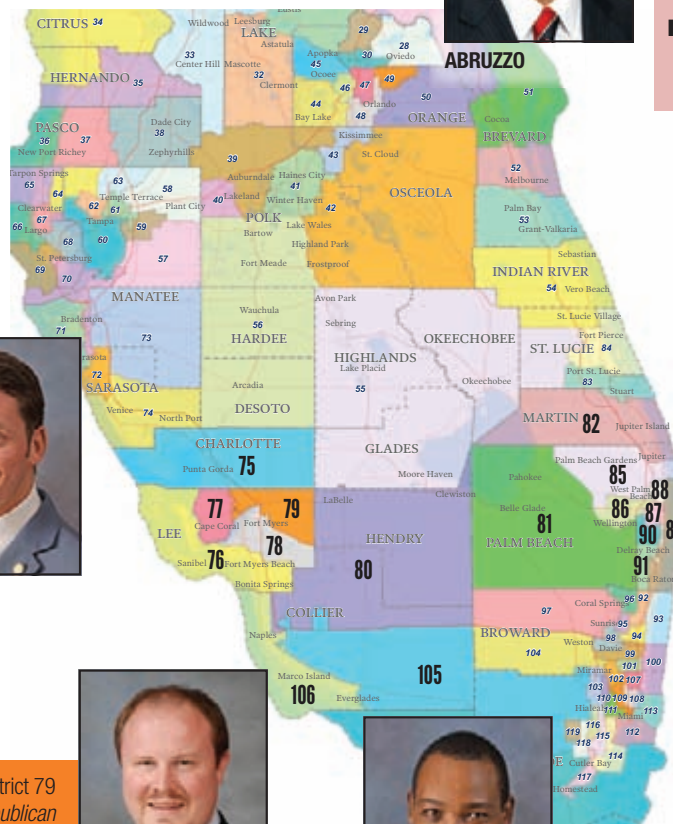
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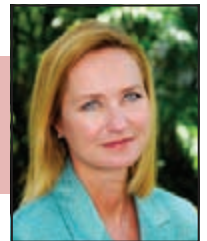
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SESSION

From page 10

taking and that is that, No. 1, we need to complete the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan that the legislature and the federal government agreed to many years ago.

“We also need to update the CERP plan based on new technology and new circumstances, new funding sources and the like. You have to take a long view of the problem because it took 100 years to get us into this mess and it’s not going to take 10 or 15 years to get out of it, and I think part of the problem is there’s a misperception in the public. (That is), if we do one thing, buy U.S. Sugar land, that will solve the problem, but it won’t because there are a lot of components to it.”

Do you support a plan to buy land south of Lake Okeechobee in the Everglades Agricultural Area for water storage?

“I do, because the (2015 UF Water Institute) study indicated that additional property is needed for storage south of the lake. Also, north of the lake. And we need to finish the reservoirs east and west of the lake.”

Sen. Passidomo pointed out a number of options for obtaining land south of the lake that the report suggests including purchasing them from the sugar industry and/or using land the state already owns.

“And last but not least, but most importantly... my district includes Hendry County, all of the people who rely for their livelihood on farming (sugar cane). Those people in Hendry County need a seat at the table. Their voices need to be heard because while we talk about taking farmland and turning it into water storage we will be affecting the livelihood of several thousand people, and we can’t operate in a vacuum, and we need to listen to them to hear their concerns in addition to those of the scientists, environmentalists, and elected officials.”

Do you support new gun control rules and how would they improve public safety? Should guns be allowed in the following places under concealed carry: theaters, courthouses, airport passenger terminals, legislative meetings, on college and university campuses, in government meetings, and in career centers?

“So my biggest issue is not the issue of gun control. The issue is the state of Florida has been not very proactive, in fact we are at the bottom of the 50 states insofar as how we handle mental health. To date we have put very little funding and very little emphasis on mental health until last year when the Legislature passed Senate Bill 12, which began the process of overhauling our state’s mental health system. (It provides) a structure and framework for collaboration among agencies and organizations that provide mental health — but it didn’t put any money into it... And that would go a long way to addressing the problem of people with problems carrying weapons and wreaking havoc in our state.”

Do you support legislation that would crack down on so-called “sanctuary cities” in Florida, including by imposing financial penalties?

“I have voted for a resolution to that effect, and a bill rather in the House last year. I support all the efforts that we have to require local governments and municipalities to follow the law. And to me if you have a law, no one is above the law, no person, no city and no county.”

How should Amendment 2 be implemented?

