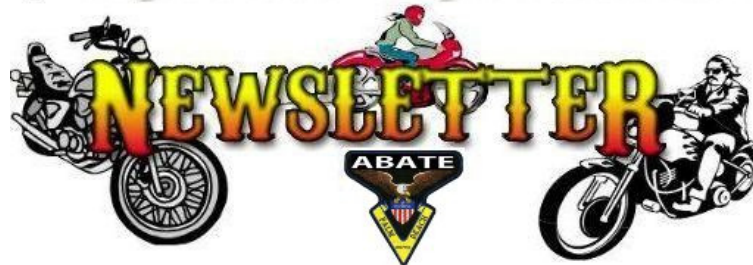


ABATE OF FLORIDA, INC. PALM BEACH CHAPTER



THE **Chrome Chronicles**



ISSUE 198 2022-2 PALMBEACH.ABATEFLORIDA.COM FEB. 2022



25th ANNUAL FREEDOM GATHERING

State Meeting Sunday, February 13, 2022 at 2:00pm

State Board Meeting Sunday, February 13 at Noon

American Legion Hall - 1065 S. Water St., Monticello, FL 32344

Directions to Hall: Go 2 blocks west of the Opera House on US 90, then turn west on Water Street. Go 1/2 mile to the Legion Hall

"We in America do not have government by the majority. We have government by the majority who participate." ~ Thomas Jefferson

Ride to the Capitol Monday, February 14, 2022

Kickstands up at 9:00am - Behind the Super 8 in Monticello

POC Abate of Florida Inc. State Office Brandy (850) 485-3853

Super 8 Monticello: 140 Pafford Rd., Monticello, FL 32336. Phone: 850-997-8888
Take I-10 to Exit 225 South on US 19. The hotel is located on the West side.



**A MERICAN
B IKERS
A IMING
T OWARD
E DUCATION**

**NEXT CHAPTER
MEETING**

3rd Sunday

Feb. 20 12:30

Johnny Q's

**CHECK TWICE
FOR MOTORCYCLES**

**LET THOSE
WHO RIDE
DECIDE!**

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Our Email is palmbeach.abateflorida@gmail.com

Put in the subject: ABATE and the officer to whom should see it and what about to so that message is directed right

Mailing Address **ABATE - Palm Beach Chapter**
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Lake Park, FL 33403

Our website is palmbeach.abateflorida.com

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ABATE of Florida Inc
Palm Beach Chapter
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Lake Park, FL 33403

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President's Message

Dan "Slo Motion" Henderson

The biggest thing we are trying to do is to find a way to get members to join online. We now accept Zelle. You can use it in your Bank app and send payment to palmbeach.abateflorida@gmail.com. (use actually like that). We are still testing so if you can try and make a small donation would help. I have Chase and had to add to it but hasn't allowed me to use full email for my renewal. At present our site has the old form you can fill out online, save and email as an attachment. Working on the new state version to do same, and have it email direct. However we are STILL waiting on state to get our access fixed so can update. If not I will reopen bikeronlineguide for a mirror site. Help us perfect this.

EDITORIAL GUIDELINES

You are encouraged to submit letters about ABATE related to events, articles, photographs, commentaries, etc. Please do not submit slanderous nor accusing letters, profanity nor nudity. Abate of Florida, Inc., will not accept any advertising that discriminates against any type of motorcyclist

I attended my first United Bikers Council as ABATE President. They are concerned about the status of biker in Palm Beach. All are hurting for members and they are open to getting more riders, groups into the council. Also getting the MCs more together. They are going to try to have more council meetings in association with the open houses. The AOA open house was after this meeting. I was proud to see six of our patches in attendance. Saturday morning was a ride to Harley. I drove since not riding anymore. While I was late, they were later. I am going to get more involved but the next two weeks I was under the weather, my kidney stones may be back. We have five at the Lone Legion Open House. I hope we continue to have a good turnout for the open houses, rides and events. I think Snooze was a bit disappointed that only two rode with him to Dania Beach Vintage Bike Show. Despite the 50 mph and cold wind, the show was worth it, Since not riding I drove,

I got a call from Snooze that Darkside had died. His real name was Donald but he preferred Duke which was what was on our roll. His membership expired back in September. Snooze is trying to get more information and if any services. So watch for news on his text system.



Find us on
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<https://www.facebook.com/AbatePalmBeachChapter>

UPCOMING Event Schedule All events subject to change

Tuesday Bike Nights L.O.F. Motorsports Jupiter Stadium Grill

Wednesday Bike Night Gorilla Motors at Johnny Qs

Saturday nights Fly n Wheels Open House

Thursdays Pirates Well Bike Night 7 pm A1A Lake Park

Feb. 4 to 6 Bert's Black Widow Music & Motorcycle Festival Port Charlotte

Feb. 5 Vintage Motorcycle Show Bert's Black Widow

Feb. 5 & 6 Palm Beach Harley Customer Appreciation 12-5

Thursday Feb. 10 Tequesta Bike night at Handlebars (old Judy's A1A)

Friday Feb.11 AOA WPB Open House

Saturday Feb. 12 Island Vibes Party and Bike Wash 12-5

Sunday Feb. 13 ABATE of FL Inc State Meeting Monticello

Monday Feb. 14 ABATE Ride to the Capital Tallahassee

Thursday Feb, 17 Palm Beach Harley Masquerade Bike Night, Battle of the Baggers,
Bikini bike Wash 6-9

Friday Feb. 18 Black Piston's WPB Open House

Sat. 19 /Sun. 20 Mardi Gras Open House 12-5

**3rd Sunday Feb. 20 Palm Beach Chapter Meeting ABATE of FL. Inc. 12:30pm
Johnny Q's 3801 10th Ave. N, Palm Springs**

Thurs Feb. 24 Underground Cycles Bike Night 7-10 PM Ralph's Stand Up Bar Jupiter

Friday Feb. 25 Lone Legion WPB Open House

Saturday Feb. .26 Island Vibes Party and Bike Wash 12-5

Monday. Feb. 28 PBHD Backstage Party 6-9

<https://www.motorcyclepowersportsnews.com/winners-bonus-round-jp-cycles-ultimate-builder-custom-bike-show/>

Here Are The Winners Of The J&P Cycles Ultimate Builder Custom Bike Show Bonus Round

When Progressive IMS Outdoors held their 11th annual J&P Cycles Ultimate Builder Custom Bike Show (UBCBS), the bonus round apparently had a very pretty list of bikes – and Tracy Harris, the senior vice president of Progressive IMS Outdoors was stoked to see such a range of talent on the podiums.

“The competition in Southern California was an excellent ending to an incredible year,” says Harris.

“The raw talent and pure passion these builders infuse into their custom bikes is remarkable, and we applaud everyone who participated. We’re proud to celebrate the hard work and artistry these builders put into their bikes and showcase the creative side of our sport.”

We’re told by MPN that “Winners of the Custom Street, Custom Classic and Freestyle categories took home \$500 to \$1,000 in cash from Progressive IMS Outdoors, plus prizes from Black Flys sunglasses.”

“The People’s Choice winner received a pair of Black Flys sunglasses in addition to \$500, courtesy of Gasoline and Coffee. The runners-up from the Custom Classic, Custom Street and Freestyle categories won an Arlen Ness Air Cleaner, Vance and Hines Exhaust and Rinehart Racing Exhaust respectively.”

So without further ado, let’s take a gander at the winners from the Southern California Round:



Custom Classic Winner 1967 Triumph Stripped-Down TR6R Hardtail

It's more than a naked bit of chassis with a pretty peanut tank; MPN tells us that this gorgeous Hardtail featured "front and rear running Shinko 705 tires, dual Amal carbs with hard lines, custom drag bars and footboards, a foot clutch with a jockey shift and cupronickel hard lines."

The pretty tank in question was modified from an original, complementing the patina frame and antiqued brass bits and bobs. Very nicely done indeed, Jon MacDowell.

Runner-Up 1979 Kawasaki KZ750



Dustin Kott outdid himself with this machine; with a Honda CB750 Swing Arm, a Suzuki GSXR front end "and a custom-built seat and rear set with paint by Cali Paint Co.," the fight for the first place must have been close indeed.

Custom Street Winner 2017 Harley-Davidson Street Glide

I think this carbalicious build speaks quite loudly for itself...and the paint job makes me want to snag an Airbnb in Las Vegas for a few glitzy weeks. A brilliant job, completed by Mikey Loko.



Runner-Up 2006 Triumph Speedmaster

Despite the fact that we're told by his website that he specializes in late '70 Honda CB's, Dustin Kott has secured himself a second runner-up with this beauty. The breakdown? "...a reversed cylinder dead and Mono-Shock conversion," complete with a very clean custom subframe, aluminum tank and "custom fairing with paint by Bryan Collins and Cali Paint Co."



Freestyle Winner 2018 Custom Motorcycle



What better bike to win the Freestyle category than a freestylin' custom build? We're told everything about this bike was created from scratch (move over, Showa), with Mark Shell including "a custom floorboard shifter and brake, and titanium pipes."

The custom paint was done by Creative Auto.

