

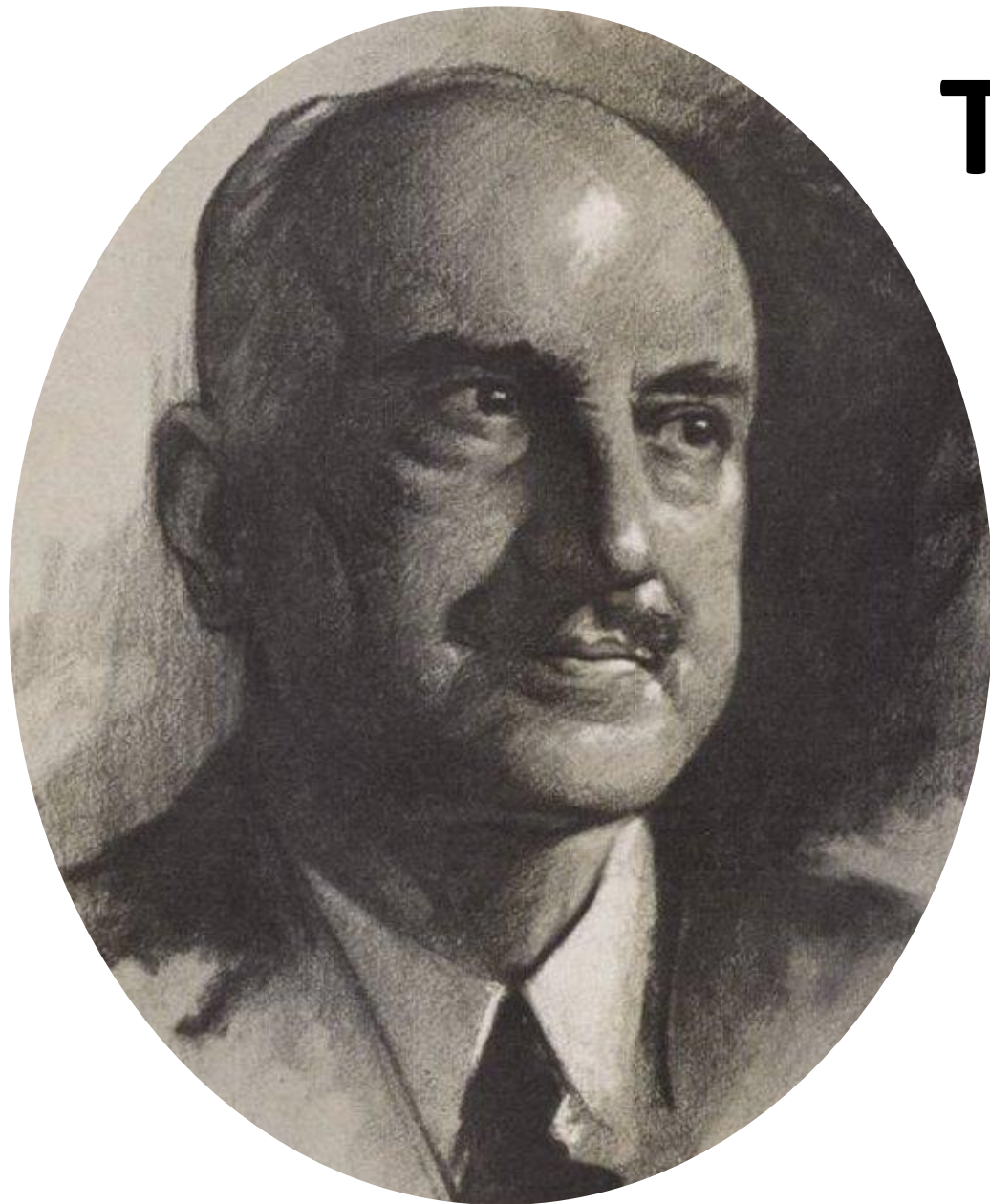
**LWW**

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®  
OF FLORIDA



# What's Coming in the 2024 Legislative Session

Monica L. Elliott, LWVBC Co-President, LWVFL Secretary  
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George Santayana  
Spanish American philosopher and writer

# The Florida Legislature

“Those who cannot  
remember the past are  
condemned to repeat it.”