“I think of my role as legislator in this arena is to listen to all of the testimony and then help (make) the regulations that

are in the best interest of our state. That being said, I am troubled by what I see, a perception — because I get phone calls from people all the time who actually believe that amendment legalizes marijuana in the state of Florida, and that’s not what it did. I bring it to their attention and tell them, (it legalized marijuana for) medical purposes only. Without exception they laugh and say, ‘oh, I have a headache, I’m stressed, I’m entitled to use it.’ And frankly that troubles me, whatever intention the drafters of that amendment had. Those people think that’s what that amendment did with a wink and a nod.”

What is your single most important goal for the session?

“My most important goal for me has always been to represent my constituents well.”

Which candidate did you vote for in the presidential election?

“I don’t want to answer that... The reason I don’t want to answer that is I don’t want the discussion to be about who I supported in the election. What I want the discussion to be about is, we have a president; he’s our president; people who voted for him and people who didn’t vote for him should support him and help him to be successful.”

■ ■ ■

REP. MICHAEL GRANT
R-DISTRICT 75

What is the best way to clean up our water? Do you support a plan to buy land south of Lake Okeechobee in the Everglades Agricultural Area for water storage?

“I haven’t seen any surveys or documentation that shows that (buying land in the EAA) is actually going to clean up the Lake (Okeechobee). As you know we’re in a pretty tight budget year, and before I start voting to commit taxpayers’ dollars to a billion-dollar plus program I want to see some documentation that’s actually going to work. (It) might not be the best way to do that; it may be better to make investments north of the Lake so that as it flows south into the Lake that it gets cleaned up. And I’d like to find some way of funding that that’s not going to have a negative impact on some of the other priorities of the state.”

Do you support new gun control rules and how would they improve public safety?

“That’s a pretty broadly worded question. So if by control you mean the effective way to keep guns out of the hands of criminals, then certainly I would support something like that. But if you mean some kind of a restriction on the rights of citizens to carry guns based on their Second Amendment right, that one would be no.”

Should guns be allowed in the following places under concealed carry: theaters, courthouses, airport passenger terminals, legislative meetings, on college and university campuses, in government meetings, and in career centers?

“Concealed carry is already permitted in the Capitol. It’s not permitted on the floor of the House, obviously because we have the Capitol Police there to maintain order, if you will. I don’t see if somebody has a concealed carry permit, they’ve already gone through background (checks), they’ve been licensed and trained to use those guns — in general, I’d say that’s fine, they can bring them where they need to bring them.”

Do you support legislation that would crack down on so-called “sanctuary cities” in Florida, including by imposing financial penalties?

“Yes. I would I think that we’re a nation of laws and a state of laws, and if there’s a law on the books, whether you like it or not, you’ve got to enforce it. I don’t think you can have selective enforcement because an individual or town or political jurisdiction thinks they’re more mighty than the federal government. I think that just leads to chaos, because if it’s immigration today, what will it be tomorrow?”

How should Amendment 2 be implemented?

“Medical marijuana has just been on the scene for three or four years. I don’t know if we have enough long-term data from other states to implement these laws and say, ‘This is the best way to do it.’

“I guess I would say, let’s be a little restrictive going into it and if that proves not to be the best way forward we can always revise it and loosen those restrictions.”

What is your single most important goal for the session?

“My overarching goal as a first term freshman is to learn as much as I can about the system so I can make the best decisions I can make for the citizens of the state of Florida.”

Which candidate did you vote for in the presidential election?

“That’s a little personal. But I will tell you it’s not Hillary Clinton.”

■ ■ ■

REP. DANE EAGLE
R-DISTRICT 77

What is the best way to clean up our water?

“Everyone wants to see the water clean, especially myself, born and raised down there. The frustration is it’s not a problem that can be fixed overnight... Now we’re stuck with these Lake (Okeechobee) releases that are hurting our tourism and environment in Southwest Florida. Since the year 2000... Congress enacted an agreement to work on the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP). That in my opinion is the best path forward.”

Do you support a plan to buy land south of Lake Okeechobee in the Everglades Agricultural Area for water storage?

Rep. Eagle pointed out the state doesn’t have the money up front to pay for a proposed plan to buy land south of the Lake for more water storage, so it would need to issue bonds (backed by a voter approved trust fund to buy such land). He’s not convinced that is a good use of taxpayer money and suggested that land buy plan might also divert attention from other important CERP projects.

But he added, “Do I agree we need to have some storage south of the Lake? I think, yes, it’s a matter of where we do it and how.”

Do you support new gun control rules and how would they improve public safety?

“I don’t. I’m actually looking at ways to expand our Second Amendment rights. That in my view is the best way to enhance public safety.”

Rep. Eagle pointed out that concealed-carry permit holders already go through a background check and training course, and that the vast majority are known to handle their guns responsibly.

“These are your defenders if you will. These are not the people that are committing these crimes. You would be controlling what they would do, not what criminals would do. When you restrict the ability of these concealed permit holders to defend themselves you’re just creating more ability for the criminals to

wreak havoc.”