Runner-Up 1966 Harley-Davidson Softail



When Yuanda Xu took on this project, I'm sure the only thing floating in his mind was the phat rear tire...I know I certainly can't unsee it.

MPN tells us that this particular build boasts "a stretched wing arm by Chassis Design (who else is going to accommodate all that rubber), custom girder forks by Voodoo Fabrications and a platinum air ride."

Xu also made sure that the pipes were completely custom, as were the handlebars, fairing, air dam, oil tank and seat.

Custom paint done by Jon Schroder.

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AmazonSmile is a website operated by Amazon with the same products, prices, and shopping features as Amazon.com. The difference is that when you shop on AmazonSmile, the AmazonSmile Foundation will donate 0.5% of the purchase price of eligible products to the charitable organization of your choice. Simply go to **Smile.Amazon.com** and choose "Abate of Florida Safety and Education Inc." from the list of charities.

Thanks for your support!!

People's Choice 2019 Harley-Davidson Softail Slim

This unit may be slim, but that wheel cover is something out of a Tim Burton film – the good ones.

Lily Karapetyan blessed this bike with “all body work performed with fiberglass, added bags and fairing, LED lights, raised handlebars and a custom seat,” and we’re told the paint job went to Karapetyan for a bit of extra TLC.



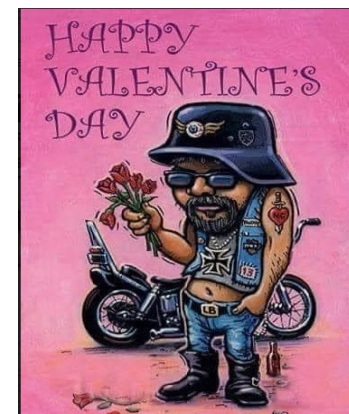
Drop a comment below letting us know what you think of these builds – which were your favorite or not, and as always – stay safe on the twisties.

Title Media Sourced From Motorcycle Cruiser

All Body Media Sourced From MPN

<https://www.webbikeworld.com/here-are-the-winners-of-the-jp-cycles-ultimate-builder-custom-bike-show-bonus-round/>

Harley Davidson Softail Harley Davidson Street glide Harley-Davidson Softail Slim J&P Cycles J&P Cycles Ultimate Builder Custom Bike Show Kawasaki KZ750 Progressive IMS OutdoorsTriumph SpeedmasterTriumph TR6R Hardtail UBCBS



ABATE of Florida, Inc. Mission Statement

WHO WE ARE

We are a non-profit organization of motorcycle enthusiasts from all walks of life. We lobby and educate the government and the general public to promote motorcycling in a safe and positive image. We endeavor to enlist the cooperation and participation of all organizations and individuals that share a similar interest in preserving our American tradition of FREEDOM. We promote motorcycle safety, training, & political awareness. We ARE NOT A CLUB NOR A GANG. We fund our work through events, toy runs, poker runs, campouts, and other motorcycle activities. We are your neighbors & friends who work, pay taxes, and get involved with our community. We serve and support our country and believe in freedom. We use all legal means to protect our rights without infringing on the rights of others. We are Pro-choice NOT anti-helmet, it is up to you to decide.

OUR GOALS

To become a powerful and viable political force in legislative matters concerning the motorcyclist.
To promote the safe riding habits without infringing on individual freedoms.
To motivate the bikers to write letters to legislators before, during, and after the legislative session.
To furnish a newsletter to keep all bikers informed in regards to upcoming legislation.

MEMBERSHIP

When you become a member of ABATE OF FLORIDA, INC. you are helping make a difference in the ongoing mission to protect your right to ride and enjoy the motorcycle of your choice, your choice of riding apparel, and when and where you can ride a motorcycle. These are issues that are real and present in today's "protect yourself from yourself" political environment. This holds true for all levels of government. There will always be those who see our love for motorcycling as a negative and will try any means to control and if possible prohibit motorcycle use.

On the local level our members get out to vote and support candidates who are sympathetic to our issues. We also will endeavor to lobby local governments whenever there are issues that need to be addressed, affecting local motorcycle use, ownership, and any discrimination that may result from said use of ownership.

At the state level we have a paid registered lobbyist who regularly visits our state capital in Tallahassee to lobby our legislators on the issues concerning the motorcycling public in Florida. He also finds reliable House and Senate sponsors for the bills we support. On the national level we are aligned with Motorcycle Riders Foundations (MRF), and the National Coalition of Motorcyclists (NCOM), along with several other international motorcycle rights organizations (MRO's).

As one can see we have our ear to the ground and our resolve tempered like steel. As Americans we have had it demonstrated to us time and again the vigilance is armor of free men and women. We shall not let the armor rust or weaken. With your support we can re-enforce and strengthen the armor for now and generations to come.

What else do you get with your membership? All members receive with their paid membership, the Membership Card, Event Discounts and Updates, Voting Privileges, Free Newsletter Classified Advertisements, a Chapter Newsletter, and a free \$4,000 Accidental Death or Dismemberment Insurance Policy from the American Income Life Insurance Company.

Memberships are open to anyone 18 years of age or older, no matter what type of motorcycle you ride, if any at all! We welcome all riders—in clubs, associations, independents, and sport riders to join us.

RENEWAL REMINDERS

One membership concern is that we have lost a lot of members due to their not be aware of renewal dates. It has been many years since we did mailings, sometimes due to money issues. So Jeff will be working with Debbi to rebuilt this campaign. It was discussed and decided to bring back the newsletter notification last. Life members will not be on this list but will be told of changes and to be sure ADD beneficiary forms are on file at State office IMPORTANT to have active membership for this accident insurance and updated forms. Another reason not to be on list are members who aren't aware they have expired I have already found that several members at last meeting were not on active list. I think I know of others so working to let them know. **Membership expires on the last day of the Month/Year column.**

EXPIRED	LAST FIRST	EXPIRES	LAST FIRST .
12-21	Johnson Randy	1-22	Turgeon James
12-21	Freeburn Richard	1-22	Williams Deano
12-21	Guarine Jon	1-21	Navjalios Mike
12-21	Prout Ryan	1-22	Jimenez Jason
12-21	Fournier Daniel	1-22	Sciderari David
12-21	Strickens Donald	2-22	Wood Zachary
12-21	Tolbert Thomas	3-22	Schmidt Fred
12-21	Tobert Tyler	3-22	Sarni Gregory
12-21	Guarine Jon	3-22	Cedeno Omar
12-21	Hartstein Howard	4-22	Ciaffi Mike "Scuffy"
		4-22	Knelson Deborah
		4-22	Schnier Craig

Help to remind members to renew to keep their ADD insurance active. Tell them of the change in chapter meetings. Everyone's help is needed for membership.

If you have any questions about your membership, contact palmbeach.abateflorida@gmail.com , Jeff or Slo motion to check the State records of your member membership status.

DELEGATE REPORT

Session to Open Without COVID-19 Restrictions

By Jim Turner News Service of Florida.

TALLAHASSEE --- Legislative leaders are monitoring the spike in coronavirus cases across Florida but haven't made plans to reimpose restrictions on public access that were used during the 2021 session.

With the 2022 legislative session starting Jan. 11, people will be allowed to roam most of the Capitol complex and address lawmakers in person.

"In light of the pandemic, the Florida House last session made significant improvements to facilities, including adding hospital-grade HEPA (high efficiency particulate air) filters for better air quality, ample hand sanitizing stations and more," House spokeswoman Jenna Sarkissian said in an email. "These improvements remain in place as the 2022 legislative session approaches and members prepare to do the people's business."

During the 2021 session, the Senate sharply restricted public access to try to prevent spread of COVID-19. For example, people who wanted to speak before Senate committees had to go to the Donald L. Tucker Civic Center, a few blocks west of the Capitol at Florida State University, and appear through a livestream feed.

In the House, lobbyists and other visitors were required to register online at least three hours before committee meetings, show identification and pick up passes to gain access to meeting rooms.

Katie Betta, a spokeswoman for Senate President Wilton Simpson, said in an email Monday that Simpson "continues to monitor the status of the pandemic," but the Senate has not put in place plans to resume the 2021 restrictions.

On Dec. 20, Simpson, R-Trilby, advised members that the Senate will be open to visitors throughout the upcoming 60-day session. A memo from Simpson also said senators could request social distancing and masking within their individual offices.

"We should all be respectful and honor such requests," added Simpson, who in October issued a rebuke to Florida Surgeon General Joseph Ladapo for declining to wear a mask while in the office of Sen. Tina Polsky, D-Boca Raton.

Polsky was being treated for breast cancer. Ladapo defended his action by saying he cannot communicate clearly "when half of my face is covered."

Beside the option of senators requiring masks and social distancing in their offices, Simpson said the Senate will continue to conduct frequent cleanings of common areas and restrooms and provide wipes, sanitizer and other products for use in between routine cleanings of office spaces. Also, hand sanitizing stations remain in place in common areas and HEPA filters will be used in committee rooms, the Senate chamber and the press gallery.

