

BOCA CHAMBER  
**GOVERNMENT & PUBLIC POLICY**  
**CONNECTION**

**March 2013**

**PROTECTING BUSINESS**

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[www.bocaratonchamber.com](http://www.bocaratonchamber.com)



# LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

## For Business - For Jobs - For Prosperity ... For Boca Raton

A MESSAGE FROM:

**Jim Nau**  
**CPCU, ARM, WCP**  
National Council on Compensation Insurance

The Chamber's Government Affairs Committee works on behalf of the Chamber members to identify and analyze public policy issues and provide recommendations on such matters to the Chamber's Board of Directors. In addition, the Government Affairs Committee works to actively represent the Chamber's positions in legislative, municipal and regulatory forums that deal with issues important to the Chamber's members. In the next two months we will be focusing on state legislative issues that affect Boca Raton area businesses.

Government Affairs Committee members participated in a "fly-in" to Tallahassee March 6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup>. The purpose of our trip to Tallahassee was to meet with all of our area's elected state representatives and senators to promote a healthy business environment in Palm Beach County and Florida. March is the heart of Florida's legislative session. Making a visit during the legislative session sends a strong message of our interest and desire for action on matters important to our members. We made presentations to our local representatives to recommend action on the following key state initiatives endorsed by the Greater Boca Raton Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors:

- Support HB537/ SB528. Prohibits an initiative or referendum process relating to a local comprehensive plan amendment or map amendment change.
- Support HB 655/SB726. Blocks local Governments from adopting paid sick time measures.
- Support HB 605/SB662. Lower's Worker's Compensation insurance costs by stabilizing the cost of prescription drugs dispensed by physicians.
- Support HB629/SB656. Reduction of Sales Tax on rental commercial real estate property.
- Support reinstating the 2012-2013 reduction of \$300 million in the 2013-2014 higher education budget.

We look forward to interacting with our elected officials. The Government Affairs Committee will monitor the results of our efforts and keep you informed of the outcomes in future editions of this newsletter. Thank you for your support.

### City & County News

- In reaction to a string of arrests in Florida and other states regarding the improper use of proceeds derived from internet cafes, the House Select Committee on Gaming heard HB 155 by Representative Trujillo. The language contained in the bill calls for an outright ban on Internet Cafés and other similar businesses. Palm Beach County has had a moratorium on the cafes in our area but that is scheduled to expire in March.
- The State Revenue Estimating Conference increased projected tax revenues at a meeting Friday. The economists added \$153 million in tax revenues in the budget year that ends June 30, and \$106.5 million for the year that begins July 1<sup>st</sup>.

### State News

- Business Identity Theft is growing exponentially in the State of Florida. Florida is the only state to have a department dedicated to helping victims of this crime and organizing the methods needed to prevent it. In 2011, it was a 50 billion dollar crime nationwide. How can you protect your business? Click [www.bitresource.com](http://www.bitresource.com) for all the information.
- Florida has the 41st worst legal climate ranking and puts our state in the bottom 10 in the nation – a reputation that does nothing to attract new businesses or give existing business owners the confidence they need to grow their business, make investments or increase their workforce. To learn more about this issue visit the Florida Chamber [here](#).
- Did you know that while Florida is the fourth most populous state, we rank 15th in manufacturing activity? **Manufacturing Fast Facts**
  - Manufacturing represents 3% of Florida's economy relative to employment and 5% of Gross State Product.
  - Over the last decade, Florida lost 118,838 workers while gaining \$6.9 billion in Gross State Product.
  - The industry's average wage for Florida is \$51,848, which is higher than the overall Florida average of \$41,574.
  - 340,093 Floridians are employed in the Manufacturing Industry- approximately 3% of Florida's total employment.

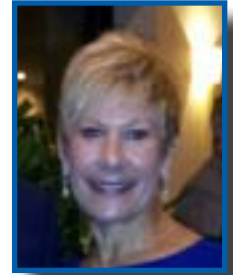
### Federal News

- "Boca Chamber Takes The Hill" You are invited to help bring the voice of the South Florida Business Community to our Congressional Delegation in Washington DC! Join other Chamber members as we meet and talk with Washington Insiders May 20th – May 23rd 2013. Click [here](#) for more information.
- The US Chamber is launching a new [Immigration website](#) as part of a larger initiative to mobilize the business community and grassroots support in favor of comprehensive immigration reform.
- Restaurants are looking for savings as the healthcare law pushes up labor costs. For a comprehensive article on the issue, click [www.restaurantslaw.com](http://www.restaurantslaw.com)

# LOCAL LEADERSHIP

*A Moment With ...*

**Constance Scott, CRA Chairman & City Council Member, City of Boca Raton**



Constance Scott was elected in March of 2009 and is currently serving her second three year term on the City Council of Boca Raton. She holds a B.A. in Economics from the University of Michigan.

