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Subject: FW: 11/09/11 Education Round-Up

FYI – have a great day!

Sincerely,

Kevin Smith,
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From: Higgins, Deborah
Sent: Wednesday, November 09, 2011 10:40 AM
Subject: 11/09/11 Education Round-Up



[Bipartisan rewrite of education law sparks debate](#)
(Associated Press © 11/09/2011)

WASHINGTON — In a divided Washington, there's widespread agreement that the sweeping No Child Left Behind education law needs fixing. But finding a fix hasn't been easy. Civil and disability rights groups have banded together with an unlikely ally, the business-friendly U.S. Chamber of Commerce, to oppose a bipartisan update to the law that has been approved by a Senate committee. They say the...

[Slot machine decision appealed](#)
(Bradenton Herald © 11/09/2011)

Associated Press TALLAHASSEE – An appellate court decision that said the Legislature can approve slot machines anywhere in the state is being appealed to the Florida Supreme Court. If allowed to stand, that ruling would allow lawmakers to permit destination casino resorts in Florida. Bills have been filed for the 2012 legislative session, which starts Jan. 10, to license three such resorts...

[Backsliding on school reform](#)

(Bradenton Herald © 11/09/2011)

When it comes to federal school reform, the overriding lesson is to be careful what you wish for. The No Child Left Behind Act, signed into law in 2002, ushered in an era of badly needed educational accountability, requiring schools to improve the lot of disadvantaged, black and Latino students who up to that point had been shorted academically in almost every way. But the law was so poorly writt...

[No sales tax option for school board](#)

(Citrus County Chronicle © 11/09/2011)

Mike Wright Staff Writer INVERNESS — Ideas for a sales tax increase to help pay for Citrus County public education are already off the table. School board members learned Tuesday that state law allows districts to increase the sales tax by a half-percent — but the money can only be used for capital outlay such as new schools and other construction projects. Board m...

[Recruiting minorities to STEM requires a focused effort](#)

(CommunityCollegeTimes © 11/09/2011)

Creating affinity among diverse populations on a college campus is about "brokering relationships," according to Donald McCoy, who spent one-third of his 30 years with IBM working on outreach programs to increase diversity. The pipeline of future technicians and engineers is built by helping women and people from various cultural experiences feel valued, said McCoy, who was trained as ...

[Volusia teachers point to county raises to rally for their own pay increase](#)

(Daytona Beach News-Journal © 11/09/2011)

DELAND — Chanting about the 3.5 percent raises county government employees got last week, Volusia County teachers paraded through DeLand on Tuesday to say it's their turn for bigger paychecks. About 150 teachers rallied outside Tuesday's School Board meeting after marching a few blocks from the county government administration building. Thirteen of them later spoke to the board about the need f...

[For States, Collaboration Key to NCLB Waivers](#)

(Education Week © 11/09/2011)

States that want newly offered relief from certain provisions of the No Child Left Behind Act are scrambling to satisfy an easily overlooked requirement that they "meaningfully" engage with teachers, unions, parents, and community organizations, and even modify their waiver proposals based on that input. Federal education officials warn that failure to meet the collaboration requirement could d...

[Duval School Board blasts education nonprofit over letter](#)

(FL Times-Union © 11/09/2011)

The letter left members wondering what it was trying to say. Posted: November 8, 2011 - 5:32pm | Updated: November 9, 2011 - 8:14am Advertisement By Teresa Stepzinski jacksonville.com Copyright 2011 The Florida Times-Union. All rights reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed. November 8, 2011 - 05:32pm Duval School Board blasts education nonpr...

[Fundraising efforts have saved prep sports in Duval public schools](#)

(Florida Times-Union © 11/09/2011)

Take a bow, Jacksonville. You saved sports in Duval County's public schools. All of them. Duval athletic director Jon Fox will announce today that all the winter sports on the chopping block — varsity wrestling, varsity slow-pitch softball and junior varsity soccer — have been saved through fundraising efforts. Those three join varsity tennis, cross country and golf as sports that were going to be...