"We now have a better understanding of how our own personal health impacts others in the workplace," Simpson wrote. "Everyone is encouraged to monitor their health daily and to stay at home when sick."

STATE MEETINGS

Host Chapter & Location

2022 State Meetings

Sunday **Feb. 13** meeting
Tallahassee

Monday 14 Ride to the
Capital

April 17 Treasure Coast

June 19 Forest

Ft McCoy

Aug. 21 Ft. McCoy State

Oct. 16 Lake

Dec. 18 Gator Alley

The Senate will make testing available to elected officials and their staff, Simpson's memo said.

The Senate and House will hold a joint session Jan. 11 in the House chamber to hear Gov. Ron DeSantis' State of the State address, the traditional kickoff for the session. Simpson will host a luncheon for senators and their families in the Old Capitol's Senate chamber after the joint session.

The session will open against the backdrop of a spike in COVID-19 cases, as the highly contagious omicron variant of the coronavirus has spread across the state. It also will come two months after lawmakers held a special session that included taking steps to prevent vaccination and mask mandates — a key issue for DeSantis.



ABATE
of Florida, Inc.

25th ANNUAL FREEDOM GATHERING

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State Board Meeting Sunday, February 13 at Noon
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Kickstands up at 9:00am - Behind the Super 8 in Monticello

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Super 8 Monticello: 140 Pafford Rd., Monticello, FL 32336. Phone: 850-997-8888
Take I-10 to Exit 225 South on US 19. The hotel is located on the West side.

Days Inn Monticello: 44 Woodworth Dr., Monticello, FL 32336. Phone: 850-997-5988. Take I-10 to Exit 225 South on US 19. The hotel is located on the East side.

There are other hotels and campgrounds in the area. The two listed above offer discounts to ABATE members. Please make reservations early.

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P.O. Box 530944
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MEMBER ABATE


WEEKLY EVENTS

Subject to change and updates due to COVID and Govt mandates

Tues Jupiter Stadium Grill LOF Motorsports Bike Night

Wed Bike Night with Gorilla Motors Johnny Q's 6:30- 10 3801 19th Ave N Palm Springs FL

Thursdays Pirates Well Bike Night 9477 Alt. A1A Lake Park 7pm
2nd Thurs Handlebars US1 Tequesta 6 PM (old Judy's)
3rd Thurs Palm Beach Harley and Treasure Coast Harleydealerships Bike Nights
Last Thurs Underground Cycles Ralph's Bike Night Jupiter

1st Fri Enforcers MC Party (?)
2nd Fri AOA WPB Open House
3rd Fri Black Pistons WPB Open House
3rd Fri Outcast MC Hang Out 656 MLK Jr Blvd Riviera Bch 8PM
4th Fri Lone Legion MC Brotherhood Open House

SAT night Fly 'n Wheels Open House
Sat PBH Abacoa Concert Series 7:30 to 10 pm
SAT Palm Beach Harley Grill Days events and bikini bike washes

SUNDAY usually something at Palm Beach Harley
3rd Sunday ABATE Palm Beach meeting 12:30 Johnny Q's 3801 19th Ave N Palm Springs FL



Advertisement for Johnny Q's & Gorilla Motors Wednesday Night Bike Night, featuring logos and text: ALL BIKES WELCOME! 6:30-10pm, FOOD & DRINK SPECIALS + FREE RAFFLE & DOOR PRIZES.

Advertisement for West Palm Beach Open House on Friday, including details on food, drinks, and a \$10 door donation.

Advertisement for West Palm Beach Open House on Friday, including details on food, drinks, and a \$10 door donation.

Advertisement for Vintage Iron Club Vintage Bike Nights, featuring a vintage motorcycle and event details.

Advertisement for Lone Legion MC Brotherhood Southeast FL Fourth Friday Open House at their clubhouse.

Advertisement for Handlebars Bar & Grill Bike Night, featuring a photo of motorcycles and event details.

Advertisement for Fly-In Wheels W.P.B. MC Open House every Saturday, featuring a logo with a winged wheel.

Advertisement for Ralph's Bar Bike Night, featuring a photo of a bar at night and event details.

ABATE of FL Inc. PALM BEACH CHAPTER

Chapter meetings 3rd
Sunday 12:30 pm
Johnny Q's
3801 10th Ave. N,
Palm Springs FL
West of I-95
East of Military Trail
Open to ALL so
come learn about us.
Meetings
usually about a hour

2022

- 3rd Sunday Feb. 20
- 3rd Sunday Mar. 20
- 3rd Sunday Apr. 17
- 3rd Sunday May 15
- 3rd Sunday June 19
- 3rd Sunday July 17
- 3rd Sunday Aug. 21
- 3rd Sunday Sept. 18
- 3rd Sunday Oct. 16
- 3rd Sunday Nov. 20
- 3rd Sunday Dec. 18

February 5th 2022
2208 El Jobean Rd
Port Charlotte FL
8am - 3pm

5th Annual South Florida's Annual 2-Stroke only

VINTAGE MOTORCYCLE SHOW

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		1	2 Bike Night Gorilla Motors at Johnny Q's	3	4 Bert's Music Motorcycle Festival	5 Fly n Wheels Open House Bert's Music Motorcycle Festival Vintage Bike show
6 PBHD 11-4 Customer Appreciation Bert's Music Motorcycle Festival	7	8 Stadium Grill Jupiter Bike Night	9 Bike Night Gorilla Motors at Johnny Q's	10 Bike Night Handlebars Tequesta	11 AOA Open House	12 Fly n Wheels Open House PBHD Island Vibes Party 12-5
13 ABATE FL State Meeting	14 ABATE Ride to Capital	15 Stadium Grill Jupiter Bike Night	16 Bike Night Gorilla Motors at Johnny Q's	17 Masquerade Bike Night PB Harley Battle of Baggers Bikini BW	18 Black Pistons Open House	19 Fly n Wheels Open House PBHD Mardi Gras 12-5
20 PB ABATE Chapter Meeting Johnny Q's PBHD Mardi Gras 12-5	21	22 Stadium Grill Jupiter Bike Night	23 Bike Night Gorilla Motors at Johnny Q's	24 Bike Night at Ralph's Stand Up Bar Jupiter	25 Lone Legion Open House	26 Fly n Wheels Open House PBHD Island Vibes Party 12-5
27	28 PBHD 6-9 Backstage Part					

March 2022

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2 Bike Night Gorilla Motors at Johnny Q's	3	4 Daytona Bikeweek	5 Daytona Bikeweek Fly In Wheels Open House PBHD 11-4 Customer Appreciation
6 Daytona Bikeweek PBHD 11-4 Customer Appreciation	7 Daytona Bikeweek	8 Daytona Bikeweek	9 Daytona Bikeweek Bike Night Gorilla Motors at Johnny Q's	10 Daytona Bikeweek	11 AOA Open House	12 Dayto- na Bikeweek Fly In Wheels Open House PBHD 12-5 Grill n Chill
13 Daytona Bikeweek	14 Daytona Bikeweek	15	16 Bike Night Gorilla Motors at Johnny Q's	17 PBHD 6-9 St Paddy's Bike Bash Bikini Competitions	18 Black Pistons Open House Abate Estero Legendary Party	19 Fly In Wheels Open House PBHD 12-5 Daytona Open House Abate Estero Legendary Party
20 PB ABATE Chapter Meeting Johnny Q's PBHD 12-5 Daytona	21	22	23 Bike Night Gorilla Motors at Johnny Q's	24	25 Lone Legion Open House	26 Fly In Wheels Open House PBHD 12-5 Grill n Chill
27	28	29	30 Bike Night Gorilla Motors at Johnny Q's	31 PBHD 6-9 Backstage Party		

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LEGISLATIVE REPORT

PALM BEACH Co. FL House of Representatives

D81 Kelly Skidmore (D)
850-717-5081 Tallahassee
561-470-2086 Boca/Belle Glade

D82 John Snyder (R)
850-717-5082 Tallahassee
772-545-3481 Hove Sound

D85 Rich Roth (R)
850-717-5085 Tallahassee
561-625-5176 Palm Bch Garden

D86 Matt Willhite (D)
850-717-5086 Tallahassee
561-791-4071(2) WPB

D87 David Silvers (D)
850-717-5085 Tallahassee
561-352-4824 West Palm Beach

D88 Omari Hardy (D)
850-717-5088 Tallahassee
561-650-6846 West Palm Bch

D89 Mike Caruso (R)
850-717-5089 Tallahassee
561-750-2396 Boca Raton

D90 Joseph A. Casello (D)
850-717-5090 Tallahassee
561-374-7850 Boynton Bch

D91 Emily Slosberg (D)
850-717-5087 Tallahassee
561-496-5940 Delray Beach

Advances: Week January 24, 2022

JTALLAHASSEE --- Joseph Ladapo has been a controversial figure in Florida since Gov. Ron DeSantis appointed him surgeon general last year. Ladapo shares DeSantis' views on handling the COVID-19 pandemic, including rejecting mask and vaccination mandates.

"We are done with fear," Ladapo said as he was introduced by DeSantis in September. "That is something that, unfortunately, has been a center point of health policy here in the United States since the start of the pandemic. It's over here."