George Santayana  
The Life of Reason, 1905

# A Past Legislature

- Legislature dominated by one party:
  - Intimidates state university faculty regarding sexual preferences
  - Accuses professors of recruiting students to “their” way of thinking
  - Investigates public school teachers, administrators and students regarding alleged homosexual activity
  - Cooperates with Florida Board of Education to revoke an individual’s teaching certificate

# A Past Legislature

- Legislature dominated by one party:
  - Accuses teachers of teaching evolution as fact
  - Faculty are scheduling speeches by “known communist sympathizers”
  - Teachers/faculty assigning “obscene” books of “intellectual garbage” such as *Catcher in the Rye*
  - Curriculum is corrupting students through use of “trashy and pornographic” works such as *The Grapes of Wrath* and *Brave New World*

# The Pork Chop Gang



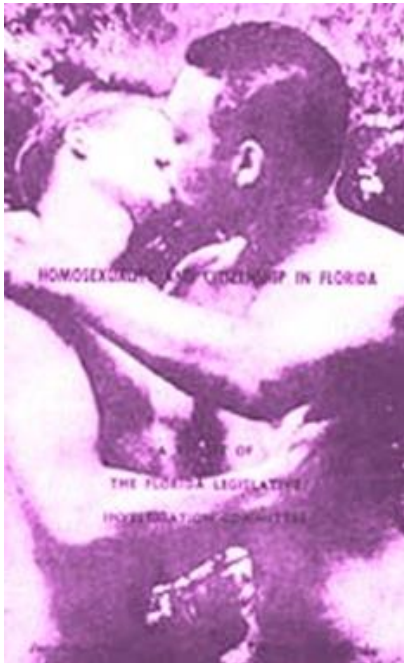
1956 - northern rural Democrats



Charley Eugene Johns  
Governor and Senator

# Florida Legislative Investigation Committee

aka “Johns Committee”



- Published “Homosexuality and Citizenship in Florida” in January 1964
- aka “The Purple Pamphlet”
- Sold for 25 cents a copy with discount for bulk orders
- Publication was beginning of downfall of the Johns Committee



thecommitteedocumentary.org

WATCH NOW

# The Committee

Charley Johns is watching you.

WINNER  
HISTORICAL DOCUMENTARY  
SUNCOAST EMMY AWARDS  
2014

NOMINATION  
EDITOR  
SUNCOAST EMMY AWARDS  
2014



# After the “Johns Committee”

- Committee disbanded on July 1, 1965
- LeRoy Collins and Buddy MacKay
- Series of Federal and SCOTUS cases mandate new districts be drawn
- 1968: New Florida Constitution



# 2024 Legislative Agenda

- 1) Voting Rights & Election Reform
- 2) Reproductive Health
- 3) Education
- 4) Gun Violence Prevention

# The Florida Legislature



## Two basic types of laws:

- 1) **General law** - applies equally across the state
- 2) **Special law** - applies to specific persons or things; filed as a **local bill**; must be approved by the local delegation first

# The Florida Legislature

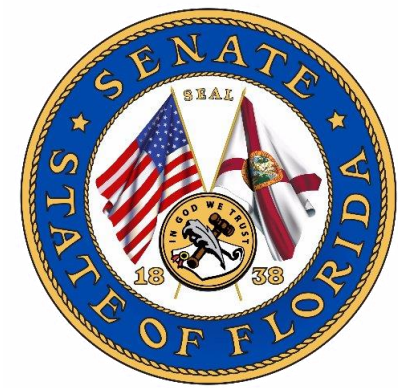
## 261 Bills Filed

(as of October 24<sup>th</sup>)



- **Senators** are not limited on number of bills they can file; filed 125 thus far.
- **Representatives** are limited to filing 7 bills
  - Exceptions to above, with local bills and claims bills as examples.

2,737 bills filed by 2023 Legislature:  
909 by Senate; 1,828 by House



- **SCR 142** filed by Sen. Lori Berman (D-Palm Beach)  
Ratifying the Equal Rights Amendment to the U.S. Constitution

“Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex.”



# Reproductive Health



- ✓ **SB 34/HB 111 - Termination of Pregnancies**
  - Sen. Book (D-Broward) and Rep. Eskamani (D-Orange)
  - Clarifying that certain penalties relating to the unlawful termination of a pregnancy do not apply to the pregnant woman who terminates the pregnancy
  
- ✓ **SB 254 - Picketing or Protesting in or Near Health Care Facilities**
  - Sen. Book (D-Broward)
  - Prohibited within a specified distance with specified intent





# Reproductive Health



- ✓ **HB 93 - Termination of Pregnancies**
  - Rep. Basabe (R-Miami-Dade)
  - 12 weeks
  - 15 weeks **with exceptions** for rape, incest, or human trafficking **IF** provide official documentations
  - No telehealth appointments
  - Abortion medications must be received in person





