

April 10, 2023

REPRESENTATIVE
MIKE BELTRAN
LEGISLATIVE UPDATE



PROUDLY SERVING THE PEOPLE OF DISTRICT 70

Dear Friend and Neighbor,

We are several weeks into Session, and I wanted to send you all information about my work in Tallahassee. It has been my great honor to represent you these last five years. There is no better place to call home than Southeast Tampa Bay. If I or my office can assist, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

Mike Beltran

In the News:

Coverage of Representative Beltran in Session:

Fines and Fees HB 921

“We should make people pay restitution and fines, but taking away their driver’s license, which they probably use for work to make money, doesn’t make a whole lot of sense — especially if the offense is not related to driving,” he said. “Fines and fees are collected in a number of ways, but (the government) shouldn’t be leveraging you for unrelated things.”

[Mike Beltran files bill to end debt-based driver’s license suspensions, ease fine payment \(floridapolitics.com\)](https://floridapolitics.com)

Sentencing Proceedings in Death Penalty Cases HB 555

“We require unanimous juries to convict for anything and we should require unanimous juries to execute,” Beltran said.

<https://floridaphoenix.com/2023/03/15/when-it-comes-to-deciding-on-the-death-penalty-its-not-always-a-party-line-vote/>

Education: HB 1

“One of my colleagues said that, you know, Tiger Woods’ kids are going to be eligible for this program,” Beltran told lawmakers at the committee meeting. “I guess he’s right, I guess that’s the punchy talking point. I understand why he said that but, Tiger Woods’ kids are eligible for public schools right now.”

Beltran added: “More importantly, Tiger Woods is paying a ton in taxes, I guarantee you — I hope he is, unless he’s cheating on his taxes — But he’s paying a ton in taxes, far in excess of whatever benefits his kids are going to get from the government. So, it doesn’t really bother me that folks who are maybe not indigent are going to be participating in these programs.”

<https://floridaphoenix.com/2023/03/10/should-wealthy-golfer-tiger-woods-kids-be-able-to-attend-private-schools-on-public-dollars-in-fl/>

Sponsored Bills

[HB 401](#) - Sovereign Immunity - This bill was voted favorably by Civil Justice Subcommittee. Although the government should be held to a higher standard than the private sector, it has special treatment. Florida law limits compensation to only \$200,000 per person and \$300,000 per "incident," regardless of the number of injured people. If many people are hurt in one "incident," they must split the \$300,000 among many victims. HB 401 originally sought to hold the government to a higher standard by eliminating Sovereign Immunity; however, through the committee process, we adopted an amendment that increases the caps to \$2,500,000 and \$5,000,000, respectively, which should allow sufficient compensation in almost all cases. .

[HB 899](#) - Surrendered Newborns – This bill has just passed off the House Floor. When circumstances prevent parents from caring for a newborn infant, there ought to be a safe and sometimes anonymous option for them to surrender the child into the care of others. This bill gives emergency facilities, hospitals, and fire stations the authority to use safe and secure newborn infant safety devices to accept surrendered newborns. The bill revises the current Florida statute to include the definition of "Newborn infant safety device." It provides safeguards and requirements for its installation. HB 899 also gives parents the ability and authority to release the newborn infant to medical staff or licensed healthcare professionals after delivery in the hospital. Finally, the bill seeks to change the definition of a newborn infant from up to seven days old to thirty days old.

[HB 1211](#) - Child Restraint Requirements – This bill has just passed the Transportation and Modals Subcommittee. This bill extends age requirements for using crash-tested, federally approved child restraint devices. Significant changes include the need to use an approved booster seat from five to the age of seven. It also requires infants up to three years old to travel in a rear-facing five-point harness. Children ages three to five must remain in the five-point harness but can be front-facing. These changes place Florida's protections for our youngest citizens have the most up-to-date safety measures protecting them in the unfortunate event of a motor vehicle accident.

[HB 921](#) - Fines and Fees - When citizens fall behind on payments and fees to the state, the correct solution is not suspending the driver's licenses of those failing to pay. The current measures make it harder for citizens to pay back their debts by preventing them from legally driving to work. HB 921 addresses this by authorizing the Clerk of Court to accept monthly installment payments for debts and prohibiting the suspension of driver licenses for failure to pay debts unless they arise from traffic infractions. It expands methods for the Clerk to accept payments for fees, charges, costs & fines. The bill also revises offenses leading to driver's license suspension upon failure to comply with court directives.

[HB 1463](#) - Childhood Mental Health, Safety, and Welfare – This bill aims to protect children from harmful effects of technology and exposure to inappropriate materials.

[HB 1321](#)- Political Advertisements for Nonpartisan Office. This bill allows persons running for nonpartisan office to discuss their political affiliation to ensure maximum information is available to the voters. At least one Court has held that prohibitions on candidates discussing their partisan affiliation are unconstitutional. This bill removes such a restriction in Florida Statute. HB 1321 is a free-speech bill that allows nonpartisan candidates to speak without restrictions.

[HB 1187](#) - Campaign Finance. This bill aims to ban the use of dark money in political campaigns. This bill prevents nefarious actors from laundering money through shell games involving multiple political committees and thereby obscuring the source of the funds. Although people have the right to participate in the political process and make their opinions known, our campaign finance laws provide for disclosure, which is thwarted by dark money. This bill ensures speech but ensures adequate disclosure.

Co-Sponsored Bills

[HB 1435](#) - Damages Recoverable in Wrongful Death Actions - HB 1435 corrects the lack of accountability of physicians who negligently provide care and cause their patient's wrongful death. Medical negligence often leads to a "slap on the wrist," and damages paid to the family are frequently unrecoverable under current Florida statute. HB 1435 removes current provisions that prohibit adult children from recovering damages in the event of medical negligence leading to the wrongful death of a parent.

[HB 733](#) – Middle School and High School Start Times. This bill ensures that our children receive adequate rest essential to their growth and development by setting reasonable start times for the school day.

For information about attending or testifying at a committee meeting, please see the "Visiting the House" tab at myfloridahouse.gov



Need Help?

My office is here to help with any issues or problem you may be having. Just give our office a call at 813-653-7097 or email at Representative Mike Beltran.

Also, to stay updated with what is happening in District 70 be sure to click the link to the right and follow my Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn!

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