

DWC

MARCH 2026 NEWSLETTER



DEMOCRATIC WOMEN'S CLUB OF MANATEE COUNTY FLORIDA

WWW.DWCManatee.com

Jan Schneider is a true believer in democratic values and fights tirelessly for them. Jan is a graduate of Yale Law School and also earned a doctorate in political science from Yale. She has practiced law from local courts to the International Court of Justice. She has also worked for the United Nations Environment Programme; taught in law school; served on many nonprofit boards; and authored dozens of publications (mostly in the fields of environmental law and senior issues). She is currently practicing law, managing a small business, running a free legal clinic for public housing tenants, and writing a book on Baby Boomer Law & Politics.



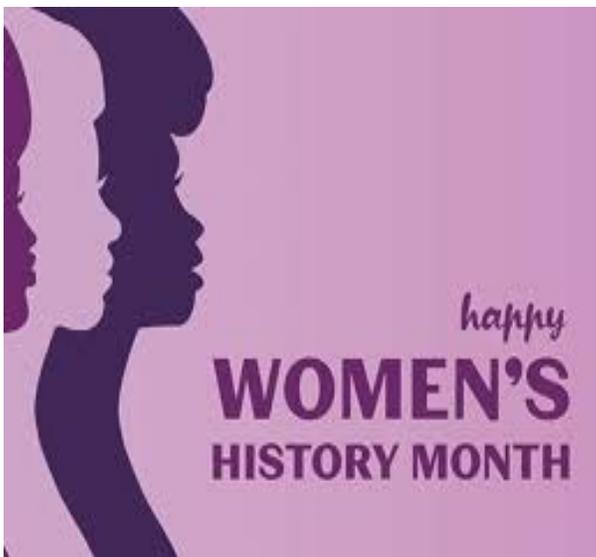
**JAN
SCHNEIDER**

Jonathan "Jon" Harris is currently in the Army Reserve, where he now holds the rank of Chief Warrant Officer. Jon serves as a senior information security advisor supporting U.S. Special Operations Command, protecting critical defense systems from foreign adversaries. He has held positions with Raymond James and ARMA Global, bringing private-sector experience to complement his national security background. He has centered his campaign on economic security, government accountability and expanding opportunity for working families and veterans.



**JON
HARRIS**

Jan Schneider and Jon Harris are candidates for Florida's 16th Congressional District, representing communities across Hillsborough and Manatee counties. Each will share their vision for serving the people of the 16th District and outline how they would advocate on behalf of residents in Washington.



DWC Luncheon Is March 12, 2026

11:30 AM

Peridia Golf & Country Club

4950 Peridia Blvd E, Bradenton, FL 34203

***Cut off date for your reservations
and meal choice must be made by
March 8, 3:00 p.m***

**Reservation Information and
Meal Choices Are On The Next Page**

Cost is \$20

President's Corner

New Supreme Court Ruling Gives Us Hope!

Numerous national polls indicate that many Americans disapprove of the current president's policies and leadership style. Many Americans expressed opposition to his administration's rhetoric and approach, leading to widespread demonstrations and significant political mobilization across the country, especially against "ICE".



Lori Rogge

As soon as Trump came into office in 2025, he made sweeping changes that have had a negative impact, according to most Democratic Americans. One of the biggest was when Trump imposed broad tariffs on imported goods, with rates differing by country of origin in an unpredictable manner. However, the tariffs were paid by the business owners and consumers, not the country of origin. Many claimed the tariffs are illegal, and, thankfully, the U.S. Supreme Court has now confirmed this. We all scream with delight that finally he is getting some pushback from the Supreme Court by this decision. It was a 6-3 ruling, which may be a sign there is more positive news to come to reign in the "wannabe king."

We know that the MAGA movement is not just the current president; many Republican politicians are in step with most of his policies, which includes most of our local politicians. We encourage everyone to participate, vote, and do their part to help achieve victory in the upcoming elections. Electing Democrats is the best way to save our Democracy.

Lori Rogge, President

Democratic Women's Club of Manatee County

PLEASE MAKE YOUR RESERVATION AND MEAL CHOICE FOR THE MARCH 12 DWC MEETING

**Email, call, or text Marilyn Baiz for reservations
durf1211@gmail.com
or 734-776-6023**

Deadline to register is Sunday, March 8, 3:00 p.m.

