



Florida PTA Legislative Dispatch #1 March 1, 2009

The 2009 session of the Florida Legislature is set to convene on Tuesday, March 3, 2009 and end on Friday, May 1, 2009.

As the economic downturn continues, it is widely expected that budget issues will dominate the session. Still fresh from the cuts to education during the Special Session in January, school districts are bracing for even larger cuts to the budget. The Federal economic stimulus package, about \$3.5 billion, is expected to bring temporary relief, but Florida cannot yet access that money. This bill stipulates that states that have slashed education funding will have to get waivers from the U.S. Department of Education to get these funds. Since the cuts during the Special Session put our funding back below 2006 levels, Florida falls into that category and will have to apply for a waiver.

Both Houses have appointed special committees to take a long range view of Florida's economy and to identify strategies and policies to help Florida recover from the current economic crisis.

Florida PTA will continue to update you on the budget and issues relevant to children and public education throughout the session. We will send updates and alerts through Capwiz and encourage all of you to sign up at <http://www.floridapta.org/CapWiz.html> to receive the updates. We will post these updates as well as a list of bills on the Florida PTA website at <http://www.floridapta.org/Legislation.html>. If you have difficulty accessing the internet, please contact the Florida PTA office and we will provide you with a copy. At the end of this dispatch you will find a listing of some of the bills that PTA will be following this session. For a more complete list please visit the Florida PTA web page at www.floridapta.org

Your response to our alerts during the Special Session in January was tremendous. Over 2000 emails were sent to the governor and legislature by PTA members from around the state in that short 10 day period. You spoke for every child with one voice. Your voices are crucial to the process and are more important now than ever before. **You can and will make the difference.**

Please join us for the Rally in Tally on March 18. Contact your county council for more information or go to <http://www.floridapta.org/Legislation.html> for the details.

We look forward to working with you throughout this session. Thank you for your commitment to children.

Bills of Interest

HB 0001 Relating to Safety Belt Law Enforcement --**Glorioso**

Similar **SB 0344** Relating to Dori Slosberg and Katie Marchetti Safe... **Rich**

HB 0087 Relating to Speed Zones at K-12 Schools-- Scionti

Identical **SB 1544** Relating to Speed Zones/K-12 Schools... Joyner

HB 0123 Relating to Human Smuggling---**Snyder**

Identical **SB 0502** Relating to Human Smuggling... **Dockery**

HB 0157 Relating to Service Learning in the Public School System --**Kriseman**

Similar **SB 0450** Relating to Service-learning Programs/Grades K-12... **Fasano**

SB 0192 Relating to Infant Eye Care/Mandatory Examinations --**Wilson**

SB 0194 Relating to School-entry Requirements/Vision Examinations-- **Wilson**

SB 0196 Relating to School Wellness and Physical Education Policies --**Wilson**

SB 0220 Relating to Public Schools/Human Sexuality Education-- **Deutch**

Identical **HB 0265** Relating to Education in Public Schools Concerning... **Fitzgerald**

SB 0330 Relating to School Nurse Services ---**Wilson**

SB 0346 Relating to High School Graduation Requirements/Health Educ. --**Justice**

HB 0353 Relating to John M. McKay Scholarships for Students with Disabilities Program--- **Porth**

Similar **SB 1010** Relating to McKay Scholarships for Students with D... **Ring**

HB 0453 Relating to Tax Credits for Contributions to Nonprofit Scholarship-funding Organizations-- **Weatherford**

Identical **SB 1310** Relating to Tax Credits/Nonprofit Scholarship-fund... **Gardiner**

HB 0643 Relating to District and School Advisory Councils --**Jones**

Identical **SB 0398** Relating to District and School Advisory Councils/... **Sobel**

SB 0918 Relating to Florida KidCare Program-- **Rich**