[Duval School Board blasts education nonprofit over letter](#)

(Florida Times-Union © 11/09/2011)

Duval County School Board members took umbrage Tuesday at a Jacksonville Public Education Fund letter that they characterized as misleading at best and, at worst, an effort to undercut the board and Superintendent Ed Pratt-Dannals' leadership. The Oct. 31 letter accompanied the annual report for the local nonprofit, which works to improve education in the community. In the letter, sent to about 15...

[Who's lacking vision here?](#)

(Ft. Myers News Press 11/09/11)

Edward "Jim" Farrell of Lehigh Acres types 80 words per minute. How many mistakes? "I don't know," says Farrell, laughing. "I can't see them." Farrell, who says he received too much oxygen in his incubator, has been blind since birth.

Determined not to let blindness keep him from a good job, Farrell enrolled at the Visually Impaired Persons Center of Southwest Florida.

[Governor appoints five new SFCC trustees](#)

(Highlands Today © 11/09/2011)

TALLASSEE - Gov. Rick Scott on Tuesday reappointed Tami Cullens and chose five others to serve on the district board of trustees for South Florida Community College. The five others are: Derren J. Bryan, 39, of Bowling Green, the general manager and information technology director for Albritton Insurance Services LLC. Kenneth A. Lambert, 51, of Wauchula, the vice president of enterprise sol...

[Online Grows, Doubts Persist](#)

(Inside Higher Education © 11/09/2011)

Despite theories that online enrollments might be approaching a plateau, the number of students taking at least one online course grew substantially for the ninth straight year, according to a new survey from the Babson Survey Research Group. However, belief among academic deans and faculty that the quality of online education is at least as good as the face-to-face alternative continues to grow...

[Board to Decide on Split Today](#)

(Lakeland Ledger © 11/09/2011)

LAKELAND | Florida's university governing body is set to decide today whether the University of South Florida Polytechnic will become the state's 12th independent university, and stakeholders scrambled to influence that decision up to the last minute Tuesday. Facts View streaming video of Board meeting at: www.flbog.org/pressroom Follow Ledger reporter Mar...

[Board looking to modify school uniform policy](#)

(Lehigh Acres Citizen © 11/09/2011)

With the opening of new schools in the East Zone next year, the Lee County School Board is looking to modify its school uniform policy to give authority to the superintendent for those newly established schools that want to implement uniforms for their students. Superintendent Dr. Joseph Burke said in order to give those schools flexibility, Board Attorney Keith Martin reported that they should m...

[Superintendent may have difficulty reaching goals](#)

(Lehigh Acres Citizen © 11/09/2011)

The superintendent for the Lee County School District will face some challenges in meeting some of his goals, due to the Florida Board of Education looking to change the cut scores for FCAT testing. The Lee County School Board held a workshop Tuesday afternoon to discuss an administrative performance assessment instrument that it can use for grading Dr. Joseph Burke's goals. At the beginning of ...

[Advocates push for millions for child development](#)

(Miami Herald © 11/09/2011)

Who took the cookies from the cookie jar? The suspects, at least according to the children's book based on the classic schoolyard tune, are a sweet-swiping cabal of woodland creatures. A bird. A turtle. A mouse. And ultimately, an army of ants. The Pre-K students at REM Learning Center in South Dade had no trouble identifying each of the offending critters when education advocate David Lawre...

[Legislators address education funding at forum in Dade](#)

(Miami Herald/Naked Politics Blog © 11/09/2011)

Three Democratic lawmakers joined dozens of parents at Dr. Michael M. Krop Senior High in north Miami-Dade County for a forum Monday night. The big topic: money for public education. The high school's PTSA and the Florida PTA hosted the event, where the legislators, Sen. Oscar Braynon, Rep. Daphne Campbell and Rep. Barbara Watson, fielded questions. NBC news reporter – and Krop parent – A...

[Barron football coach questioned about 'disturbing photo' showing him grabbing player's facemask](#)

(Naples Daily News © 11/09/2011)

COLLIER COUNTY — Barron Collier football coach Mark Ivey and Principal Tim Kutz met with the parent of a Cougar football player Tuesday about photographs showing Ivey grabbing the player's facemask and touching his face during last week's game, the parent said. No formal complaint was lodged and the district said Ivey is not under investigation. But Chalmers Brothers, the father of a senior offen...