- 1. Sliced steak, grilled onion & mushrooms on grilled sub roll w/ melted provolone, served w/ pub chips**
- 2. Chef Salad with lettuce, tomatoes, onion, ham, turkey, swiss & cheddar cheese w/ ranch dressing on the side**
- 3. Breaded eggplant, marinara sauce, and melted mozzarella and parmesan**

All meals come with rolls, butter, a non-alcoholic drink, and dessert.

No-shows will be billed

‘Our democracy depends on rejecting this charade’: GOP pushes bills to prevent millions from voting

Congressional Republicans held hearings on a pair of bills that watchdogs, election experts, and Democratic lawmakers characterized as brazen and dangerous efforts to suppress voter turnout in service of President Donald Trump’s broader assault on democracy—which has included a call for the GOP to “nationalize the voting.”

Hearings, held by the House Committees on Rules and Administration, featured a revived version of the Safeguard American Voter Eligibility Act (SAVE) Act and Rep. Bryan Steil’s (R-Wis.) newly introduced Make Elections Great Again (MEGA) Act, which one analyst described as possibly the “most dangerous attack on voting rights ever” unveiled in the US Congress.

During his opening remarks at the House Administration Committee hearing on the MEGA Act, the panel’s ranking member, Rep. Joe Morelle (D-NY), said that “this scheme is not just how Republicans plan to take over our elections, it’s how they plan to take over our country.”

“Republicans know that they have one hope at winning the next election: change the rules of the game, destroy the rule of law, and desert any last remaining shred of allegiance to the United States Constitution,” Morelle added.

Both the SAVE Act—which is expected to get a House vote this week—and the MEGA Act would impose severe restrictions on voting access by effectively eliminating voter registration by mail, implementing nationwide photo ID requirements, banning universal mail-in ballots for federal elections, allowing massive voter roll purges, and threatening nonpartisan election officials with imprisonment if they fail to uphold the bills’ strict voter documentation requirements.

If passed, the SAVE Act would require anyone registering to vote in federal elections to furnish documentary proof of US citizenship, such as a passport or birth certificate, in person. The Brennan Center for Justice has estimated that 21 million people in the

U.S. “lack ready access to these documents,” noting that “half of all Americans don’t have a passport, for example, and millions of married women who have changed their names might need to jump through extra hoops to vote.”

“Make no mistake: The SAVE Act would stop millions of American citizens from voting,” the Brennan Center wrote in an analysis of the legislation. “It would be the most restrictive voting bill ever passed by Congress. It is Trump’s power grab in legislative garb.”

The co-chairs of the Not Above the Law Coalition placed the voter suppression bills in the context of Trump’s “yearslong campaign of election lies and conspiracy to overturn the 2020 results” as well as “his recent attempts to nationalize election administration, and weaponization of the Department of Justice to intimidate voters and officials.”

“Republicans are falling in line by attempting to silence American voters under the guise of ‘election integrity,’” the coalition said. “House Republicans are doing Trump’s bidding instead of holding him accountable. The real threats to election integrity sit in the White House and among those enabling his authoritarian agenda. Our democracy depends



on rejecting this charade and confronting Trump’s documented attacks on free and fair elections.”

The Trump White House has publicly endorsed the SAVE Act amid mounting fears that the president—animated by false claims of large-scale voter fraud—is moving to undermine the midterm elections later this year.

“It will be up to Democrats to hold their ground and ensure the SAVE Act’s ultimate defeat. It will be up to all of us to not be fooled by the myths and the lies—and protect our elections so they remain free and fair,” wrote Brennan Center president Michael Waldman. “And we should stand with election officials who now face threats of groundless criminal prosecution for doing their jobs.

“For voters, who must have the most powerful voice in our democracy,” Waldman added, “the stakes are high, and getting higher.”

