

# CAPITOL REPORT

## Summary of Third Week of Legislative Session



Online voter registration would alleviate the need for paper registration, and save Florida dollars!

March 20, 2015

Dear League Supporter,

Some very exciting developments occurred this week, in particular a bill that would introduce online voter registration passing through committee!

We will continue to monitor SB 228, filed by Senator Jeff Clemens (D-Lake Worth).

### Major Issues and Bills:

**EXTENDING HEALTH CARE:** The League remains adamantly supportive of a mechanism that will bring in federal health care dollars to be used by our state in addressing health care needs for approximately 800,000 of Florida's poorest and underserved individuals. This past Tuesday, the House Health Care Appropriations Subcommittee voted to remove all Low Income Pool (LIP) funding from the proposed state budget, which would cripple several of the state's busiest hospitals serving the poorest communities. On Thursday, the Senate released a budget proposal that includes funding for LIP, as well as a \$2.8 billion expansion of health care coverage. This amounts to a \$5 billion shortfall between the two chambers of the Legislature. We strongly urge all League members to call and email their Representatives, asking them to help move Florida in the right direction, and to move a bill forward that would allow the state of Florida to accept the available federal Medicaid dollars. Click [here](#) to find

your Representative, along with his or her contact information.

**GUN SAFETY:** SB 176 would allow the concealed carry of weapons on university and college campuses, and was heard by the Senate Committee on Higher Education on Monday. The League stood with University Presidents, students, and university law enforcement in opposition to this dangerous bill. The bill passed committee with a vote of 6-3. Its House companion bill, HB 4005, passed through the Higher Education & Workforce Subcommittee on Wednesday. To date, opposition to the bill has been along party lines with Democrats voting to oppose. However, in the House Subcommittee two Democrats, Representative Michelle Rehwinkel Vasilinda (D-9) and Representative Katie Edwards (D-98), broke with the party and voted in support of the bill. To view members of the Senate Judiciary Committee, as well as their contact information, click [here](#). Call and tell these Senators what our students and faculty across the state are saying: that we want NO guns on campus.

**AMENDMENT 1 FUNDING:** This Thursday, the Senate General Governmental Appropriations Subcommittee released a \$714.2 million dollar proposal, with only \$22 million designated for land acquisition. Land acquisition is not being properly funded, which is contrary to the Constitutional language that was adopted by 75% of the Florida voters this past November.

**ONLINE VOTER REGISTRATION:** Online Voter Registration was the number one recommendation in the 2012 U.S. President's Commission on Elections Administration. It is also the number one priority of the Florida State Association of Supervisors of Elections. Senate Bill 228 filed by Senator Jeff Clemens would establish a system of registering to vote online; it passed through the Senate Committee on Ethics and Elections. The bill was amended to include an implementation date of October 1, 2017. The League remains supportive of SB 228 and its House companion bill, HB 227.

**EDUCATION:** A bill to increase charter school accountability, HB 7037, passed through the Education Committee on Thursday. The League is generally supportive of the bill; we do however, have concerns regarding language in the bill that would hold school districts responsible for facility upgrades to charter schools. The next step will be the House floor. We will continue to monitor this bill.

### **Get Involved!**

Debbie Harrison Rumberger is the League's professional lobbyist for the 2015 Legislative Session. Updates on League legislative issues will be provided on a regular basis through Capitol Report, which is published every week during the session. Important information may also be accessed at [www.leg.state.fl.us](http://www.leg.state.fl.us) Watch for your Capitol Report each Friday of the session for news on priority issues and what you can do to help. For updates on or copies of proposed legislation, call legislative information at 1-800-342-1827 or visit the Florida Online Sunshine homepage at [www.leg.state.fl.us](http://www.leg.state.fl.us).

For more information about the League's advocacy, check out [www.thefloridavoter.com](http://www.thefloridavoter.com)

Thank you,

Debbie Harrison Rumberger  
LWVF Legislative Liaison