



OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

Press Release

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SPEAKER RUBIO ANNOUNCES COUNCIL CHAIRS

TALLAHASSEE, Fla –Speaker of the Florida House of Representatives Marco Rubio today named nine Representatives to serve as Council Chairmen.

“Over the next two years we will debate meaningful ideas and shape a bold agenda to define our state’s future,”said Speaker Marco Rubio. “I am honored to serve with such talented members at the helm, guiding Florida toward a brighter and better tomorrow.”

The nine Council Chairmen include:

- Representative Aaron Bean, Healthcare Council
- Representative Holly Benson, Safety & Security Council
- Representative Don Brown, Jobs & Entrepreneurship Council
- Representative Dean Cannon, Economic Expansion & Infrastructure Council
- Representative Andy Gardiner, Government Efficiency & Accountability Council
- Representative Stan Mayfield, Environmental & Natural Resources Council
- Representative Joe Pickens, Schools & Learning Council
- Representative David Rivera, Rules & Calendar Council
- Representative Ray Sansom, Policy & Budget Council

“Addressing the issue of healthcare for Floridians is a top priority,”said Healthcare Council Chair Aaron Bean. “We must look at innovative ways to give Florida a 21st century healthcare system that is the envy of the national, as well as the world. I am honored to be working on this important issue and look forward to finding real solutions.”

"One of the first concerns for every Floridian is keeping their family safe, and it must be a top priority for state government," said Safety and Security Council Chair Holly Benson. "I look forward to working to ensure that our children, our families and our seniors are protected against threats and that wrong-doers are brought to justice."

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“To continue the unprecedented growth and prosperity Floridians have enjoyed for the past 10 years, we must look at new ideas to help expand our economy,” said Jobs and Entrepreneurship Council Chair Don Brown. “We must ensure that government does not hamper our small businesses so that they can continue to create the jobs that grow our economy. We must look for new ideas on solving our insurance problems. I look forward to that challenge and helping set the foundation for the jobs of the 21st century.”

“Under the leadership of Jeb Bush, we have seen Florida grow beyond anyone’s expectations,” said Economic Expansion and Infrastructure Council Chair Dean Cannon. “To continue the road to prosperity, Florida businesses must have the tools necessary to compete in the global market. I am excited and look forward to helping keep Florida’s economy strong.”

“Floridians look to us to solve problems, not create excuses,” said Government Efficiency and Accountability Council Chair Andy Gardiner. “Identifying ways to streamline the labyrinth of bureaucracy and ensure accountability is the cornerstone of good governance. I am proud to be working to ensure that our state government respects Floridians’ tax dollars.”

“Protecting Florida’s pristine environment is a gift that we as Floridians can leave for many generations to enjoy,” said Environmental and Natural Resources Council Chair Stan Mayfield. “Finding solutions to our dependence on foreign oil and identifying ways to make Florida the leader in alternative energy is one of the biggest challenges we face. I am honored to embark on this challenge and look forward to creating a healthier and energy self-reliant Florida.”

“In order to prepare our children for the challenges they will face, our education system must be world-class,” said Schools and Learning Council Chair Joe Pickens. “Our children must be ready to compete on a global scale and we must provide them with access to every resource necessary to be successful. There is no greater factor in the success of Florida than the strength of our educational system.”

“I look forward to working with Speaker Rubio bring his vision of a bipartisan idea-driven legislative process to the Florida House of Representatives to fruition,” said Rules and Calendar Council Chair David Rivera. “I can think of no better legacy for the people of Florida than to help ensure the Florida House is remembered for these qualities.”

“An important component to the enormous growth and prosperity Floridians have seen is due in part to sound and robust public policy,” said Policy and Budget Council Chair Ray Sansom. “We must continue to be innovative, forward leaning and identify long term solutions that will help Floridians for years to come. I am excited and honored to be working on this endeavor and look forward to advancing the agenda.”

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Chairman of the Healthcare Council, Representative Aaron Bean (R-Fernandina Beach) – Representative Bean was first elected to the Florida House of Representatives in 2000. Representative Bean most recently served as the Chair of the House Healthcare Appropriations Committee and Vice-Chair of the Future of Florida’s Families Committee. Representative Bean’s prior public service includes three years as a board member of the Amelia Island Tourist Development Council, four years as Mayor-Commissioner and Commissioner of the City of Fernandina Beach. He is a past President of the Fernandina Beach Rotary Club, as well as Big Brothers and Big Sisters of Nassau County. He is currently a member of the YMCA Board of Directors and a little league coach and football coach for the YMCA.

Chairman of the Safety and Security Council, Representative Anna Holliday “Holly” Benson (R-Pensacola) – Representative Holly Benson was first elected to the Florida House of Representatives in 2000. Representative Benson most recently served as the Chair of the Health and Families Council and Co-chair of the Select Committee on Medicaid Reform, where she led the way for historic reform of Florida’s Medicaid program. In the 2002-2004 term, Representative Benson served as Chair of the Select Committee on Article V where she oversaw the implementation of a 1998 Constitutional Amendment that required a major restructuring of the state's court system. Representative Benson has been active in her community, launching initiatives such as I LOVE Science, a science mentoring program, and Bay Day, an environmental day for area 6th graders, and she serves on the Boards of Directors of YMCA of Northwest Florida and the West Florida Regional Library Foundation. Representative Benson has received numerous awards for her legislative service, including the Florida Medical Association's Legislator of the Year, 2002, the Florida Bar President's Award, 2003 and Associated Industry of Florida's Champion of Business Award, 2005.