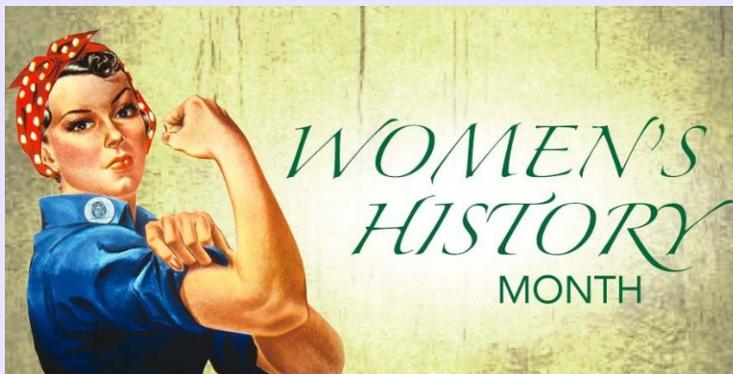
By: Jake Johnson, *Common Dreams*

National Women's History Month

National Women's History Month is an honorary observance of the month of March in the United States, as designated in 1987 by the U.S. Congress, in recognition of women's the month by focusing on the "consistently overlooked and undervalued" role of American women in history. Libraries and communities promote special events that emphasize the achievements of women. Similar month-long observances occur in other countries.

A common myth holds that the significance of the month of March for women's history dates to the mid-19th century, when a group of female garment workers in New York City staged a protest on March 8, 1857, to demand better working conditions and pay. According to this story, the police aggressively halted the demonstration, but several years later the determined women formed their own union. However, no record of this demonstration exists in contemporary newspapers. The myth was likely created to soothe concerns regarding the observance's actual origin.

In 1908 a branch of the New York City Social Democratic Women's Society declared that the last Sunday in February would be celebrated as National Woman's Day. The observance was first held on February 28, 1909, in New York City. However, the better-known precursor to Women's History Month was International Women's Day, which was created in 1910 at the Second International Socialist Women's Conference and first observed on March 19, 1911. Led by German social democratic activist Clara Zetkin, the women of the conference intended International Women's Day to focus on the struggles of working women—in contrast to the mainstream feminist movement, which the socialists associated with the bourgeoisie. The March 8 date became official in 1921 when Zetkin, by then a com-



unist, proposed it in honor of a strike led by women workers in Petrograd (now St. Petersburg) on March 8 (February 23, Old Style), 1917, that marked the beginning of the Russian Revolution. The myth of the U.S.-based garment workers' protest originated in a 1955 issue of the French daily newspaper *L'Humanité*. It was readily embraced, in part because it allowed American women living amid Cold War tensions to celebrate International Women's Day without acknowledging its socialist and communist associations.

In 1978 the schools of Sonoma County, California, designated March as Women's History Month as a means of examining women's history, issues, and contributions. The idea gained momentum, and in 1981 a U.S. congressional resolution proclaimed the week including March 8 to be National Women's History Week. In 1986 the National Women's History Project (later known as the National Women's History Alliance) played a significant role in expanding the observance to the entire month of March.

Other countries soon adopted similar month-long events. In 1992 Canada began celebrating Women's History Month, which had been set for October to commemorate the resolution of the so-called Persons Case. That month in 1929 the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council of Great Britain (then Canada's highest court of appeal) ruled that the meaning of the term "qualified persons" in Canadian constitutional law had never been explicitly limited to "men." That decision, which reversed an earlier ruling of the Supreme Court of Canada, meant that the dominion's governor-general was legally entitled to appoint female senators. In March 2000 Australia began holding its own Women's History Month.

Source: *Britannica*

Byron Donalds backs English-only driver's tests as solution to 'major problem'

If you can't read the signs, that's a good sign to stay off the roads.

That's the unambiguous message from U.S. Rep. Byron Donalds, who endorses Florida's recent rule change banning aspirant motorists from taking tests in any other language but English.

"Look, what happened last year on our roads, where you had somebody who couldn't read our signs lead to the death of three people on the roads of Florida is, frankly, chilling," the Naples Republican and current candidate for Governor said on "Varney and Co."

"To know that we have these various driving tests to get a license, but you don't have to read English when all our road signs are in English, I think that creates a major problem."

The monolingual edict from the Florida Department



of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles comes as legal proceedings continue against Harjinder Singh, who is accused of multiple vehicular homicides after making an illegal U-turn on the Florida Turnpike last year.

The change applies to commercial driver's licenses, such as the one Singh had from California, as well as non-commercial license exams.

For Donalds, the rule change is just good policy.

"If you're going to be driving on Florida's roads, you have to understand English well enough to follow not just our laws, but to follow the road signs," he said. "I think that's common sense. It actually helps to make our roadways more safe, and at the end of the day, that's government's primary job, (and) it is to make sure that safety and law and order are consistent."

