



Florida Police Benevolent Association, Inc.



CAPITOL REPORT

300 East Brevard Street, Tallahassee, FL 32301 • 850.222.3329 • FAX: 850.561.0192 • www.flpba.org

By Matt Puckett, Deputy Executive Director
 LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITY FOR THE WEEK ENDING APRIL 25, 2008

IT'S DOWN TO THE WIRE! PROTECTING JOBS REMAINS THE TOP PRIORITY

This week was our most productive week of the session so far. We were able to move a couple of our legislative agenda items through the final committees of reference and onto the floor of the House of Representatives. The budget conferees chipped away at the position cuts in the Department of Corrections. The funding bills for pay raises advanced to the House Policy & Budget Council. There were a few surprises mixed into the week too.

A couple years ago, under former **Speaker of the House of Representatives Johnnie Byrd**, we enjoyed one of the best sessions for our organization on record. We were able to secure a pay increase for all of PBA Law Enforcement, Correctional and Correctional Probation Officers, plus we passed eight bills on our legislative agenda. It was the high water mark so far for this decade. We have struggled, at times mightily, to achieve that level of excellence since. This session will not rank anywhere near that landmark year, but we may just pull off a few issues that can still make it a successful venture. We are in what is called the final stretch and we have our Correctional Officer Definition (**HB 427 and SB 924**) and Eight Year DROP (**HB 501 and SB 706**) bills in play along with a few other issues.

However, the most critical issue we have faced all session continues to linger, the position cuts to the Department of Corrections staff in the prisons and on the streets remain a serious threat. Our top priority must always be to save our members' jobs. Unfortunately, all of our efforts may still come up short in the area of probation supervision.

Legislation for pay and benefit increases, such as our Eight Year DROP, seem like a consolation prize (if we can pass it) in the face of real people losing jobs. Remember the cuts are so deep that not all of these positions will be vacant. So please consider the gravity of the situation and appreciate what in the way of pay and benefits we are able to secure this session. We may see some pay increases and we may increase the DROP by an additional three years, but it is highly likely that we will see a young father or mother lose his or her job.

Most of what is left to do for this session is accomplished at the top levels of the Legislative Leadership. We have made our case for the critical needs of our membership to them and now it's a matter of forcing the issue on our legislation. The team will be busy from Monday until *Sine die* on Friday this coming week hustling to bring our issues home. Let's keep our fingers crossed!

PBA LEGISLATIVE AGENDA FOR 2008

- Equitable pay increases for state correctional, correctional probation, and law enforcement officers represented by Florida PBA, including but not limited to, pay compression and retention issues.
- Legislation extending the period of DROP participation for Law Enforcement, Correctional and Correctional Probation Officers, at the rank of Captain and below, an additional 36 months **(Representative Julio Robaina HB 501 and Senator Carey Baker – SB 706)**
- Legislation including Institutional Security Specialist to the definition of Certified Correctional Officer. **(Representative Pat Patterson – HB 427 and Senator Ted Deutch – SB 924)**
- Legislation allowing for purchase of Special Risk credit for certain academy time. **(Representative Anitere Flores – HB 379 and Senator Mike Fasano – SB 106)**
- Legislation changing the Special Risk upgraded credit from two percent to three percent. **(Representative Ed Hooper – HB 397 and Senator Mike Fasano – SB 294)**
- Support for the Officer Malcolm Thompson Act. **(Representative Frank Attkisson – HB 57 and Senator Steve Oelrich – SB 1024)**
- Support for legislation to place security cameras in certain late night business parking lots **(Representative Ari Porth HB 325/HB 327 and Senator Jeff Atwater SB 2770/SB 2774)**
- Support for legislation to require life sentences for murder or attempted murder of a law enforcement officer. **(Representative Will Snyder – HB 321 and Senator Paula Dockery - SB 1064)**

With reference to other legislation, the Board of Directors gives authorization to the Director of Legislative Services to support legislation favorable to the membership or oppose legislation harmful to the membership.



President John Rivera (center) discussing our Eight Year DROP legislation with our House Sponsor Representative Julio Robaina (right).



Treasurer Ernie George (center) and Executive Director David Murrell looking over proposed legislation while on the fourth floor lobby.



Representative Franklin Sands (left) is lobbied by Broward County PBA Vice President Pat Hanrahan and Broward County PBA Representative Kathleen Andersen (center).



PBA Lobbyist Jim Spearing testifies in support of our Eight DROP legislation during the House Government Efficiency & Accountability Council.



PBA Presidents Bill Smith and Matt Tyre talking over some strategy.



Treasurer Ernie George discussing the West Palm Beach Pension bill with House Sponsor Carl Domino.