[Orange schools to ask businesses for funding help](#)

(Orlando Sentinel © 11/09/2011)

The Orange County School Board on Tuesday gave the go-ahead to a plan the chairman hopes will raise millions of dollars for district programs in coming years. "Increasingly, we are going to have to look to ourselves to fund programs we need, like mentoring," said board chairman Bill Sublette, citing diminishing government money. The board approved a committee that will develop a "philant...

[Residents weigh in on new Seminole schools leader](#)

(Orlando Sentinel © 11/09/2011)

The search is on for a new superintendent of Seminole County schools, and the School Board on Tuesday heard suggestions on what characteristics the new leader of the school district should have. Whoever is hired to replace Bill Vogel, who is retiring in June, should be teacher-oriented, consider beefing up vocational education and keep up Seminole's standing as a high quality school system, speak...

[Orange board OKs two charters, rejects two](#)

(Orlando Sentinel © 11/09/2011)

After previously rejecting about a dozen charter school applications, the Orange County School Board on Tuesday approved two charters for Fall 2012. One will add elementary grades to the A-rated Orlando Science middle/high school. The other would give one charter to Mavericks Charter Schools, which operates a school in Osceola that has an incomplete rating for failure to test enough students. T...

[Lake-Sumter Community College ranks fifth in nation among small schools for technology use](#)

(Orlando Sentinel © 11/09/2011)

LEESBURG — Lake-Sumter Community College has been recognized for its "cutting-edge use of technology" in the seventh annual Digital Community Colleges Survey. LSCC ranked No. 5 among in the small-colleges category (fewer than 5,000 students) in the survey by e.Republic's Center for Digital Education and Converge Online. Criteria included integration of technology in curriculum and campu...

[New state university a loser for taxpayers](#)

(Orlando Sentinel © 11/09/2011)

Florida legislators have slashed state funding for higher education in recent years, making it increasingly challenging for the board members who oversee public universities to stretch that dwindling supply of tax dollars across the system without sacrificing its quality. Yet this week members are set to vote on a proposal that would make their job even tougher. A branch campus of the Universit...

[Palm Beach County School District to hold workshop on purchasing practices, math standards](#)

(Palm Beach Post © 11/09/2011)

The Palm Beach County School Board will meet at 5 p.m. today (Wednesday) at district headquarters for a series of workshops and discussions. Of note will be a presentation on current purchasing policies and procedures, and will include information on diversity in picking vendors. The agenda notes that school board member Chuck Shaw has asked the board to have a discussion on whether the distr...

[Reject unneeded university](#)

(Palm Beach Post © 11/09/2011)

The Florida Board of Governors is scheduled to vote today on whether the University of South Florida Polytechnic in Lakeland can become an independent university separate from the main USF campus in Tampa. For several reasons, the board should vote no. For starters, the state cannot afford a 12th university. The Legislature has cut the budget for the 11 members of the State University System each...

[Vote on Bay Haven virtual schools delayed](#)

(Panama City News Herald © 11/09/2011)

PANAMA CITY — A "breakdown in communications" led to a lengthy debate during Tuesday's School Board meeting about the course of action to take regarding two virtual charter school applications. At stake are a virtual middle school and high school proposed by Bay Haven Charter Academy Inc. Bay Haven officials wrote two charters for the virtual schools, and the charters wen...

[FSU PC event draws crowd to hear Gov. Scott](#)

(Panama City News Herald © 11/09/2011)

PANAMA CITY BEACH — During his campaign and several times since taking office, Gov. Rick Scott has recalled his humble roots for crowds as he explained his political views and policy initiatives. Tuesday night at Edgewater Beach & Golf Resort was no different as the governor told the crowd gathered for Florida State University Panama

City's annual dinner about his stint at a col...

[New College provost: Faculty's tasks extend far beyond classes](#)

(Sarasota Herald-Tribune © 11/09/2011)

State Sen. Mike Bennett recently expressed his support for Gov. Rick Scott's approach to higher education ("Scott is right on higher ed," Nov. 1), taking a stand in favor of lowering costs for students and making sure that Florida's college graduates are prepared to succeed in today's tough economy. I can assure you that all of us who serve as faculty and administrators in the State University Sys...

