

The 2012 Regular Legislative Session convened on January 10<sup>th</sup> and adjourned at 11:59 pm on March 9<sup>th</sup>. Of the 2,235 bills, memorials and joint resolutions filed by legislative members and committees, 292 items passed both Chambers. The members of the Florida Legislature were required to do two things in particular this year: Pass a state budget and address the redrawing of Florida's legislative districts based on information from the latest United States Census data.

## **STATE BUDGET**

Governor Rick Scott signed a \$69.1 billion of the budget that was delivered to him by the Florida Legislature, but vetoed \$615 million of the original amount through his right to use the line item veto. At the time of this update, the Governor has acted on all of the bills delivered to him by the House and Senate. The bills will continue to be delivered in small groups until all have been released. Governor Scott can still execute one of the following actions on those bills once they are delivered to his office: sign the proposed legislation into law, veto a bill in its entirety, or allow the bill to become law without his signature.

## **REDISTRICTING**

### **What does redistricting mean for my community?**

Redistricting is the redrawing of Florida's political boundary lines, every ten years, to reflect changes in population. Everyone lives in districts...congressional, legislative, etc. Those districts tell the stories of their communities. It was reported during the regular legislative session that the House of Representatives developed a map that has been accepted by the Florida Supreme Court as valid. However, the Senate's map was deemed not valid by the Court. This ruling forced the legislature back to Tallahassee for a Special Session devoted solely to deal with this issue. The Supreme Court has since reviewed the new Senate maps and have declared them valid. This ruling is being contested by parties not in agreement with the new territories and an appeal has been filed. However, the new maps will be used in the upcoming 2012 election process. For more information and the opportunity to have your voice heard or show support for the legislature in the redistricting process, please visit [www.floridaredistricting.org](http://www.floridaredistricting.org).

## **LEGISLATION THAT PASSED IN 2012**

### **Energy - HB 7117 (Energy and Utilities Subcommittee and Gardiner)**

Requires utilities' 10-year site plans to address existing & proposed renewable energy production and purchases; provides for portion of proceeds of local government infrastructure surtax to be used to provide loans, grants, & rebates to residential or commercial property owners who make energy efficiency improvements to their residential or commercial property, subject to referendum; reestablishes corporate tax credit for certain costs related to renewable energy technologies; directs DMS in coordination with DOACS to further develop state energy management plan. Effective Date: July 1, 2012. Status: Governor Scott allowed HB 7117 to become law *without* his signature on April 13, 2012. The Governor cited concerns with "whether the taxpayers of Florida will receive a return on the targeted tax credits in the bill".

### **Environmental Regulation – HB 503 (Patronis and Bennett)**

Environmental Regulation: Creates, amends, & revises numerous provisions relating to: development, construction, operating, & building permits; permit application requirements & procedures, including waivers, variances, & revocation; local government comprehensive plans & plan amendments; programmatic general permits & regional general permits; permits for projects relating to stormwater management systems, coastal construction, dredge & fill activities, intermodal logistics centers & commercial & industrial development; sanitary program surveys of certain water systems; innocent victim petroleum storage system restoration, ambient air quality & water quality standards, & solid waste disposal; sale of unblended gasoline for certain uses; exemption from payment to authorizing agencies for

use of certain extensions; provides 2-year permit extension. Effective Date: July 1, 2012.  
Status: Governor Rick Scott signed the bill on April 20, 2012.

#### **Florida Climate Protection Act – HB 4001 (Plakon and Hays)**

Repeals provisions for cap & trade regulatory program to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from electric utilities. Effective Date: July 1, 2012.

Status: Governor Rick Scott signed the bill on March 30, 2012.

**HR 9089** was adopted by publication on March 2<sup>nd</sup>. At the request of Representative Seth McKeel, August 26, 2012, will be known as "**Lineworker Appreciation Day**" in Florida. Earlier in the session, lineworkers from across the State (including three of our very own lineworkers and supervisors and other PEF employees) gathered on the back steps of the Historic Old Capitol along with McKeel and the family of a fallen Lakeland Electric lineman to honor the great sacrifices these men and women make every day to provide safe and reliable power to the citizens of Florida. The participants of the day's event were also recognized on the House Floor and offered applause and gratitude from the members of the Florida House.