Gov. Ron DeSantis has also praised the "good reform," saying also that people "need to be able to read the road signs."

By: A.G. Gancarski, *Florida Politics*

Plan on attending the NO KINGS RALLY



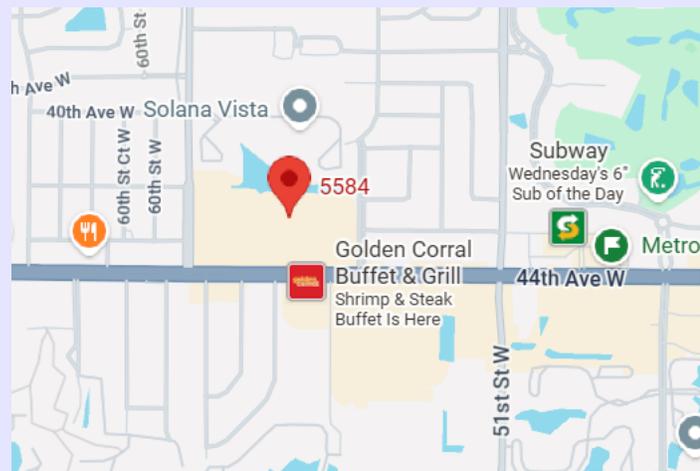
When: March 28

Where: Big Lot's parking lot on Cortez Road

5584 Cortez Road

Bradenton, FL

Time: 10:00 a.m.





House passes another library book removal bill; Senate dawdling

The Florida House passed for a second year in a row a bill to define how school library materials may be “harmful to minors.”

The bill, HB 1119, would build on a 2023 law that led to the removal of library books from schools based on objections from the public. The Senate, however, has not moved its version.

The 2023 law allows community members to object to school library materials considered “pornographic” or that “describes sexual conduct.”

Rep. Doug Bankson, the bill sponsor and a Republican from Apopka, said existing statutes have been “improperly bypassed,” prompting the need for the bill.

The bill passed 84-28.

“Bottom line, this is simple. We’re talking about ratings. We rate movies, TV shows, and songs. There’s nothing wrong with rating books. We would never show an X rated movie in a middle school classroom. This is common sense,” Rep. Kim Kendall, a Republican from St. Augustine, said.

The bill and its identical Senate companion would add to state law a definition of what is to be considered “harmful to minors.”

The definition the lawmakers propose: “any reproduction, imitation, characterization, description, exhibition, presentation, or representation, of whatever kind or form, depicting nudity, sexual conduct, or sexual excitement when it: predominantly appeals to prurient, shameful, or morbid interest; and is patently offensive to prevailing standards in the adult community as a whole with respect to what is suitable material or conduct for minors.”

“We have been here before, and I have no idea why we’re back because members of our community have asked us to focus on the affordability crisis not to restrict more literature,” Rep. Anna Eskamani, a Democrat from Orlando, said.

Democrats filed a number of amendments that

the GOP majority rejected and debated extensively against the bill on the floor.

“I know this bill is being presented as a refinement of existing law, but the reality is it expands a system that has already led to widespread book removals. We’ve seen litigation and we’ve seen real financial costs for taxpayers and school districts,” Rep. Rita Harris, a Democrat from Orlando, said on the floor.

The Senate bill, SB 1692, is sponsored by Sen. Stan McClain, a Republican from Ocala. McClain sponsored the legislation last session, too, but it died after First Amendment concerns emerged during its first committee hearing. This session, the Senate version has three committee assignments but has yet to be heard.

The House passed the measure off the floor last year.

The 2023 law has led to Florida making nationwide headlines for the number of books removed. In 2024, lawmakers addressed overuse of the law, limiting non-parent members of the public from object-

ing to more than one library material per month.

The 2023 law was deemed “overbroad and unconstitutional” last summer by a federal judge. That suit was filed by book authors and parents objecting to restrictions.

The state filed a brief this week in the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit asking for that court to uphold the ruling from last year. The appeal is scheduled for oral arguments in April in Atlanta.

That law allowed for books to stay on shelves that were considered to have literary, artistic, political, or scientific value. Bankson and McClain’s proposal would prevent school boards from keeping books based on those values if they contain “harmful” content.