Ladapo also contended that science has been misused and that vaccinations are not the only answer to handling the pandemic.

"The state should be promoting good health," Ladapo said. "Vaccination is not the only path to that. It has been treated almost as a religion. That is just senseless. There are lots of good pathways to health, and vaccination is not the only one."

Ladapo's views have been cheered by conservatives but have drawn fierce criticism from Democrats and other opponents. As early as October, a group of doctors and other health-care professionals known as the Committee to Protect Health Care urged state senators to "fully vet" Ladapo during a confirmation process.

Palm Beach County FL Senators

D25 Gayle Harrell (R)
850-487-5025 Tallahassee
772-221-4019 Stuart

D29 Tina Scott Polsky (D)
850-487-5029 Tallahassee
561-443-8170 Boca Raton

D30 Bobby Powell (D)
850-487-500 Tallahassee
561-650-6880 WP Bch

D31 Lori Berman (D)
850-487-5031 Tallahassee
561-292-6014 Boynton

FEDERAL

U.S. Senators

Marco Rubio

Rick Scott

U.S. HOUSE

District 18

Brian Mast (R)

District 20

Alcee Hastings

District 21

Lois Frankel

District 22

Ted Deutch

“As a physician, I’m honestly concerned that Dr. Ladapo’s actions around the pandemic thus far have been not just unhelpful, but dangerous,” Bernard Ashby, a Miami cardiologist and Florida state lead for the Committee to Protect Health Care, said in a prepared statement at the time.

Some of that division could be on display Wednesday, when Ladapo is scheduled to go before the Senate Health Policy Committee for a confirmation hearing.

In most cases, confirmation hearings draw little attention. But Ladapo likely will face questions as he navigates toward what he hopes will be an ultimate confirmation by the full Senate.

Weekly Roundup: Follow the Lines By Ryan Dailey

TALLAHASSEE — All eyes will be on the House in Florida’s once-a-decade redistricting process, after the Senate this week overwhelmingly gave the go-ahead to proposed maps. The Senate voted 31-4 in favor of its congressional plan (SB 102), which could give a slight bump to the Republican majority in Florida’s congressional delegation. However, the congressional map didn’t include controversial lines pitched by Gov. Ron DeSantis’ administration.

The DeSantis proposal would be even friendlier to the GOP.

The Senate’s congressional map would result in 17 districts won in 2020 by former Republican President Donald Trump, up from 16 current districts. The DeSantis proposal seeks to create 18 districts that went for Trump in 2020.

During an appearance in Sarasota on Friday, DeSantis noted the House must still offer a congressional map and said the “process will work itself out.” The Senate and House ultimately will have to reach agreement on congressional districts, which then would go to DeSantis for approval.

“That’s their prerogative,” DeSantis replied when asked about the Republican-dominated Senate’s congressional map.

“For the congressional map, it requires my signature,” DeSantis said. “And so, you know, we have lawyers that had had concerns about what they were doing. So that process will work itself out, and we’ll be able to hopefully end up with a product that makes a lot of sense.”

Some Democratic senators expressed concerns that a surge in the state’s Hispanic population doesn’t appear to be fully represented with the changes.

Sen. Victor Torres, D-Kissimmee, said he expects the congressional map to be legally challenged over the failure to increase the number of Hispanic districts, particularly in Central Florida. Torres was one of four senators who voted against the map.

“I’m not looking at myself, my district, I’m looking at the broader picture as to how this state has grown with my community, my culture,” Torres said.

Senators also voted 34-3 in favor of new state Senate lines (SJR 100), which could put a few incumbent South Florida Democrats into the same districts.

The House, which has moved slower than the Senate on new maps, will draw House districts and a congressional plan.

Speaker Chris Sprowls, R-Palm Harbor, acknowledged to reporters recently that the House would lag behind the Senate.

“The only reflection of our timeline is math. The Senate has 40 districts, we have 120. Naturally, that’s a little more complicated to do. We’re happy our friends in the Senate are moving at their pace. We’re probably going to be a week or so behind as a result of the fact that we have more districts, we have more maps to draw,” Sprowls said.

ON THE MOVE Some of the most controversial proposals of this year’s legislative session

began moving forward during its second week, as Republicans continue to impose their will on Democrats.

A House panel on Wednesday approved a controversial bill (HB 5) that would prohibit doctors from performing abortions after 15 weeks of pregnancy, overriding fiery objections from Democrats who argued the proposal is unconstitutional.

The proposal, approved by the House Professions & Public Health Subcommittee in a 12-6 vote, closely resembles a Mississippi abortion law that is being considered by the U.S. Supreme Court. The court heard arguments in the case last month.

Rep. Erin Grall, a Vero Beach Republican who sponsored the bill, said the significance of the proposed 15-week limit was based on being “consistent” with the Mississippi law.

“I believe that we have a unique opportunity in the fact that the Supreme Court is considering 15 weeks right now, and this would allow Florida to save as many babies as possible, as soon as possible,” she said.

The bill does not include an exception for victims of rape and incest, drawing ire from Democrats and other opponents.

Meanwhile, a bill that aims to carry out DeSantis’ push to prohibit critical race theory from being taught in schools or used in employee training sessions began moving forward Tuesday in the Senate.

Democrats have slammed the measure (SB 148) as a distraction that takes focus away from problems facing everyday Floridians and serves as a “culture war” issue for Republicans.

In part, the bill would prohibit employers from subjecting workers to training that is centered on a number of race-related concepts. It also has implications for the way certain historical subjects are taught in Florida schools.

For instance, the measure spells out that classroom instruction on topics such as sexism, slavery and racial oppression and segregation are allowed — but the discussions “may not be used to indoctrinate or persuade students” to viewpoints that are inconsistent with state standards.

The Senate measure does not specifically mention critical race theory, but it effectively seeks to cement into law a ban on critical race theory as part of Florida’s curriculum standards. The State Board of Education passed such a ban during the summer.

HELP WANTED State agencies are struggling to fill vacant positions and retain employees, including those who care for some of Florida’s most vulnerable citizens.

Many employees are leaving state government jobs because they’re overworked and underpaid, according to a presentation Wednesday to the Senate Governmental Oversight and Accountability Committee..

Florida has the country’s leanest state employee workforce, with a ratio of 85 full-time employees for every 10,000 residents.

“I know we are trying everything we can, whether it’s going to junior colleges for people with trades. We are recruiting actively on LinkedIn. We’re trying to make referrals within our own people and agencies. But we’re trying to use every tool in our toolbox,” Department of Management Services Secretary J. Todd Inman told the panel.

STORY OF THE WEEK: The Florida Senate on Thursday overwhelmingly approved maps in the once-a-decade redistricting process, despite concerns from Democrats that a surge in Hispanic population doesn’t appear to be fully represented with the changes.

QUOTE OF THE WEEK: “We’re telling a company if they want to teach anti-discrimination,

they want to teach diversity, they want to teach unconscious bias, which is a course in the Florida Senate, that they will potentially be creating the cause of action from a disgruntled employee.” — Sen. Tina Polsky, D- Boca Raton, on the Senate proposal to limit race-related subjects in employer training sessions

Backroom Briefing: Getting in Some Digs

Weekly political notes from The News Service of Florida By Dara Kam and Jim Turner

TALLAHASSEE --- As the University of Florida prepares to launch a nationwide search to replace outgoing President Kent Fuchs, a perennial fight over a proposal to keep information confidential about people applying to lead state colleges and universities is erupting again.

The Senate Governmental Oversight and Accountability Committee this week voted 4-2 along party lines to give the nod to the measure (SB 520), which would create a public-records exemption for information about presidential hopefuls.

Debate included some barbed digs at the University of Florida, where Fuchs recently announced he is stepping down amid the glare of a national spotlight over a controversial conflict-of-interest policy.

Sen. Gary Farmer, an alum of UF's chief instate rival, Florida State University, raised flags about conducting university leader searches out of the sunshine. To prop up his arguments, he pointed to UF's rapid hiring of Joseph Ladapo, who was appointed by Gov. Ron DeSantis in September as state surgeon general.

Ladapo is earning a combination of salaries from his role as surgeon general and a gig as a faculty member at the university. The surgeon general serves as secretary of the Florida Department of Health.

Ladapo has wholeheartedly embraced the Republican governor's combative stance toward vaccination mandates and other COVID-19 protocols. The surgeon general also has downplayed the need for vaccinations, drawing fierce pushback from Democrats and other critics. As Farmer, D-Lighthouse Point, argued against the public-records exemption proposal Wednesday, he called attention to Ladapo's hiring.

“The University of Florida again rushed the tenure votes for Surgeon General Lapdog, excuse me, Ladapo. And that was done again because of the lack of public involvement, oversight and the transparency that comes with an open process,” Farmer said.

Farmer's comments didn't draw a scolding from any of the Republicans on the GOP-dominated committee.

But Chairman Jeff Brandes, R-St. Petersburg, defended the proposed public-records exemption, arguing that higher-ed leadership searches are being conducted by head-hunting firms largely outside of public scrutiny. Supporters of the bill also contend that some candidates will not apply for jobs if their interest is made public.