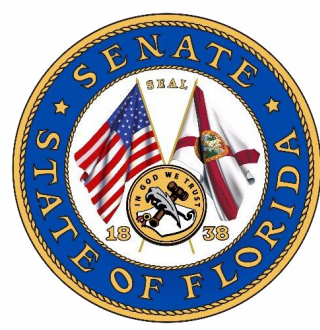
# Reproductive Health



## ✓ SB 256 - Pregnancy Support and Wellness Services

- Sen. Book (D-Broward)
- Florida Pregnancy Care Network, Inc.
  - Only current, medically accurate information, with noncompliance fines in contract
  - Make information on local rape crisis centers and sexual assault treatment centers readily available to clients.
  - Perform an annual financial audit of each organization
  - DOH visit each org. w/i the network (unannounced) annually





# Education

- ✓ **HB 13/SB 136 - Minimum Base Salary for Full-time Teachers**
  - Sen. Berman (D-Palm Beach) and Rep. Edmonds (D-Palm Beach)
  - Minimum base salary of \$65,000
  
- ✓ **HJR 69 - Homestead Tax Exemptions for School District Levies**
  - Rep. Garcia (R-Miami-Dade)
  - Proposed amendment to state constitution

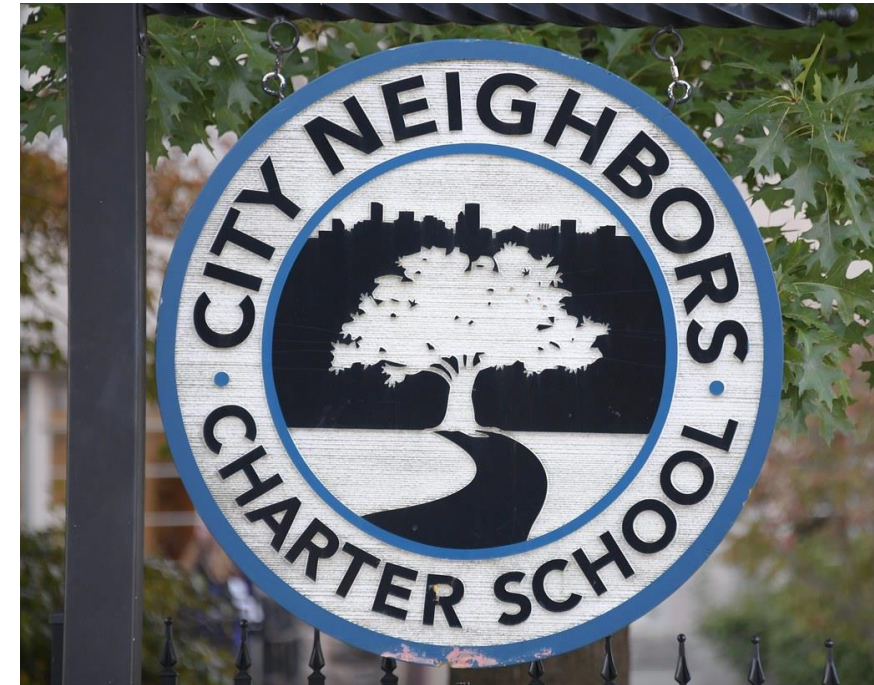


# Education



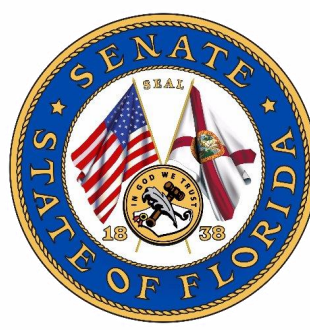
## ✓ HB 109/SB 246 - Conversion Charter Schools

- Rep. Andrade (R-Escambia/Santa Rosa) and Sen. Harrell (R-Martin)
- Municipalities could request conversion of public school to charter school
- A municipality may submit an application for conversion for any or **all** of the public schools within its jurisdictional boundary as part of a single application for approval





# Environmental



## ✓ SB 36 - Comprehensive Waste Reduction and Recycling Plan

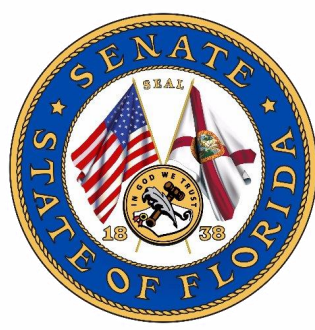
- Sen. Stewart (D-Orange)
- Requires DEP to develop plan by July 1, 2025
- Include a 3-year plan to implement:
  - Recycling and outreach
  - Local government recycling assistance
  - Recycling materials market development







# Environmental



## ✓ **SB 144/HB 193 - State Renewable Energy Goals**

- Sen. Berman (D-Palm Beach) and Rep. Eskamani (D-Orange)
- Very comprehensive
- Prohibit drilling for oil, gas, etc. on state lands and state waters
- By 2050, 100% of electricity generated from renewable energy
- By 2051, state to have net zero carbon emissions
- Form Renewable Energy Workforce Development Advisory Committee