Do you think guns should be allowed in the following places under concealed carry: theaters, courthouses, airport passenger terminals, legislative meetings, on college and university campuses, in government meetings, and in career centers?

“Yes I do. And again they call these zones ‘gun-free safety zones,’ which is an oxymoron. They are not free from guns... They are free from guns carried by law-abiding citizens. They are quote unquote ‘gun-free zones’ but obviously, guns were there. They were being carried by the criminals.”

Do you support legislation that would crack down on so-called “sanctuary cities” in Florida, including by imposing financial penalties?

“Yes. I’m actually co-sponsoring a bill this year that opposes that (sanctuary cities). It’s a great concern. It’s a concern for our citizens. My job is to ensure my constituents and constituents across Florida are protected, and we cannot guarantee that if we don’t know who is coming here from other countries.

“I’m sponsoring a bill that would impose sanctions on illegal immigrants who are here and also decide to commit violent crimes.” (For instance, a second-degree misdemeanor conviction would be increased to a first-degree misdemeanor if that person is an undocumented immigrant).

How should Amendment 2 be implemented?

“That’s everything from growing to dispensing to storage to transportation to tax and regulation. So we’re at the very early stages of that... We did actually legalize Charlotte’s Web in 2014 (a single strain of marijuana used to alleviate seizures) and with that did start to create some of these regulations. So with that we have a limited number of growers throughout the state and ways to dispense that as well. So we’ll be looking at proposing new amendments within those guidelines. We might expand that because obviously we’ve expanded the number of people (with access to medical marijuana). So we’d have to talk about expanding the growers and dispensaries. But I do think it should be done in a limited matter. It is still illegal federally, and it hasn’t been thoroughly studied by the FDA. So instead of opening up the door like states like Colorado have done, we need to take baby steps.”

What is your single most important goal for the session?

“I think the budget. It’s our only constitutional duty as the legislature in the state of Florida. And that’s one of the main reasons I ran for office, to be a responsible steward of the taxpayers’ dollars.”

Which candidate did you vote for in the presidential election?

“Donald Trump.”

■ ■ ■

REP. MATT CALDWELL
R-DISTRICT 79

What is the best way to clean up our water? Do you support a plan to buy land south of Lake Okeechobee in the Everglades Agricultural Area for water storage?

“The easiest way to explain that is to say that every member of the Legislature has already voted to increase storage south of the Lake and they did that by supporting Legacy Florida, the bill we passed last year that funds CERP (the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan), which has southern storage as a piece of it...”

“There’s not a conflict really in the Legislature between people who want

to restore the Everglades and folks that don't. Everybody unanimously wants to see the Everglades restored. The proposal from the Senate (to buy land south of the Lake, SB 10) is about changing the priority of the projects in the plan."

Do you support new gun control rules and how would they improve public safety?

"The Second Amendment is very clear. It's a personal right to self-defense and the clear outcome of most gun control legislation is to disarm law-abiding citizens, because criminals are going to ignore the law whatever the crime may be. And that's really the paradigm that I view any proposals regarding the Second Amendment rights issues."

Should guns be allowed in the following places under concealed carry: theaters, courthouses, airport passenger terminals, legislative meetings, on college and university campuses, in government meetings, and in career centers?

"I think the thing to keep in mind is concealed-carry permits are citizens in Florida over the age of 21 who have submitted to fingerprint and a background check and have been licensed to carry concealed. The other thing to note based on research conducted in the last several years, law enforcement officers are actually more likely to commit a (gun-related) crime than concealed-carry permit holders... They're both statistically very, very tiny, but that was an amazing statistic that sworn officers are actually more likely to commit a crime than concealed-carry holders. (It) really demonstrates how effective that program (concealed-carry permitting) is."

Do you support legislation that would crack down on so-called "sanctuary cities" in Florida, including by imposing financial penalties?

"The immigration question is more complicated than just a simple statement can cover, but the interest of the Legislature is to see uniform application of the law in Florida, and regardless of what issue it is, local governments should be focused on that mission. That's the way we're going to be most successful in having laws that are enforceable and having a state that is open and welcoming to business and the people."

How should Amendment 2 be implemented?

"The legislature has already authorized both Charlotte's Web and full THC for terminally ill patients and we've built a system for delivering that. This amendment significantly expands the disease states and thereby the number of patients eligible for medical marijuana so we're going to have to evaluate whether the

current system we've built can handle that volume."

What is your single most important goal for the session?

"I've been working on Everglades issues long before I ever ran for office. This will be 13 years now that I've been a passionate advocate for the Everglades and I'm going to continue to focus on that goal and endeavor to work with the senate to make it a reality."

Which candidate did you vote for in the presidential election?

"Yeah... Evan, come on. Let's just skip that question for today."