“I want there to be a process that's transparent as possible,” Brandes said.

BURNING BRIDGES DeSantis this week called Florida's \$245 million allotment of federal money for bridge improvements “inadequate,” saying other states with fewer people and a similar number or fewer bridges in need of repair are getting more money.

The governor's office said in a news release that Florida was penalized “for doing its job and successfully maintaining the infrastructure.”

“The Biden administration continues to punish states that are succeeding,” DeSantis said in a statement. “Despite obstacles created by the Biden administration, the state of Florida contin-

ues to thrive and foster an environment that draws new residents and tourists every single day. By doing so, Florida has continued to grow, and our infrastructure must be able to keep up the pace. The Biden administration, though, is short-changing Florida yet again.”

The federal agency identified 408 of Florida’s 12,500 bridges as being in poor condition, and the governor’s office highlighted that Washington state had the same number of bridges listed as poor and is slated to get \$605 million, Connecticut, with 248 bridges identified as poor, is getting \$561.4 million, and Biden’s home state of Delaware is getting \$225 million for 19 bridges needing repair.

No comparison was made on the sizes of the spans in question, weather conditions, the terrain or how much work is needed.

In announcing the allocations last Friday, the White House said the \$27 billion being spent over the next five years to repair worn-down bridges nationwide is based on need. The money is part of a roughly \$1 trillion bipartisan infrastructure bill signed into law by President Joe Biden in November

The American Society of Civil Engineers gave Florida a “C” grade for its overall infrastructure, with a “B” for its bridges, on a 2021 infrastructure report card.

In an address Friday, Biden said about two-thirds of the bridges in need of repair across the country are considered “off system” because they’re not directly connected to the interstate highway system.

“These are the bridges that are often overlooked when decisions are being made,” Biden said.

“But they are essential for small towns, rural towns, farmers to get their products to market, small businesses to be able to serve customers.”

CARRYING ON Put Senate President Wilton Simpson in the camp of allowing people to openly carry firearms --- an idea known as “constitutional carry.”

“If a constitutional carry bill gets to the Senate floor, and it’s heard on the Senate floor, I will vote yes. I would support that on the floor,” Simpson said Wednesday.

The Trilby Republican added as a caveat that “as all other bills, I do not get involved until it gets to the floor.”

It remains to be seen how the Republican-dominated Legislature will handle the politically hot proposal.

Rep. Anthony Sabatini, a Howey-in-the-Hills Republican and congressional candidate who has openly clashed on issues with House Speaker Chris Sprowls, R-Palm Harbor, has filed such a bill (HB 103).

The proposal has not been heard in House committees and has not drawn a Senate version.

Sabatini unsuccessfully pushed similar proposals in the 2019, 2020 and 2021 sessions.

In December, the group Florida Gun Rights released a video snippet indicating DeSantis would “of course” support the measure if it got to his desk.

DeSantis spokeswoman Christina Pushaw later said in an email the governor’s response “was a general statement, but it’s a hypothetical.”

“The governor cannot comment on specific legislation that has not come across his desk yet, and he cannot agree to sign legislation that he has not seen,” Pushaw wrote.

More than 2.44 million concealed-weapons licenses had been issued in Florida as of Dec. 31.

TWEET OF THE WEEK: “Thank you for being by my side from the beginning, but especially

yesterday as we celebrated my FINAL Chemo Treatment together. I'm grateful, very humbled and blessed." --- First Lady Casey DeSantis (@FLCaseyDeSantis), who was diagnosed last year with breast cancer.

Advances: Week of January 17, 2022

TALLAHASSEE --- Broadly legalizing medical marijuana. Restoring felons' voting rights. Raising the minimum wage.

Those are a few examples of issues that Florida voters have put into the state Constitution in recent years.

But many Republican lawmakers and business groups have long bristled at the use of ballot initiatives that have essentially gone around the Legislature to set policies for the state. As a result, they have tried to make it increasingly hard to put initiatives on the ballot — and pass them.

The latest chapter in the fight about ballot initiatives will start Tuesday, with a slightly different twist. Instead of addressing how initiatives go before voters and pass, a House panel will consider what can be included in proposed constitutional amendments.

The House Public Integrity & Elections Committee is scheduled to take up a proposal (HJR 1127), filed by Rep. Mike Beltran, R-Lithia, that says initiatives would have to be "limited to matters relating to procedural subjects or to the structure of the government or of this (Florida) Constitution."

While the proposal doesn't specify what those subjects would be, it's probably safe to say that legalizing marijuana or raising the minimum wage wouldn't be included.

Beltran told The News Service of Florida recently that many issues that have been in ballot initiatives do not belong in the state Constitution and should be decided by the Legislature.

"Most of the citizen initiatives are one of two things," he said. "They are either in-state special interests or out-of-state special interests that are heavily financing these campaigns. There are no checks and balances."

Supporters of initiatives, however, argue they have to go the ballot route because lawmakers don't listen to the voters' wishes.

Regardless, if Beltran's proposal passes the Legislature, voters will have final say on it in November. That is because restricting the subjects in ballot initiatives would require changing the Constitution.

Weekly Roundup: 'Freedom Works' Sets Up Session

By Ryan Dailey News Service of Florida.

TALLAHASSEE --- When Gov. Ron DeSantis stepped to the rostrum in the House chambers Tuesday, his State of the State address was as much a message to Floridians as it was a tone-setter for the 60-day legislative session.

DeSantis' half-hour speech reiterated priorities he's touted as he's traveled throughout the state in recent months and also swatted at the federal government on issues such as the economy and immigration.

"Freedom works. And while our economy is the envy of the nation and our state is well-prepared to guard against future economic turmoil, the truth is that our nation is facing economic problems stemming from reckless federal policies, especially the most sustained inflation our country has witnessed in decades," DeSantis said. "The federal government has borrowed and printed unprecedented sums of money, and the bill is coming due."

The governor is pushing the Republican-dominated Legislature to pass a \$1 billion gas-tax

break for motorists, greenlight \$1,000 bonuses for educators and law enforcement officers and create a state office charged with investigating election-related crimes.

House Democrats launched a preemptive strike on Monday, criticizing what they labeled a “culture war” fight coming from Republicans. The heavily outnumbered Democrats said they instead plan to focus on “pocketbook issues” as they seek the mantle of the party that best represents average Floridians.

Echoing many Democrats’ criticisms after Republican lawmakers passed a controversial elections bill last year, Rep. Tracie Davis, D-Jacksonville, branded the governor’s proposed elections police as “political theater,” especially because the 2020 elections were run smoothly in the state.

“These so-called election investigators are unnecessary, and will be costly to Floridians. And (it’s) a big change to the way these investigations have already been done in the past. We already have state attorneys who investigate crimes like this, but Gov. DeSantis wants to take the authority away from the locals and give it to Tallahassee,” Davis said.

Affordable housing, abortion access and immigration policy are other issues that Democrats say will be their priorities.

As DeSantis is widely considered a potential 2024 presidential candidate, parts of his State of the State speech served up red-meat appeals to an increasingly national audience.

“Rather than defend our sovereignty and enforce the border, the federal government has released hundreds of thousands of illegal aliens to communities across the U.S., shipping them to Florida at alarming rates, including by sending clandestine flights in the dark of night,” he said.

Republican lawmakers began delivering for DeSantis on the opening day of the session by filing proposals aimed at carrying out the governor’s immigration wish list.

Identical House and Senate bills (SB 1808 and HB 1355) would expand a 2019 law that bans so-called “sanctuary cities” in Florida and would crack down on transportation companies that bring undocumented immigrants into the state.

Agriculture Commissioner Nikki Fried, a Democrat who is running for governor this year, scorched DeSantis’ priorities as out-of-touch.

“Half of his speech was talking about immigration, talking about what’s happening in Washington, D.C.,” Fried told reporters. “There was less focus on the concerns and the issues that are happening every single day in families.”

EYE ON THE TARGET Ahead of DeSantis’ address, House Speaker Chris Sprowls and Senate President Wilton Simpson outlined their game plans for the annual session.

Simpson, a Trilby Republican who is running for state agriculture commissioner, used his opening-day address to acknowledge local government officials’ concerns about “preemption” bills, which involve the state taking away authority from cities and counties.

“I want local governments to know that we have heard your concerns about preemption bills. I will keep a sharp eye out for legislation that would limit your ability to pass local ordinances,” Simpson said, adding a caveat. “At the same time, we’re going to make sure that local citizens and businesses understand the impacts of your regulations by requiring you to provide fiscal impact statements for ordinances and referendums. We will also ensure that you pay legitimate businesses that are impacted by your takings.”

Senate Minority Leader Lauren Book, D-Plantation, blasted the president’s comments about

listening to local governments.

"While he says he hears us, but pivots (to), 'Here's the things that we have to do: terrible, awful, terrible, awful.' Again, an attack on local government," Book told reporters. "Look, there are several bills like that here in the process. We have analyzed those bills and again are ready to fight because we believe in home rule."

