

STATE CAPITOL BRIEFS – FRIDAY, MARCH 27, 2009  
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CRETUL CONFIDENT SESSION CAN END ON TIME

House Speaker Larry Cretul tried to convince a room full of reporters Friday that everything is on track pretty much as usual despite the cloud of the budget shortfall hanging over lawmakers. Cretul said about 22 percent of the 843 bills filed this year have had a hearing in a House committee, which he said he doesn't believe is far off track where the House normally is. And he said the 35 days remaining in the regular session should be enough to work out a budget for the coming year and recess. "I'm hoping and expecting we will be out of here on time," said Cretul, R-Ocala.

HOFFMAN'S FAMILY SAYS WEAKENED INFORMANT BILL NEEDS MORE PROTECTIONS Representatives of the family of Rachel Hoffman say legislation spurred by her death while working as a police informant has been weakened too much and they'll push to strengthen it. The bill (HB 271), known as Rachel's Law, was approved unanimously in the House Criminal and Civil Justice Policy Council Friday, but with an amendment that sought to ease concerns of law enforcement that the measure went too far to protect informants. Hoffman family lawyer Lance Block said he hopes the final version of the legislation will require that informants are advised of their right to a lawyer before agreeing to do it, a ban on the use of people in substance abuse treatment for informant work and a prohibition on non-violent offenders from being used in undercover operations involving violent offenders. "If any one of these provisions had been in place before this tragedy, Rachel would still be alive today," Block said. The bill is now in the House Criminal and Civil Justice Appropriations Committee. A similar Senate version (SB 604) is awaiting a hearing in the Judiciary Committee.

SCHOOL DISTRICT BREAKOUT

Just a quick breakout on what some of the state's biggest school districts would get money-wise under the Senate's budget proposal: The total school funding is about \$17.9 billion, a 0.22 percent decrease from the past year. However, the average funding per student would hold steady at \$6,860.36. Brevard County would lose \$14.2 million for a total \$478.5 million. Broward would bring in \$1.7 billion, for a loss of \$15 million. Miami-Dade would bring in \$2.3 billion, an increase of \$11.3 million. Duval County gets \$846.5 million under the proposal, losing \$9 million from the previous year. Hillsborough County would receive \$1.3 billion, a loss of \$18.9 million. Orange County would net \$1.15 billion, a loss of \$6.4 million. Palm Beach County would bring in \$1.2 billion, for a \$7.5 million boost over last year. And Pinellas County would receive \$711.6 million, for a

loss of \$14.7 million.

#### LONGTIME AIDE JOAN GLICKMAN DIES

Joan Glickman, a familiar face at the Capitol for years as an aide to South Florida lawmakers, has died, the Miami Herald reported Thursday. Glickman, served as an aide to former senators Howard Foreman and Daryl Jones, and most recently as an aide to Sen. Frederica Wilson, D-Miami. The Herald reported that Glickman died Wednesday.

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