The measure would provide a carve-out for required health education course material. It would allow the state to withhold funding from districts that do not comply.

By: jay Waagmeester, *Florida Phoenix*





Do you have ponds in your neighborhood? In response to growing popular demand and the initiative of Michelle Atkinson with the University of Florida/IFAS Manatee Extension and the Manatee County Department of Natural Resources, Lakewatch is now available to pond communities in Manatee County. Set an appointment with Michelle Atkinson to come to your homeowners' meeting to see how you can protect your neighborhood ponds. You can reach Michelle by emailing her at michelleatkinson@ufl.edu. Lakewatch is the pond monitoring program provided by the UF/IFAS Extension that helps communities track the elements in their stormwater ponds that determine a pond's health and ability to reduce excess nutrients before they flow downstream. The service is free of charge and monitors total nitrogen, total phosphorus, chlorophyll, PH, and water clarity. The program uses trained volunteers in the community to gather monthly water samples that are then processed for results by the UF/IFAS staff in Gainesville.

Ruth Lawler, Environmental Chair

Scholarship Fund Update



The Democratic Women's Club of Manatee County will not be holding a special scholarship fundraiser meeting due to unforeseen circumstances. However, we are pleased to share that there are sufficient funds in our scholarship account to make awards in April.

Fundraising for Our Scholarship Fund

To continue strengthening our scholarship program, we will feature several silent auction items at our March meeting for those who wish to participate. All proceeds will benefit the scholarship fund.

If you would like to donate an item for the auction, please bring it to the March meeting. If you are bringing an item, please call Patty Benson at 941-758-4610 or email her at pattybeenutty@gmail.com in advance so the item can be included on the agenda.

We also welcome ideas for additional fundraising efforts to support our scholarship fund, particularly as we look to replace the 50/50 raffle. Suggestions may be shared during the meeting or with any board member.



If you have not paid your 2026 membership dues of \$35, please do so at the March meeting, or you can mail your check, payable to Democratic Women's Club to our Treasurer.

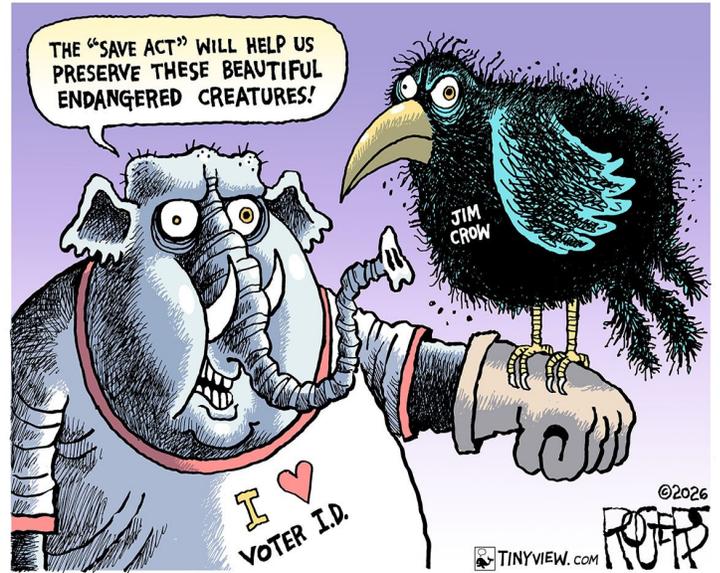
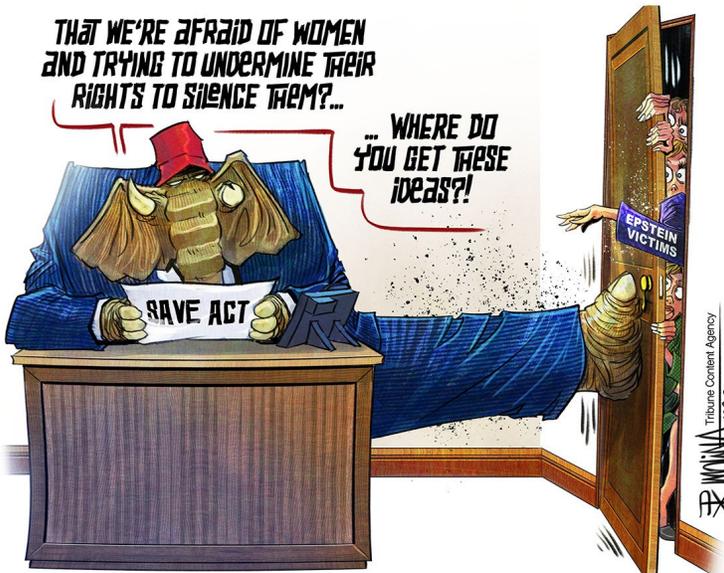
Wini Meier-Oakes
3607 AVENIDA MADERA UNIT A
Bradenton, FL 34210

