Legislative Rankings

The Miami Herald released their annual ranking of state legislators on Saturday, June 14, 2003. The Herald relies on a panel of experienced legislative observers to independently rank lawmakers. The panelists selected this year were:

- **Mike Abrams**, lobbyist with Katz Kutter Alderman & Bryant in Miami.
- **Brian Ballard**, lobbyist with Smith, Ballard & Logan in Tallahassee.
- **Sarah Bleakley**, lobbyist with Nabors, Giblin & Nickerson law firm in Tallahassee.
- **Victoria Hernandez**, lobbyist for Miami-Dade Community College.
- **Yolanda Cash Jackson**, lobbyist with Becker & Poliakoff law firm in Fort Lauderdale.
- **Curt Kiser**, lobbyist with Holland and Knight law firm.
- **Sean Pittman**, lobbyist with the Pittman Law Group in Tallahassee.
- **Sarah Bleakley**, lobbyist with Nabors, Giblin & Nickerson law firm in Tallahassee.
- **Curt Kiser**, lobbyist with Holland and Knight law firm.
- **Peter Wallsten**, The Herald’s political writer and outgoing chief of the Herald’s capital bureau.

These observers used the following standards for ranking lawmakers:

- Effectiveness at passing legislation that affects the entire state
- Effectiveness at influencing colleagues on behalf of legislation, particularly through debate
- Effectiveness at serving his or her district.

House Speaker Johnnie Byrd and Senator Ken Pruitt attained the number one rankings in individual chambers this year. Judges described Speaker Byrd as a strong leader in the House, “everything that happened, he directed,” and “Byrd dominated the House on every issue.” Of Senator Pruitt, judges said, “the entire session came down to a fundamental, philosophical difference on spending, and Ken Pruitt was the intellectual and political force behind it.”

The following list represents how our local delegation and legislative alumni ranked this session.

**Senate Rankings**

**FOUR STARS:**
- Jim King, R-Jacksonville
- Alex Villalobos, R-Miami
- Al Lawson, D-Tallahassee
- Nancy Argenziano, R-Crystal River
- Steve Geller, D-Hallandale Beach

**TWO STARS:**
- Audry Gibson, D-Jacksonville
- Adam Hasner, R-Delray Beach
- Mark Mahon, R-Jacksonville
- J.C. Planas, R-Westchester
- Ray Sansom, R-Destin
- John Stargel, R-Lakeland
- Carl Domino, R-Jupiter
- Terry Fields, D-Jacksonville

**House Rankings**

**FOUR STARS:**
- Allan Bense, R-Panama City
- Chris Smith, D-Fort Lauderdale
- Bev Kilmer, R-Quincy
- Dennis Baxley, R-Ocala
- Jeff Kottkamp, R-Cape Coral
- Marcelo Llorente, R-Miami
- Curtis Richardson, D-Tallahassee
- Ken Sorenson, R-Key Largo
- Leslie Waters, R-Seminole
- Loranne Ausley, D-Tallahassee
- Audrey Gibson, D-Jacksonville
- Adam Hasner, R-Delray Beach
- Mark Mahon, R-Jacksonville
- J.C. Planas, R-Westchester
- Ray Sansom, R-Destin
- John Stargel, R-Lakeland

**TWO STARS:**
- Carl Domino, R-Jupiter
- Terry Fields, D-Jacksonville
Bills that passed during Special Session B

HB 23 - FCAT/ High School Graduation by Representative John Quinones (R- Kissimmee). Provides learning opportunities for out-of-state and foreign transfer students to meet high school graduation requirements and authorizes alternate assessments; requires district school superintendents to notify students of the consequences of failure to receive a standard high school diploma; provides for alternate assessments for the grade 10 FCAT and directs the Commissioner of Education to approve certain standardized tests if determined to meet certain criteria as equivalents to the FCAT and to permit passage of such tests in lieu of passage of the grade 10 FCAT for students graduating in the 2002-2003 school year. Signed by the Governor and became law on June 20, 2003.

HB 85 - Biomedical Research, by Speaker of the House Johnnie Byrd (R-Plant City). Renames the Florida Biomedical Research Program as the James and Esther King Biomedical Research Program; providing an appropriation of $3,540,998 from the Biomedical Research Trust fund to the Department of Health to operate the James and Esther King Biomedical Research Program for the 2003-2004 fiscal year, thereby continuing current biomedical studies being conducted at Florida universities, including at FSU for the new fiscal year. The bill was signed by the Governor on June 26, 2003 and will take effect on July 1.

Be sure to visit On-line Sunshine on the World Wide Web for budget and other legislative information.

www.leg.state.fl.us

Accidentally delete your favorite issue of the Legisletter?
Need to reference a past issue?
Be sure to visit Florida State University Office of Governmental Relations' website located at www.fsu.edu/~govrel to download your copy in Adobe Acrobat.