A day after Simpson's remarks, the Senate Community Affairs Committee voted 7-2 along party lines to approve a proposal (SB 280) that would require counties and cities to produce a "business impact statement" before passing ordinances and to suspend enforcement of the ordinances amid legal challenges.

Sprowls, a Palm Harbor Republican, kept his remarks to the House brief on Tuesday, emphasizing that lawmakers will be "managing risks" during over the next eight weeks.

"This session, in this House, we are going to be looking at the risk portfolio of our state. Some risks are concrete and specific, like the deficiencies in our state's cybersecurity infrastructure. Some risks are massive and omnipresent, like the array of problems created by the threat of hurricanes. Some risks are more existential, like what our shared values and beliefs are as Floridians," Sprowls said.

Sprowls also touted a "cash-rich moment" for Florida, as lawmakers are flush with funds to spend this session. That's due largely to the state having received billions of dollars in stimulus money from the federal government and state tax revenues having far exceeded expectations. With cash on hand, Sprowls is eyeing a plan to raise wages for state workers.

"I think that we have to take a realistic viewpoint and realize that we have a lot of state workers who haven't kept up with inflation in their salaries, and we need to address it. How we do that or how much or how fast is all something that's going to have to be worked out during the budget process, but I share President Simpson's commitment to working on it," he said.

STORY OF THE WEEK: Touting Florida as a "free state," Gov. Ron DeSantis gave a State of the State address Tuesday that outlined priorities for the 2022 legislative session while criticizing the federal government on issues such as the economy and immigration.

QUOTE OF THE WEEK: "When we look at abortion as an issue, it's not even a culture war issue, it is health care. So how dare you strip away our rights in this new piece of policy, which is a direct assault on the protection established under Roe v. Wade." — Rep. Anna Eskamani, D-Orlando on legislative proposals filed this week that seek to prevent doctors from performing abortions after 15 weeks of pregnancy.

Backroom Briefing: Playing it Close to the Vest

By Jim Turner

TALLAHASSEE --- Florida's next House speaker is holding off on publicly outlining his priorities for the 2023 and 2024 legislative sessions.

Asked Wednesday about what key issues he'll pursue as speaker, Rep. Paul Renner replied, "Well, that's the one question I'm not supposed to answer out loud."

He then told people attending the Florida Chamber of Commerce's "Legislative Fly-In" at Florida State University's Augustus B. Turnbull Conference Center, "I'm going to have a lot of areas of interest because my colleagues in the House have a lot of areas of interest," and "I don't think there's a particular area, like I want to be, you know, the guy that did education, or the guy that did (an unspecified) this."

Renner, a Palm Coast Republican who is an attorney and retired U.S. Navy commander, is in line to take over the House after the 2022 election.

In November, Renner emphasized that he wants to protect the Second Amendment and other freedoms and billed Florida Republicans as “the champions for ‘We the People,’” during his speaker designation ceremony.

On Wednesday, he said he’ll listen to the concerns of his colleagues.

“They have tremendous ideas and thoughts on where we can take the state,” Renner said.

“You know, you look at all the good stuff we’ve done, I believe, since I’ve been here that you think, ‘Wow, what’s left.’ But there’s always something left.”

BACK OF THE BILL BILLIONS Gov. Ron DeSantis has repeatedly made a point that his proposed budget stands at \$99.7 billion, down from the more than \$100 billion in the current fiscal year, which runs through June 30.

But House budget leaders on Tuesday questioned more than \$2.4 billion in what are known as “back of the bill” spending proposals that aren’t included in the \$99.7 billion total. Those issues address such things as pay raises, transportation projects and domestic security grants.

“I want this committee to understand that this is a recommendation, obviously,” House Appropriations Chairman Jay Trumbull, R-Panama City, said of the governor’s proposal. “The onus is on our committee to craft a budget, and we are going to be transparent in how we appropriate these funds. We’re going to have them in the front of the bill and not try to reduce the size of our budget by putting things in the back of the bill.”

Asked about the \$100 billion benchmark on Tuesday, DeSantis told reporters the state wasn’t spending “willy nilly.”

“I don’t have any firm numbers on it. I mean, I think our budget’s very, very reasonable,” DeSantis replied. “Our state is obviously growing. And so, you could have (an) increase just to keep up with the population.”

He turned to infrastructure and other expenses before adding, “We clearly are not a spend-thrift state. But there are obviously things from a public interest perspective, roads, bridges, all of our water resources, I mean, we’re going to be having.”

ELECTION COPS DeSantis should expect to get something out of his \$5.7 million request to create an Office of Election Crimes and Security within the Department of State to investigate and prosecute election-related crimes.

However, the reception from legislative leaders on Tuesday indicated he might not get the proposed 52 employees for the office.

Senate President Wilton Simpson, R-Trilby, said he expects the request to reach the Senate floor, but he wouldn’t predict what the proposal will look like.

“This bill will be vetted through the committee process,” Simpson said. “I have heard a lot of different proposals. We are watching it as it comes through the process.”

House Speaker Chris Sprowls, R-Palm Harbor, indicated the House will evaluate DeSantis’ proposal.

“I don’t have a problem with people investigating elections,” Sprowls said. “And the one thing where I think the governor certainly has a point on the election front is there’s nobody’s job to do that, right. So you might have a detective who works economic crimes or homicide or robbery, but I doubt you have an elections detective.”

The request by DeSantis, who has praised the handling of the 2020 elections in Florida, has drawn concerns from some county elections officials over how the officers would be used.

SHOO-IN? In a roundup of the 30 state attorney general positions up for election nationwide

this year, Sabato's Crystal Ball --- a political prognostication site from the University of Virginia's Center for Politics --- dismissed Florida Democrats' prospects to unseat Attorney General Ashley Moody.

"Florida Democrats are making credible runs at Republican incumbents holding the governor's office and a U.S. Senate seat this year, but Moody seems to have escaped a serious challenge. (Or perhaps the Democratic bench in this reddening state is simply too weak.)," the report released Wednesday said. "For now, Moody is a shoo-in for another term." Jim Lewis, a criminal defense attorney from Fort Lauderdale, is the only Democrat who has filed to run for attorney general. He had not raised any money as of Dec. 31.

As January began, Moody had nearly \$450,000 in her campaign account and another \$3.2 million on hand in the political committee Friends of Ashley Moody.

TWEET OF THE WEEK: "The "Free State of Florida" is raging with COVID. #OpeningDay" — Sen. Shevrin Jones (@ShevrinJones), D-West Park, as the legislative session opened.

Advances: Week of January 10, 2022

TALLAHASSEE --- When Gov. Ron DeSantis steps to the podium Tuesday in the House chamber, he will play a huge role in setting the agenda for the 2022 legislative session.

DeSantis, who will give the annual State of the State address to launch the session, has been traveling through Florida highlighting priorities that are popular with Republican base voters.

And with the Legislature dominated by Republicans — and 2022 being an election year — count on DeSantis' priorities playing a key role in the session.

As an example, DeSantis held an event last month in Wildwood to announce what he called the "Stop Wrongs Against Our Kids and Employees Act," or Stop W.O.K.E. Act. The target of the proposal: critical race theory, an issue that has become a favorite talking point for Republicans nationally.

During an event a few days earlier in Jacksonville, DeSantis rolled out a series of legislative proposals aimed at the immigration policies of President Joe Biden. DeSantis, in part, called for lawmakers to "fight against the Biden border crisis" by passing legislation to expand a law targeting so-called "sanctuary cities" and to bolster E-Verify employment rules.

That drew a retort from state Sen. Annette Taddeo, a Democratic gubernatorial candidate who alluded to speculation about DeSantis running for the White House in 2024.

"Which of Florida's borders, Alabama or Georgia?" Taddeo, D-Miami, tweeted.

"Ronnie is spending Floridians' taxpayer dollars pandering to voters in Iowa."

But the fact of the matter is that Democrats can do little to stop DeSantis' proposals if he receives support from GOP legislative leaders. Meanwhile, many lawmakers on both sides of the aisle will be focused on the redistricting process that can help determine the makeup of the Legislature for the next decade.

Weekly Roundup: An Open Door for the 'People's Business'

By Ryan Dailey

TALLAHASSEE — It's a new year, coronavirus cases are surging throughout the state, and lawmakers are ready to kick off the legislative session next week.

But don't expect any COVID-19 restrictions in the Florida Capitol.

Legislative leaders are monitoring the spike in cases, driven by the highly contagious omicron variant of the coronavirus. But they haven't made plans to reimpose restrictions on public access that were used during the 2021 session, when people who wanted to speak be-

fore Senate committees could only appear through a livestream feed. Similarly, the House required lobbyists and other visitors to show identification and pick up passes to gain access to meeting rooms.

During the 2022 session, which starts Tuesday, people will be allowed to roam most of the Capitol complex and address lawmakers in person.

On Dec. 20, Senate President Wilton Simpson, R-Trilby, advised members in a memo that the Senate will be open to visitors throughout the 60-day session and that senators can request social distancing and masking in their individual offices.