# Gun Violence Prevention



- ✓ **HB 145/SB 180 - Sales [or Transfer] of Ammunition**
  - Rep. Daley (D-Broward) and Sen. Polsky (D-Broward)
  - Requires background check
  
- ✓ **SB 150 - Assault Weapons and Large-capacity Magazines**
  - Sen. Berman (D-Palm Beach)
  - Very comprehensive
  - Bans the sale, transfer and possession of these items
  - If lawfully possess these items before October 1, 2024, must apply for certificate of possession by October 1, 2025





# Gun Violence Prevention



- ✓ **SB 130/HB 209 - Possession or Use of a Firearm in a Sensitive Location**
  - Sen. Berman (D-Palm Beach) and Rep. Rayner (D-Pinellas/Hillsborough)
  - Bans possession or use in health care facility, government building, place of worship, public areas (e.g., parks), homeless shelters, daycare, schools, universities . . .



# Voting/Home Rule



## ✓ **HB 57 - County Commissioner Term Limits**

- Rep. Salzman (R-Escambia)
- Even in charter counties, limit county commissioners to 8 consecutive years
- Originally proposed as a constitutional amendment





# Voting & Elections



# Three Election Laws in Three Years

- **2021: SB 90** - filed Feb. 3, passed on April 29
- **2022: SB 524** - filed Oct. 18, 2021, passed on March 9
- **2023: SB 7050**
  - Submitted for consideration by Ethics and Elections Committee on March 30
  - Filed on April 5, passed on April 28





# Voting & Elections



- ✓ **HB 67/SB 236 - Agreement Among the States to Elect the President by National Popular Vote**
  - Rep. Gottlieb (D-Broward) and Sen. Torres (D-Osceola and Orange)
- ✓ **SB 190 - Ballot Boxes**
  - Sen. Garcia (R-Miami-Dade)
  - All ballot boxes, ballots, ballot stubs, memoranda and papers to be transported by law enforcement





# Voting & Elections



## ✓ **HB 135 - Voter Registration Applications**

- Rep. Gossett-Seidman (R-Palm Beach)
- Prevent party affiliation changes from occurring without the knowledge of the voter
- Special emphasis on registration or update of registration at Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles



# Close the Write-in Loophole

## Universal Primary - from Article VI, Section 5 (b)

Proposed by Constitution Revision Commission in 1998 and approved by voters in 1998

- **If** all candidates for an office have the same party affiliation
- **And** the winner will have no opposition in the general election,
- **[Then]** all qualified electors, regardless of party affiliation, may vote in the primary elections for that office.



# Close the Write-in Loophole

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**What does this phrase mean?**



# Close the Write-in Loophole

**Advisory Opinion by AG - DE 00-06 - May 11, 2000**

- Write-in candidates “constitute opposition in a general election”
- If a write-in candidate will participate in general election, the primary is closed.

## **What’s the problem?**

- Bogus write-in candidates, which close the primary to all voters
- Being used by both parties
- Since 2020, 8.2 million voters have been disenfranchised in 114 state and federal races statewide

# Close the Write-in Loophole

## Suggested amendment change to Article VI. Section 5 (b)

(not yet filed!)

Language highlighted in yellow is the word changes to constitutional article.

If all candidates for an office have the same party affiliation and the winner will have **either** no opposition in the general election **or** **opposition only from one or more write-in candidates**, then all qualified electors, regardless of party affiliation, may vote in the primary elections for that office.

# Returning Citizen Legislation

- ✓ In 2023, HB 1235 by Rep. Felicia Robinson (D-Broward) and SB 1296 by Sen. Geraldine Thompson (D-Orange)
  - Require Florida Commission on Offender Review to develop and maintain database
  - Has not yet been reintroduced for 2024
- ✓ Florida Supervisor of Elections legislative request for 2024:
  - “Require the establishment of a statewide database of felony offenders, complete with all terms of sentences (esp. outstanding fines and fees) included”



# Other FSE 2024 Legislative Priorities



- Prefer **NO** changes!
- Protect election workers from harassment and threats
- Exempt election workers from e-verify
- Exempt all voter information from public records requests.
- Exempt election worker information from public records requests.
- Keep segregated, but eliminate requirement for ballots cast during a *poll extension* to be placed in Provisional envelopes.

## ✓ SB 162: Designation of the State Bird

- Sen. Polsky (D-Broward)



Common Mockingbird  
*Mimus polyglottos*



Florida scrub jay  
*Aphelocoma coerulescens*

**LWW** LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS<sup>®</sup>  
OF FLORIDA

**Questions?**

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