Every March, Women's History Month is recognized by presidential proclamation as a time to honor the vital contributions women have made throughout American history. It is a moment to reflect not only on the progress achieved, but also on the work that remains. In that spirit, the video "The Past and Future of the Women's Rights Movement" offers a powerful look at the struggles women have faced in the past, the challenges of the present, and the vision for a more equitable future.

At the same time, serious concerns continue to be raised about the conduct of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). Reports describe masked agents operating without visible identification, conducting aggressive arrests, entering homes without warrants, and deporting individuals without due process. The video "Bad News 2" serves as an anti-ICE anthem, portraying what advocates characterize as harsh and unjust enforcement actions.

[CLICK HERE TO WATCH THE PAST AND FUTURE OF WOMEN'S RIGHTS](#)

[CLICK HERE TO WATCH BAD NEWS 2](#)



DEMOCRATIC WOMEN'S CLUB OF MANATEE COUNTY OFFICERS/LEADERS 2026 - 2027

| ELECTED OFFICERS | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| President Lori Rogge | lori4dems@gmail.com |
| 1st VP (Programs) Brian Heavrin | brianhwithdwc@gmail.com |
| 2nd VP (Membership) Carol Plant | carolplant@optonline.net |
| Recording Secretary Lori Rogge | lori4dems@gmail.com |
| Treasurer Wini Meier Oakes | winimo3@gmail.com |
| Regional Representative Pat Benson | pattybeenutty@gmail.com |

| Website Links | |
|--|--|
| DWC of Manatee County Website | |
| Manatee County Democratic Website | |
| Democratic Women's Club of Florida | |

| OTHER OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Fund-Raising | Pat Benson pattybeenutty@gmail.com |
| Hospitality/ Calling | Marilyn Baiz durf1211@gmail.com |
| Candidate Search | Vicki Waters vwaters@earthlink.net |
| Parliamentarian | Open |
| Web Master | Lori Rogge lori4dems@gmail.com |
| Newsletter and Directory | Brian Heavrin blh3011@gmail.com |
| Environmental | Ruth Lawler ruthlawler@att.net |
| Legislative Liaison | Open |
| Corresponding Secretary | Open |
| Bylaws Chair | Anne Marie Keane Keaneanne20@gmail.com |

Manatee County Democratic Women's Club
6403 Heritage Lane
Bradenton, FL 34209



PLACE
STAMP
HERE

The Manatee County Democratic weekday office hours are Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.. To check status, times, dates of events and club meetings, please visit our Manatee County Democratic website at www.ManateeDemocrats.com.

Elected Officials

CONTACT OUR ELECTED OFFICIALS

PRESIDENT

Donald Trump (switchboard) (202) 456-1111
www.whitehouse.gov

U.S. SENATORS

Rick Scott (R)
help@rickscott.senate.gov (202) 224-5274

Ashley Moody (R) (202)224-3041
www.moody.senate.gov

U.S. REPRESENTATIVES

Vern Buchanan (R-Distr. 16) (202) 225-5015
www.Buchanan.house.gov (941) 747-9081

GOVERNOR

Ron DeSantis (R) (850) 717-9337
www.flgov.com/email-the-governor

OUR FLORIDA SENATORS

Jim Boyd (R-Distr. 21) (850) 487-5026
Boyd.Jim.web@flsenate.gov

OUR FLORIDA REPRESENTATIVES

Michael Owen (R-Distr.70) 850 717-5070
MichaelOwen@myfloridahouse.gov

Will Robinson (R-Distr. 71)
Will.robinson@myfloridahouse.gov (941) 744-5097

William "Bill" Conerly (R-Distr.72) (941) 327-0150
BillConerly@myfloridahouse.gov