“We should all be respectful and honor such requests,” added Simpson, who in October issued a rebuke to Florida Surgeon General Joseph Ladapo for declining to wear a mask while in the office of Sen. Tina Polsky, D-Boca Raton, who was being treated for breast cancer. The Senate will make testing available to elected officials and their staff, Simpson’s memo said.

House leaders also have given the green light for people to move freely about the cabin.

“In light of the pandemic, the Florida House last session made significant improvements to facilities, including adding hospital-grade HEPA (high efficiency particulate air) filters for better air quality, ample hand sanitizing stations and more,” House spokeswoman Jenna Sarkissian said in an email. “These improvements remain in place as the 2022 legislative session approaches and members prepare to do the people’s business.”

Lawmakers will deal with no shortage of hot-button issues over the next two months. As examples, the Republican-controlled Legislature could consider placing additional restrictions on abortions and a DeSantis plan to create a state office that would investigate election-related crimes.

Several proposals that involve fiercely contested education issues will be on tap, including a bill that would shift school board elections from nonpartisan to partisan contests. DeSantis also has called for legislation to cement in law a prohibition on teaching critical race theory in Florida classrooms.

STRESSING TESTS Though he was a baseball player in his college days, DeSantis laced up his running shoes this week as he tried to instigate a race with the federal government over shipping at-home COVID-19 tests.

President Joe Biden’s administration last month announced a plan to distribute 500 million coronavirus tests to Americans. Biden on Tuesday said a website will launch before the end of this month to allow people to request tests to be delivered to their homes.

DeSantis, meanwhile, announced a plan to ship coronavirus test kits to senior facilities, with expected arrival over the weekend. The announcement came as Ladapo, the state’s top health official, rolled out new guidance that discourages people from getting tested for COVID-19 if they have few risk factors and don’t have symptoms.

“What we’re going to start by doing is send them (the test kits) to our nursing homes and our long-term care facilities. And then beyond that, we’ll focus on senior-heavy communities,” DeSantis said during a news conference Thursday in West Palm Beach.

The governor’s plan to deliver 1 million at-home tests is part of what DeSantis and Ladapo are calling “high-value testing,” or testing that the surgeon general said could lead to changes in clinical outcomes for people who would require treatment for COVID-19.

New testing guidance from the state health department said people who are 65 or older, have chronic medical conditions or are pregnant or were recently pregnant face increased

risks. The guidelines said such people should get tested “soon after symptom onset” and should “seek early monoclonal antibody or antiviral drug treatment and seek other medical treatment as necessary.”

People who have COVID-19 symptoms but no significant risk factors should consider getting tested after the onset of symptoms, the guidance said, but should “seek medical treatment only when necessary.”

For people with no symptoms who suspect they may have been exposed to COVID-19, “testing is unlikely to have any clinical benefits,” according to the guidelines.

The new testing recommendations drew criticism from Democrats, some of whom accused DeSantis of trying to cut down on coronavirus case numbers by discouraging mass testing.

State Agriculture Commissioner Nikki Fried, who is running for governor this year, criticized DeSantis “for deprioritized testing with omicron exploding” across the state.

FAREWELL FUCHS University of Florida President Kent Fuchs announced Wednesday that he plans to step down at the end of 2022, saying he has fulfilled commitments he made when he took the helm of the state’s flagship university.

Fuchs, 67, will work as a professor in the school’s department of electrical and computer engineering after leaving the presidency.

The announcement said Fuchs told UF Board of Trustees Chairman Mori Hosseini in August that he would like to shift from being president to a professor. It said they agreed he would continue as president through the completion of a capital campaign in fall 2022 and until a successor is appointed, which is expected by early 2023.

Notice of Fuchs stepping down, however, came after the university and its administration faced controversy during the past two months about a decision to prevent three political-science professors from serving as expert witnesses against the state in a lawsuit over a high-profile new elections law.

While the university ultimately walked back the decision, the controversy has drawn national media attention and a federal lawsuit in which six professors allege a UF policy violates First Amendment rights. Chief U.S. District Judge Mark Walker held a hearing Friday in the professors’ lawsuit.

STORY OF THE WEEK: Gov. Ron DeSantis said Thursday the state is shipping about 1 million at-home coronavirus tests to nursing homes and assisted living facilities, with the kits set to arrive over the weekend.

QUOTE OF THE WEEK: “It’s not something that I’ve been concerned about in my job here, because, quite frankly, it’s not something that most Floridians have been concerned about. They’re concerned about their jobs, education, inflation, gas prices, all those things.” — Gov. Ron DeSantis on the Jan. 6, 2021, storming of the U.S. Capitol

10 Big Issues to Watch in the 2022 Session

By Jim Saunders News Service of Florida.

TALLAHASSEE — With the COVID-19 pandemic continuing and fall elections looming, Florida lawmakers will start the annual 60-day legislative session Tuesday.

Here are 10 big issues to watch during the session:

— **ABORTION:** As the nation waits to see if the U.S. Supreme Court will overturn *Roe v. Wade*, Florida Republican lawmakers could consider placing additional restrictions on abortions. Details of potential restrictions remain unclear, though GOP leaders have not signaled support for a proposal that would mirror a controversial Texas abortion law.

— BUDGET: Gov. Ron DeSantis has proposed a \$99.7 billion budget for the upcoming fiscal year that includes funneling money to education, the environment and pay for law-enforcement officers. Florida is flush with cash because of a huge influx of federal COVID-19 stimulus money and higher-than-expected state tax collections as the economy has recovered.

— CRITICAL RACE THEORY: Appealing to his Republican base, DeSantis wants to cement in law a prohibition on teaching critical race theory in Florida classrooms. The State Board of Education approved such a rule in June, as the GOP nationally takes aim at critical race theory, which involves a premise that racism is embedded in American institutions.

— EDUCATION: Lawmakers will consider a DeSantis proposal to revamp the school-accountability system, moving toward what is known as progress monitoring. The Republican-controlled Legislature also could continue years of efforts to expand school choice and will weigh a DeSantis proposal to give bonuses to public-school teachers and principals.

— ELECTIONS: After lawmakers passed a controversial elections bill in April that included placing restrictions on voting by mail, DeSantis wants additional steps, such as creating a state office that would investigate election-related crimes. DeSantis also has called for increasing criminal penalties for a practice dubbed ballot “harvesting.”

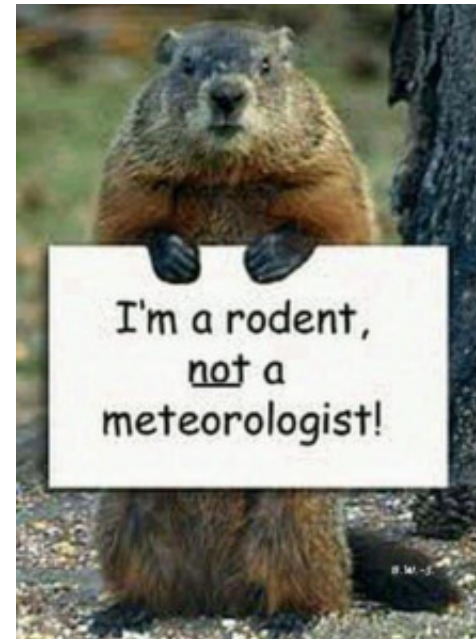
— HEALTH CARE AND COVID-19: The COVID-19 pandemic continues to dominate health care, and lawmakers will consider extending pandemic-related legal protections for hospitals, nursing homes and other providers. DeSantis also proposed increased Medicaid funding that supporters say could help with staffing problems at nursing homes.

— IMMIGRATION: DeSantis and Attorney General Ashley Moody have criticized the Biden administration for months about border policies, and DeSantis wants lawmakers to take up a series of immigration issues. DeSantis has called for expanding a law targeting so-called “sanctuary cities” and bolstering use of the E-Verify system to check workers’ immigration status.

— INSURANCE: With private insurers dropping policies and customers flooding into the state-backed Citizens Property Insurance Corp., lawmakers will again consider making changes to the property-insurance system. Lawmakers in recent years have tried to address issues such as curbing litigation over insurance claims, but problems persist in the industry.

— SCHOOL BOARDS: Republican lawmakers could take aim at county school boards after upheaval about issues such as student mask requirements during the pandemic. Legislative proposals include shifting from nonpartisan to partisan school-board elections and setting requirements for school boards to take public comments during meetings.

— TAXES: Buoyed by federal stimulus money, DeSantis has proposed suspending state gasoline taxes for five months, starting July 1. The governor would use \$1 billion in stimulus money to make up for lost gas-tax revenues, which go toward funding transportation projects. Lawmakers also will consider a series of sales-tax “holidays.”



ABATE of FL Inc. Palm Beach Chapter Minutes

1-23-2022 14 members in attendance Start at 12:35 Johnny Q's

President: Dan Henderson. Meeting was a week later due to Johnny Q's closed for remodel, some paint, new rugs, tables and chairs. So at first the turnout seemed very slow but we did get more of the normal numbers. We got one new member right at the start. I attended the Council meeting and they are attempting to bring all the bikers closer together. After that was the AOA open house and our chapter had six patches there. I was proud of that. The next day they did a ride to Harley, since I don't ride now I meet them there. I put in or dates in May for our Motorcycle Month event.