Council Member Scott is a Business Counselor for the Small Business Development Center and former Business Banker for Citibank. She has over 20 years' experience in finance and Economic Development and has had the privilege of serving the City of Boca Raton as the Public Information Officer and the County of Palm Beach as an Economic Development Specialist.

## **What are your top priorities for the City of Boca Raton?**

- Pension Reform/long Term Sustainability
- Comprehensive plan for city Owned Land and Overlay District for 20th Street
- Economic Development Strategies and Incentives for Job Creation
- Continued Implementation of Downtown Branding and Marketing Plan including Pattern Book adoption, Business Improvement District, Transportation /Shuttle System

## **What do you foresee as being the biggest challenge for the City?**

Pension Reform, Unfunded Mandates from State and Federal Government

## **What steps is the City taking to ensure we are heading in the right economic direction?**

- Maintaining a balanced budget
- Continuing to fund the Economic Development Incentive Program
- Maintaining our AAA rated bond status
- Looking forward to continue to allocate resources efficiently and effectively and to control the costs of providing exemplary services.
- Continuing to build and expand collaborative relationships with the business, academic and Not for Profit community.

## **What steps is the City taking with other governmental entities to ensure Boca Raton remains the premier location for the relocation of business?**

- Close Partnership with our Local, County, State and Federal Elected Officials.
- Active participation with Florida League of Cities, Palm Beach County League of Cities, Metropolitan Planning Organization
- Partner with Business Development Board of Palm Beach County for Marketing and Corporate Recruitment
- Close Partnership with Boca Raton Chamber of Commerce
- Development of a Sister Cities Program to reach out Internationally

## **Personally, what do you appreciate the most about the City?**

What I appreciate most about the City of Boca Raton as an elected official is the quality and character of our residents. This community continues to come together and support the success and achievements of all the businesses, not for profit organizations, and academic institutions. The philanthropic support for the Arts, the Hospital and our Universities is unbelievable. I am so proud to represent our community and to serve on the City Council where we set policy that will maintain the quality and excellence the City of Boca Raton residents deserve.

[\*\*Click Here to view the Boca Chamber's Legislative Agenda\*\*](#)



# LEGISLATOR LOOK-UP

## FEDERAL & STATE OFFICIALS UNITED STATES SENATE

### Marco Rubio

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### Bill Nelson

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## UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

### Ted Deutch, District 21

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## STATE SENATE

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### Joseph Abruzzo – District 25

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### Maria Sachs, District 34

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## FLORIDA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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### Lori Berman, District 90

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### Bill Hager, District 87

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### Kevin Rader, District 81

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### Irving L. "Irv" Slosberg, District 91

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## Local Officials COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

[www.pbcgov.com](http://www.pbcgov.com)  
301 N. Olive Avenue  
West Palm Beach, FL 33401

### Steven L. Abrams, Mayor, District 4

561-276-1220  
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### Priscilla A. Taylor, Vice Mayor, District 7

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### Hal Valeche, Chair, District 1

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### Paulette Burdick, District 2

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### Shelley Vana, Vice Chair, District 3

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### Mary Lou Berger, District 5

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### Jess R. Santamaria, District 6

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## CITY OF BOCA RATON

### Council

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### Mayor Susan Whelchel

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### Deputy Mayor Susan Haynie

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### Commissioner Anthony Majhess

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### Commissioner Michael Mullaugh

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### Commissioner Constance J. Scott

## BLU-PAC

Business Leaders United Political Action Committee  
*Supporting candidates who support  
a pro-business environment in  
Boca Raton*

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

The Boca Chamber's Government Affairs Committee meets the 2nd Thursday of every month at the Boca Chamber from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.  
US Chamber Info: [www.uschamber.com](http://www.uschamber.com) • Florida Chamber of Commerce Info: [www.flchamber.com](http://www.flchamber.com)  
City of Boca Raton: [ci.boca-raton.fl.us](http://ci.boca-raton.fl.us)  
Greater Boca Raton Chamber of Commerce: [www.bocaratonchamber.com](http://www.bocaratonchamber.com) • (561) 395-4433