Chairman of the Economic Expansion and Infrastructure Council Representative Dean Cannon (R-Winter Park)–Representative Dean Cannon was first elected to the Florida House of Representatives in 2004. Representative Cannon previously served as General Counsel for the Orange County 2000 Charter Review Commission. Representative Cannon is a member of Leadership Florida's Class XIX, a member of the Orlando Science Center's Board of Trustees, and a former Council Member of the ABA Section of State and Local Government. Representative Cannon was chosen as Speaker-designate by his colleagues for the 2010-2012 Legislative Sessions.



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Chairman of the Jobs and Entrepreneurship Council, Representative Donald D. “Don” Brown (R-DeFuniak Springs) – Representative Don Brown was first elected to the Florida House of Representatives in 2000. Representative Brown most recently served as the Chair of the State Administration Council. Representative Brown’s previous public service includes also service on the Board of Directors of the Private Industry Council, Chairman of the Walton County Airport Council, and as Walton County Commissioner. Representative Brown has received numerous awards for his legislative service including the Florida Chamber of Commerce MVP award for 2005 and 2006 and the Florida Pharmacists' MVP for 2004. Representative Brown is a member of the DeFuniak Springs Kiwanis Club and past-president of the Walton County Chamber of Commerce.

Chairman of the Government Efficiency and Accountability Council, Representative Andy Gardiner (R-Orlando) – Representative Andy Gardiner was first elected to the Florida House of Representatives in 2000. Representative Gardiner most recently served as Majority Leader during the 2004-2006 Legislative Sessions. Representative Gardiner is a recipient of numerous awards for his public service, including the 2006 Christian Coalition of Florida Faith and Family Award, the 2006 Coastal Conservation Association Florida, Legislative Conservation Award, and the Central Florida Regional Transportation Authority, Legislative Leadership Award of 2003. Representative Gardiner serves as the Executive Director of the Apopka Area Chamber of Commerce.

Chairman of the Environmental and Natural Resources Council, Representative Stan Mayfield (R-Vero Beach)–Representative Stan Mayfield was first elected to the Florida House of Representatives in 2000. Representative Mayfield most recently served as the Chair of the House Environmental and Agricultural Appropriations Committee. Representative Mayfield also served as Assistant Superintendent for the St. Lucie County School District and as a member of the Indian River County School Board. Representative Mayfield is a member of the Florida Engineering Society, the Indian River County Chamber of Commerce, and a past board member of the Community Child Care Resources.



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Chairman of the Schools and Learning Council, Representative Joe H. Pickens (R-Palatka) -

Representative Pickens was first elected to the Florida House of Representatives in 2000. Representative Pickens most recently served as Vice-Chair of the House Pre-K–12 Committee and currently serves as General Counsel for the Putnam County School Board. Representative Pickens is a Board Member of the American Cancer Society, Putnam County Unit, a Paul Harris Fellow for the Palatka Rotary Club, and a Board Member of the Putnam County School Readiness Coalition. Representative Pickens is a recipient of numerous awards for his legislative service including Florida Association of District School Superintendents, Legislator of the Year 2004, 2005, 2006; Florida Chamber of Commerce, A Honor Roll 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006; Florida School Boards Association, Legislator of the Year 2001, 2002, 2004, 2005, 2006; YMCAs of Florida, Outstanding Leadership Award 2006; Associated Industries of Florida, Champion for Business Award 2005; and the Florida Council of Instructional Technology Leaders, Innovative Legislator of the Year 2005.

Chairman of the Rules and Calendar Council, Representative David Rivera (R-Miami)

– Representative David Rivera was first elected to the Florida House of Representatives in 2002. Representative Rivera most recently served as Chair of the Governmental Operations Committee, Vice-Chair of the Insurance Committee, and Vice-Chair of the Education Appropriations Committee. Representative Rivera also serves as National Committeeman for the Republican National Hispanic Assembly, State Committeeman for the Republican Party of Florida, and Executive Director of the Republican Party of Miami-Dade County. Representative Rivera is a member of the American Society for Public Administration and served as Senior Advisor to U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Human Rights Commission.

Chairman of the Policy and Budget Council, Representative Ray Sansom (R-Destin) –

Representative Ray Sansom was first elected to the Florida House of Representatives in 2002. Representative Sansom recently served as the Chairman of the Transportation Committee. He also was a member of the Education Council and a member of Military and Veterans Affairs Subcommittee where he sponsored Constitutional Amendment VII that provided an additional discount on property tax for wounded veterans. Representative Sansom serves as the Northwest Florida Economic Development Representative for Alabama Electric Company. He also serves on the Board of Directors for Vanguard Bank and the YMCA Board of Directors. His previous public service includes working as a Director of Community Affairs for the Okaloosa County School District, Okaloosa Board of County Commissioners, Covenant Hospice Board of Directors, and membership on the Florida Corrections Commission. Representative Sansom was also selected “Freshman Legislator of the Year” in 2003 by the Association of Counties and was chosen as Speaker-Designate by his colleagues for the 2008-2010 Legislative Sessions.

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