



State Representative Chip LaMarca

Serving District 93



Deerfield Beach · Fort Lauderdale · Hillsboro Beach · Lauderdale-By-The-Sea · Lighthouse Point · Oakland Park · Pompano Beach · Sea Ranch Lakes · Wilton Manors

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

2019 SESSION

Dear Neighbor,

With the 2019 Legislative Sessions, and my first as your State Representative, concluded in Tallahassee, I wanted to take a moment to update you on a few of the important issues we are working on as a state, now, and in the immediate future. We accomplished many great legislative items this year in the Florida Legislature, and I would like to share some of those with you now.

I am most proud of the House's commitment, along with the Governor, to provide real environmental funding. In my view, these strategic funding initiatives such as Everglades restoration, water quality research, septic to sewer conversion, and beach nourishment is what is needed to move Florida into a more sustainable future, while also maintaining our multi-billion dollar tourism industry and unique ecosystems.

Sincerely,

Representative Chip LaMarca, District 93

District Office

1827 Northeast 24th Street
Lighthouse Point, FL 33064
(954) 784-4531

Tallahassee Office

1401 The Capitol
402 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1300
(850) 717-5093 State Office

Email: Chip.LaMarca@myfloridahouse.gov

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Legislature Passes \$121.5 Million Tax Cut Package

Once again, the Florida House delivered for Florida's families by passing over \$121 million in broad-based tax cuts. Working closely with our Senate partners, we fulfilled our commitment to bring meaningful tax relief to Florida's families and small businesses.

This tax package will benefit many Floridians, including small businesses, active military, and students. Major tax relief initiatives in the package included a permanent cut to the business rent tax from 5.7% to 5.5% effective January 1, 2020. This will save small businesses and renters of commercial property over \$65 million annually in Florida.

The Legislature also approved another **Back-to-School Sales Tax Holiday from August 2-6, 2019** where clothing priced \$60 or less, school supplies \$15 or less, and computers and accessories priced \$1,000 or less per item and purchased for personal use will be exempt from state and local sales tax. The tax package also called for another **Hurricane Sales Tax Holiday** where sales taxes were waived for many disaster preparedness supplies including flashlights, portable generators, and batteries from **May 31 – June 6, 2019**.



House Passes Comprehensive Water Package



Our balanced state budget funds a number of critical environmental priorities, including \$686.8 million for water quality and protection. Specifically, we included \$50 million to jumpstart water storage and treatment projects North of Lake Okeechobee. We also funded research that will help us understand, prevent, and mitigate harmful algae and red tide and created the Florida Red Tide Mitigation and Technology Development Initiative to develop technologies and approaches needed to address the control and mitigation of red tide and its impacts. We were also successful in receiving \$40 million in reoccurring annual statewide beach nourishment funding.

Engineered Life Safety System Regulations

The sprinkler language added into **HB 7103** does in fact push the date of ELSS compliance back to Jan. 1, 2024 giving another opportunity for associations to vote and opt-out of these potentially costly unit improvements. The bill also requires Florida's CFO Jimmy Patronis, in his capacity as Chief State Fire Marshal, to collect data on how many high-rise condos - defined as those over 75 feet tall - have not complied with the retrofit requirements and the financial impact this could have on residents.



Firefighter Cancer Benefits

This Legislature was able to accomplish what none other was able since 2004 – pass a comprehensive firefighter cancer benefits program. Nationwide, 70% of firefighter line-of-duty deaths in 2016, were cancer-related. This bill grants certain benefits to a firefighter upon receiving a diagnosis of cancer. This is a great victory for our brave men and women who protect and serve our communities every day, and I was proud to cosponsor this legislation.



Andrew's Law



This year we were successful in unanimously passing “Andrew’s Law”, named after Andrew Coffey, a lifelong resident of Lighthouse Point, who tragically passed away during a hazing incident at while attending Florida State University. Andrew’s Law adds an amnesty provision to the hazing statute that would incentivize a bystander to call for help and stay with the person in need until first responders arrive.

The Coffey Family

Anti-Semitism Bill

Recently, I was a delegate on Governor DeSantis’ Business Development Mission to Israel. As a proud cosponsor of Representative Fine’s Anti-Semitism Bill, I was honored to be a part of this historic trip and bill signing. The bill amends the Florida Educational Equality Act to add religion as a protected class with regard to discrimination against students and employees in Florida’s K-20 public education system. It passed unanimously in the Florida House and Senate.



Coastal Management Legislation

HB 325 – Coastal Management passed all of its House and Senate committees and respective Chambers unanimously. This bill creates a 3-year work plan for inlet and beach management projects. It also modernizes and refines the criteria for ranking beach and inlet sand management projects to better capture the economic importance of healthy beaches to tourism, storm damage reduction, and resource protection.



Vacation Rental Legislation



I filed **HB 1129** to provide greater accountability and transparency for the short-term rentals industry, by expanding the definition of “hosting platform.” This bill, if passed, would have combated the unlicensed commercial operators from developing in our residential communities. However, **HB 987**, which was also a vacation rental bill, would not have held the same level of accountability that our state needs. This bill would have stopped local governments from being able to regulate this growing industry. I was not in support of this bill, because every community is unique and we should have a say in what happens in our neighborhoods. Thankfully, this bill did not pass either. I look forward to my next opportunity to stand up to protect our neighborhoods.

FAU Funding

I am delighted to share that FAU fared extremely well in the 2019 Legislative Session. The university received funding for several large-scale projects that are of critical importance to their strategic mission and to the infrastructure of its campus, including \$11 million for the FAU Jupiter STEM/Life Sciences Building and an initial investment of \$11.5 million for the FAU A.D. Henderson/FAU High Developmental Research School K-8 Replacement Facility.

FAU also will receive a proportional share of the State University System’s Performance Based Funding for fiscal year 2019-2020, as well as a \$12 million increase to their recurring operational base budget. Those resources will allow FAU to take the next steps in its journey and accelerate its improvement to join the list of U.S. News & World Report’s Top 100 Public Universities.