REP. CARLOS TRUJILLO
R-DISTRICT 105

What is the best way to clean up our water? Do you support a plan to buy land south of Lake Okeechobee in the Everglades Agricultural Area for water storage?

"I think the best way to clean up our water is to follow the plan that was set out by the University of Florida study that came out in 2015. We spent as a state hundreds of thousands of dollars to figure out what to do. They're the experts. They've proposed solutions. We need to put pressure on the federal government to finish building the levees and the dikes around the lakes... So I think those are two real solutions that could immediately deliver results."

Do you support new gun control rules and how would they improve public safety?

"In the past I've voted for campus carry, I've voted for open carry, and I maintain my position on those two issues..."

"Restricting the Second Amendment rights of law-abiding citizens is something that I do not support."

Should guns be allowed in the following places under concealed carry: theaters, courthouses, airport passenger terminals, legislative meetings, on college and university campuses, in government meetings, and in career centers?

"Career centers, I don't see any objection to that. In some of the other hostile forums I think there have to be some safety net mechanisms put in place. (Such as a contentious custody hearing, divorce situation), or some of these more real-life issues that people find themselves in, those are ones I'd be much more hesitant toward encouraging people to carry firearms. But I think on all of these you have to review a case by case basis, it's hard to just lump them into one category."

Do you support legislation that would crack down on so-called "sanctuary cities" in Florida, including by imposing financial penalties?

"Yes... Nobody has a right to circumvent the United States Constitution. The power of immigration is clearly vested in the federal government. Municipalities can't decide which laws to enforce and which to reject. Imagine applying (that) to criminal cases... Once we lose the rule of law we lose complete control as a society."

How should Amendment 2 be implemented?

"I think within the strict letter of the law. Now, we're trying to make it something that it's not. I think it's clearly for medical purposes."

What is your single most important goal for the session?

"To pass a balanced budget that reflects the values of Floridians. It's just such a complicated process to figure out where we can be more efficient. My goal is (when the session ends) on May 5, to have a very fair budget that really reflects the value of Floridians."

Which candidate did you vote for in the presidential election?

"Donald Trump."



REB. BOB ROMMEL
R-DISTRICT 106

What is the best way to clean up our water? Do you support a plan to buy land south of Lake Okeechobee in the Everglades Agricultural Area for water storage?

"Billions of state and federal dollars have already been spent on the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan, since it was first put forward in the late 1990s. Notably, CERP includes a comprehensive plan to address all of the Lake O issues both north and south of the lake. I would like to see more discussion and public debate on the plans which are already on the table before we spend billions more on something new which doesn't solve our problem."

Do you support new gun control rules and how would they improve public safety?

"I am a staunch supporter of the Second Amendment. I am also a proud gun owner and have a concealed permit. I do not support new gun control laws, which, in practice, will actually make law abiding citizens less safe by interfering with our constitutional right to defend ourselves from criminal conduct. Instead, we need to be focused on enforcing the

existing laws we have on the books."

Should guns be allowed in the following places under concealed carry: theatres, courthouses, airport passenger terminals, legislative meetings, on college and university campuses, in government meetings, and in career centers?

"So long as an individual possesses a lawful concealed permit, I support concealed carry in all of these locations. It's been well-documented that gun-free zones are a lightning rod for criminal conduct because criminals know that the people in gun-free zones are not armed and cannot defend themselves."

Do you support legislation that would crack down on so-called "sanctuary cities" in Florida, including by imposing financial penalties?

"Absolutely. In fact, I've already signed on to co-sponsor House Bill 697 with Rep. Larry Metz, a bill which aims to end sanctuary cities in Florida once and for all."

How should Amendment 2 be implemented?

"As a general matter, I think we need to regulate marijuana like any other pharmacy drug. With that in mind, some of the provisions I would like to see enacted include, but are not limited to:

No grow houses near schools or high-use residential or commercial areas.

Should be distributed behind the counter in a pharmacy like other prescription drugs, or with a pharmacist present.

Prescription from a medical doctor required.

Clear labeling system so consumers know what they're getting.

Should be sold in tamper-proof containers/pill bottles, like any other medication.

Edibles must be clearly labeled, with warnings in big bold letters, individually wrapped, and sold behind a counter."

What is your single most important goal for the session?

"After just a few short weeks on the job, I'm proud to have introduced landmark legislation in the Florida House that will affect millions of Floridians, on topics as diverse as tort reform, Sunshine Law reform, and legislation to tackle the drug overdose and opioid epidemic, which has so many Floridians and our families in its terrible grasp. In the coming weeks, I expect to introduce several other critical pieces of legislation and am looking forward to working with my colleagues in the Florida House and Florida Senate to ensure passage of these important bills."

Which candidate did you vote for in the presidential election?

"Donald Trump." ■



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