

Rolling Over to 2012!

My goodness! Where has the past year gone?!? I think I say that to you every year. And this year I really mean it! (too) I haven't progressed to on-line banking yet so I know I'll spend the next little bit turning 2011 into 2012 on my checks. Hope I'm not the only one who needs some time practicing that.

The first order of business for me with you in this New Year is to say a big, whole-hearted **THANK YOU!!!** So, so many of you responded to the "call to arms" to oppose Senate Bill 386 and House Bill 271. It is my job to orchestrate that, and then, go one-by-one to members of the first committee that would hear that bill. The reason I know you have been working right alongside me is that as I moved about the Capitol with my appointments I was told: "glad you came in...I've heard from A LOT of people about this bill"; or, "you've created quite a ruckus about this bill...tell me about it". And so, when I say thank you for all your efforts, I really mean it!

We are organizing next steps and will be distributing more information in early January. So far, both HB 271 and SB 386 have remained in their first committees without getting a hearing! That's a good thing...the longer they stay bottled up there, the better. And so, when I say that I really appreciate all your help, I really mean it!

In the midst of **opposing SB 396/HB 271**, we will also be trying to get some traction with the FMO bills. These are the bills developed by the FMO Board of Directors based on input you gave about changes you'd like to see in Chapter 723. There was a summary of these bills in your last magazine. [**Senate Bill 822** by **Senator Mike Fasano**, R-New Port Richey; **House Bill 537** by **Representative Ken Roberson**, R-Port Charlotte] **Senator Nancy Detert**, R-Venice has also filed two bills to help mobile home owners if they can get any movement. [**Senate Bill 572** and **Senate Bill 574**] And so, when I say that we're running on parallel tracks in opposite directions, I really mean it!

The Legislature is facing a very big task. They must create new boundary lines for all legislative seats based on the data and demographics obtained through the census. Both reapportionment chairmen, **Senator Don Gaetz**, R-Destin, and **Representative Will Weatherford**, R-Wesley Chapel, have demonstrated tremendous leadership and both the House and Senate have already rolled out several proposed maps. When the Legislature completes its work, the Florida Supreme Court must agree that the proposed Florida legislative district lines meet Florida Constitution requirements. Sometime that requires a "do over". This will be my fourth reapportionment session. They are not fun. In addition, our Budget Chairs, **Senator J. D. Alexander**, R-Lake Wales, and **Representative Denise Grimsley**, R-Sebring, must guide the Legislature to cut the current budget by \$ 1.7-\$ 2 billion. That is tough duty, indeed! And so, when I say the next four to six months are going to be tough, I really mean it!

We will have a busy, exciting time over the next several months. As we turn our calendars to a New Year, please know how proud I am to represent all of you! And, I really mean it!!