VP: Ron Rossi Butterbean hopes for a good turnout for the Lone Legion Open House Jan. 28

Secretary: Shannon. The minutes from last meeting as in newsletter were accepted

Treasurer: Jeff Adkins. The report is final for our event. We did okay for all that was going on that day. So we are stable on money

Membership Jeff Adkins. This month we had one renewal and 3 new members join at the meeting. Jeff and Debbi were setting up a Zelle account with our Bank Deb missed meeting so will contact her.

Sgt at Arms: Quiet Dan Shawback. Nothing new but good to wear helmet with this traffic

Safety: Dan Henderson. No events for table with weather being poor

Delegate Report: Ken and Dan. Jeff will take Dan's place for state meeting so he can get to do the ride to the capital. Dan can't afford to go. Jeff will follow up on Zelle

Legislative: Ken Gerecke. Session have started see page 20 for news.

Public Relations: Dan Henderson. Still waiting to have access to our website, going to contact again. Been doing more with Facebook, our data 761 likes, and 814 following. How can we get them to join?

Products We sold some t-shirts and patches.

Old Business : Ron is preparing a report on the gambling event for the state.

New Business : Put in dates for a May Motorcycle event, Sunday May 1st or third weekend but might have to be after our meeting if on Sunday. Snooze is looking into location. Since nobody will pay \$600 for life, I thought a multi-month deal might help keep members. The biggest thing to get renewals, we lost 14 in November and December. Those at meeting were okay with \$100 for six years, so Jeff will present at the state meeting for chapters input.

Good of the Order: Jan. 29 Saturday in the Dania Beach Vintage Bike Show. Snooze is setting up ride. On the same is the Breast Cancer event.

Meeting adjourned: 1:33 Next meeting Feb. 20 so back to third Sunday

WHY JOIN ABATE OF FLORIDA, INC.?

ABATE is a non-profit Motorcycle Rights Organization whose cause is to EDUCATE the government, motorcyclists and the general public on freedom, rights, road safety, and awareness of motorcycles on the road.

REQUIREMENTS—must be at least 18 years of age. It does not matter what you ride or even if you ride. You can be an independent or member of a club or association. All are welcome at meetings.

JOIN FOR THE CAUSE. Everything is voluntary, we understand work and family comes first. We hope you can help in any small way, vote and spread the word.

BENEFITS Your money is used to provide a lobbyist to the state and federal government to watch for our rights and freedom. The State *MasterLink* newsletter every 2 months, read it online. The chapter newsletter is available by the start of each month online at palmbeach.abateflorida.com. There it is in color, with active Internet links and zoomable. Members get free classified ads in our newsletters.

INSURANCE As an active member you have a \$4,000 **Accidental Death and Dismemberment** policy from American Income Life. We used to get a card in the mail from state office to register your beneficiary for ADD insurance, now fill out on membership form. Be sure your family knows about the policy. We have the form online and now included in membership form. We will get it to the ABATE of FL Inc. State office. It does not have to be a motorcycle accident.

Be sure to renew in time so are always covered!

PRIVACY Your email, address and phone are never given out to anyone except State/Chapter executive board.

EMAILINGS you can be added to a mass mailing which you can opt to be removed at end of email. Local events are included and sometimes urgent matters may be included. No one will see your email Postings are on our Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/AbatePalmBeachChapter>

PHONE TEXT another way to communicate with members. Your phone number may be added to our text alert system To change or add the chapter email is palmbeach.abateflorida@gmail.com Our website is palmbeach.abateflorida.com

Mail: **ABATE - Palm Beach Chapter, P.O. Box 530944, Lake Park, FL 33403**

Another benefit of chapter membership in ABATE of FL Palm Beach is having a free business card in newsletter and free newsletter classified for items to sell or acquire. Support your brothers and sisters when possible, Besides a \$4,000 ADD insurance policy, we are looking into other benefits for members. We are always in need of more paid advertisers so find any business to benefit from our low rates and support our newsletter and chapter.

A.D.D. INSURANCE POLICY UPDATE

We all realize the \$4,000 Accidental Death and Dismemberment insurance policy is one of the best benefits of being an ABATE member. That is one reason to keep your membership up to date. Renew early so there is no lapse in coverage. The insurance company no longer sends out the form. You **MUST** name someone on your membership form to get the money in case of death to prevent taxes and being in probate court. Contact ABATE of FL. main office and

NEW STATE OFFICE: ABATE OF Florida, Inc. PO Box 614, Cantonment FL, 32533-0614

Phone: (386) 943-9610 Fax: 850-361-1118 Email: flabatestateoffice@gmail.com

Get your card at chapter meeting or our table at events.

Keep your membership up to date for the insurance, check with us if any question as many have expired during the last few years. President or membership can check your status.

ABATE of Florida, Inc. Membership Application

Last Name: _____ First Name: _____ Date of Birth: / /

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____ Chapter: _____

Are you a registered voter: Yes _____ No _____

Voting Districts _____ Fl House: _____ Fl Senate: _____ Us Congress Dist. : _____

Membership Options Annual New Member \$20.00: _____ Lifemembership \$600.00: _____

Member Transfer to New Chapter: _____ From old Chapter: _____

Change of address: _____ Home Chapter: Palm Beach Chapter

Signature: _____ Date: _____

ALL APPLICATIONS ARE SUBJECT TO APPROVAL. Membership is open to anyone 18 years or older. All members receive a membership card and voting privileges in their home chapter, Personal involvement in statewide Legislative actions and their freedom to ride. Mail to Po Box 530944 Lake Park, Fl. 33403 Questions: (786) 574- 1344

Membership Use Paid By Cash: _____ Check: _____ Paypal: _____ Square: _____

Verified By: _____ Date paid: _____ **Do Not mail Cash**

ABATE of Florida, Inc has partnered with American Income Life to provide all members with a \$4000.00 AD&D Policy Please fill out the card below

Mail to State office: ABATE of Florida, Inc. Po Box 614 Cantonment, Fl. 32533-0614 Phone: (386)943-9610

ABATE of Florida, Inc Members Information

Last Name: _____ First Name: _____ Date of Birth: / /

Physical Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Beneficiary Information

Last Name: _____ First Name: _____ Date of Birth: / /

Physical Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____



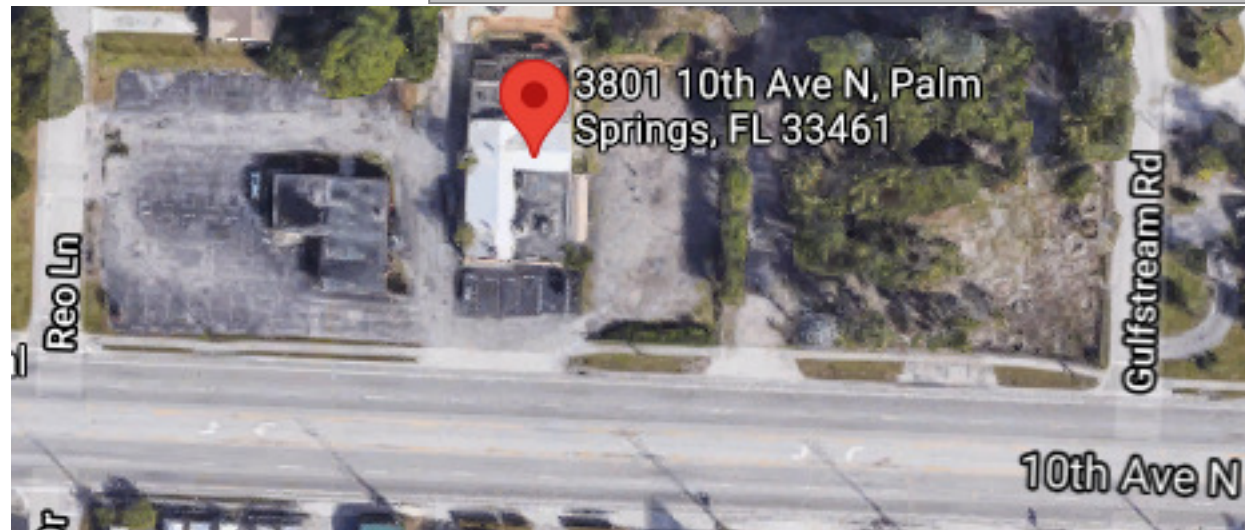
Palm Beach Chapter Meeting
3rd Sunday Feb. 20 , 2022

12:30 pm

Johnny Q's

3801 10th Ave. N, Palm Springs FL

Chapter meetings 3rd Sunday Open to ALL so come
learn about us.



GOALS & PURPOSES OF ABATE

To print a newsletter to keep all bikers informed with regard to legislative actions and events around the state and throughout the country.

To become a powerful and viable political force in legislative matters concerning all motorcyclists rights.

To provide a lobbyist to represent ABATE of Florida, Inc. on the state and national level.

To promote voter registration and motivate members to write their legislators.

To promote safe riding habits without infringing on individual rights.

To educate the public about motorcycle awareness.