#### **Metal Theft – HB 1323 (Drake and Norman)**

Increases criminal penalties for specified violations relating to secondary metals recycling; provides increased criminal penalties for third & subsequent criminal violations; prohibits removing copper or other nonferrous metals from electrical substation site without authorization of utility. Effective Date: October 1, 2012.

Status: Governor Rick Scott signed the bill on April 13, 2012.

#### **Secondhand Dealers and Secondary Metals Recyclers – HB 885 (Ford and C. Smith)**

Deletes exemptions for flea market transactions & auction businesses; revises provisions relating to recordkeeping; provides requirements for salvaged motor vehicles & mobile homes; revises requirements information recyclers must obtain & maintain; limits liability for conversion of motor vehicles to scrap metal; revises requirements for payments; provides methods of payment for restricted regulated metals property; requires that purchases of certain property be made by check or by electronic payment; prohibits secondary metals recyclers from purchasing regulated metals property, restricted regulated metals property, or ferrous metals during specified times, from certain locations, or from certain sellers; prohibits purchase of specified restricted regulated metals property without certain proof of seller's ownership & authorization; preempts to state regulation of secondary metals recyclers & purchase transactions; provides exceptions; amends provisions relating to theft of copper or other nonferrous metals from utility or communications services provider; prohibits removing or assisting with removal of copper or other nonferrous metals from electrical substation site without authorization of utility; provides civil liability & civil & criminal penalties. Effective Date: July 1, 2012.

Status: Governor Rick Scott signed the bill on April 13, 2012.

#### **Transportation and Mitigation Programs – HB 599 (Pilon and Dean)**

Transportation and Mitigation Programs: Authorizes DOT (Department of Transportation) to indemnify against loss & purchase liability insurance for National Railroad Passenger Corporation subject to specified terms & conditions; revises legislative intent to encourage use of certain mitigation options; provides DOT or transportation authority option of participating in mitigation projects; requires DOT or transportation authority to submit list rather than survey of threatened or endangered species & species of special concern affected by proposed projects; provides conditions for release of certain mitigation funds;

prohibits implementation of mitigation plans under certain conditions; provides criteria that DOT must use in determining which projects to include in or exclude from mitigation plans; authorizes governmental entity to provide or create mitigation for projects other than its own under specified circumstances.

Effective Date: upon becoming a law.

Status: Governor Rick Scott signed the bill on April 13, 2012.

### **2012 ELECTION DATES**

**Primary Election: August 14, 2012**  
**General Election: November 6, 2012**

**If you are a registered voter in Florida, check with your county's Supervisor of Elections for precinct and Early Voting information by [CLICKING HERE](#) and then again on your county name.**

### **2011-2012 Florida House of Representatives and Senate Committees:**

The House Energy & Utilities Subcommittee is led by Chairman Scott Plakon (R, District 37) and Vice-Chairman Daniel Davis (R, District 13). To view the members of the 2011-2012 House Energy & Utilities Subcommittee in its entirety, [CLICK HERE](#).

The Senate Communications, Energy and Public Utilities Committee is led by Chairman Andy Gardiner (R, District 9) and he continues to provide leadership and adheres to conservative ideals. To view the members of the 2011-2012 Senate Communications, Energy and Public Utilities Committee in its entirety, [CLICK HERE](#) and then click "members".

### **Legislature at a Glance**

- The Florida Senate has 40 members - Republicans are in the majority and Sen. Mike Haridopolos is President of the Senate. Sen. Don Gaetz is the incoming President of the Florida Senate if he is re-elected to his district seat.
- The Florida House has 120 members - Republicans are in the majority and Rep. Dean Cannon is Speaker of the House. Rep. Will Weatherford is the incoming Speaker of the House of Representatives.
- Republican Rick Scott is Governor of Florida and Republican Jennifer Carroll is Lieutenant Governor (*special note: Jennifer Carroll is the first woman AND African American to be sworn in as Florida's Lieutenant Governor*). Both leaders were sworn in on January 4, 2011.
- Republican Pam Bondi is Attorney General (*special note: Pam Bondi is Florida's first female elected to serve as Attorney General*)
- Former Senate President Jeff Atwater, a Republican, is Chief Financial Officer
- Former Congressional member Adam Putnam, a Republican, is Commissioner of Agriculture and Consumer Services and currently oversees Florida's Energy Office.