

UNITED FACULTY OF FLORIDA

2023 Legislative Session - Week 8



Pictured: Democratic Senator Geraldine Thompson advocating for higher education students and community members during debate on SB 266.

TAKE ACTION!

Contact your local legislators and ask them to **oppose HB 999** which is set for a 2nd reading in the House.

Click here to tell your Rep to vote NO on HB 1355, which is a xenophobic attack on our international faculty and students.

Click here to **join the fight** against HB 1617 / SB 1718.

This Week in Tallahassee

On Wednesday, the Florida House passed HB 1445—this year's anti-union bill that will remove the right to payroll dues deduction and require 60% membership density for most public sector unions in Florida—sending it to Gov. DeSantis's desk for signature. At every step of the legislative process, no one except the bill's sponsors in the Senate or the House spoke in support of this terrible bill, and we will remember this harm when the next election cycle comes around. For now, the most important action every member can take to prepare for the implementation of this bill is to **use these simple instructions to sign up for eDues** (if you haven't already done so), ask your colleagues to sign up, and recruit new members to join your local union chapter. Together, we will overcome this attack and emerge stronger than ever on the other side!

If you'd like assistance with joining the eDues system, check out the opportunities provided on page 2 of this newsletter. While sign-up for this system is simple (and requires on average fewer than three minutes), we have various options to assist our members who need more information or would like a little help from UFF's staff and leaders.

Not sure who to contact? Find your locally elected legislator **here!**

SB 266 / HB 999

On Thursday, SB 266 was heard for the second reading on the Senate floor, which is generally the last opportunity for the body to propose and pass amendments. Senators Polsky, Thomas, and Osgood filed amendments to reduce the targeting of students and faculty of color, prevent the loss of research grant funding, and preserve the national standing of Florida's universities. Of course, these good sense amendments failed due to the ideological extremism of Senate conservatives. The bill moved to a third reading in the Senate where it passed along nearly perfect party lines, with Senator Bradley being the only Republican breaking ranks to vote for academic freedom.

HB 999 is not currently scheduled for its final hearing on the House floor, more than likely because the House will take up the final version of 266 once it passes third reading. This process allows the House to move more quickly on the bill and avoid what is known as the "reconciliation" process, where two versions of the same bill must be aligned in both bodies before final passage.

For now, continue to contact your local legislators and tell them to vote NO on HB 999. You can find links and talking points in the "Take Action" box on page 1.



Pictured: Democratic Senator Tina Polsky fighting to protect grant funding at Florida's universities.

Transition to eDues

In just a few weeks, UFF has already transitioned over 1500 members to the eDues system, which represents just over 17% of our total membership! While this is incredible progress in only a short time, we still have a long way to go before we have reached the benchmarks that will ensure we can protect our collective rights around the state.

Joining is simple! Search your email inbox for your eDues invitation from the following email address: centralmemberssystem@floridaea.org. This digital invitation will contain all of the information you need to join this secure system. On average, it takes a member less than three minutes to sign up.

There is no need to end your local dues deduction, as new dues deductions will not begin until after July 1st. However, if you have any questions or need extra help, you can join one of two weekly opportunities to get any support you need!

Every Monday from 11:00 am - 1:00 pm, UFF hosts statewide Zoom eDues Office Hours, where members can receive one-on-one assistance with signing up for the eDues system. [**Join here!**](#)

Every Friday, from 3:00 - 4:00pm, UFF is hosting Fight Back Friday townhalls, where all members can receive eDues instructions and work on local organizing plans to help their colleagues join this safe and secure system. [**Register here!**](#)