[At Florida colleges, faculty's tasks extend far beyond classes](#)

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[Broward weighs single-sex schools to compete with charters, private schools](#)

(South Florida Sun-Sentinel © 11/09/2011)

Single-sex education could be one way to compete with charters and private schools, Broward School Board members said Tuesday. But the district would have to create options for both boys and girls, staff said. "I think it's a great way to bring back that market share," said board member Robin Bartleman. "We should really look into doing this." ...

[With support of students, self-esteem program will continue in Hillsborough schools](#)

(St. Petersburg Times © 11/09/2011)

TAMPA — Black Girl Speaks, the writing and self-esteem program that sparked a debate about contracting on the Hillsborough County School Board, was renewed Tuesday after students, teachers and administrators came forward in strong support. "She is phenomenal," said Blake High School principal Jacqueline Haynes, referring to performance artist Talitha Anyabwele, who runs the federally funded...

[Parents make pleas to Pinellas school board over proposed zoning changes](#)

(St. Petersburg Times © 11/09/2011)

LARGO — More than two dozen parents came in the middle of a workday, each with a plea to let their children be, each with a school that they love. Whether their devotion was to Leila Davis Elementary in Clearwater, Shore Acres Elementary in St. Petersburg, Oakhurst Elementary in Largo or any other school any other place, the parents who spoke before the Pinellas County school board Tuesday ...

[USF Poly's bid for independence gets its first test](#)

(St. Petersburg Times © 11/09/2011)

TAMPA — To split or not to split? Specifically, should the University of South Florida's branch campus in Lakeland become the state's 12th public university? That's the big decision now in the hands of the Florida Board of Governors, which meets today in Boca Raton. And it's a choice wrought with political land mines, mostly because of who's taking sides. For months, the idea has been pus...

[Broward weighs single-sex schools to compete with charters, private schools](#)

(Sun-Sentinel © 11/09/2011)

11 PM EST, November 8, 2011 Advertisement Single-sex education could be one way to compete with charters and private schools, Broward School Board members said Tuesday. But the district would have to create options for both boys and girls, staff said. "I think it's a great way to bring back that market share," said board member Robin Bartleman. "We should really look into doing t...

[Bipartisan rewrite of education law sparks debate](#)

(Tampa Bay News 9 © 11/09/2011)

WASHINGTON – In a divided Washington, there's widespread agreement that the sweeping No Child Left Behind education law needs fixing. But finding a fix hasn't been easy. Civil and disability rights groups have banded together with an unlikely ally, the business-friendly U.S. Chamber of Commerce, to oppose a bipartisan update to the law that has been approved by a Senate committee. They ...

[STEM grads help bring new business to Florida](#)

(Tampa Tribune © 11/09/2011)

Gov. Rick Scott's 2012 Job Creation and Economic Growth agenda includes an encouraging focus on Florida's STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) subjects. Florida's higher education graduates have a huge effect on the state's business community, and these programs are important to bolster a work force that attracts new businesses to the state. Business interests looking to succee...

[Old contracts flawed, but schools mentor gets new one](#)

(Tampa Tribune © 11/09/2011)

TAMPA The Hillsborough County School Board approved a contract Tuesday for a girls' mentoring program after an internal review found errors in previous agreements. In a nine-page report, Assistant Superintendent Ken Otero said one of the mix-ups led board members to approve a contract that differed significantly from the one signed by the program provider. Still, his review found Black Girl Spea...

[Bill would restrict local governments' ability to charge impact fees or collect for new schools, roads](#)

(The Florida Current © 11/09/2011)

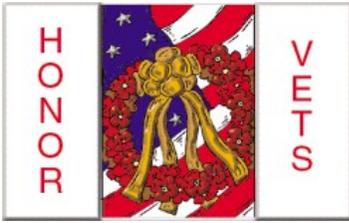
Cities and counties would be restricted from forcing developers to pay local impact fees or paying for new roads and schools under a House bill filed Tuesday. HB 603 by Rep. Michael Weinstein, R-Orange Park, would prohibit cities and counties from applying impact fees until July 1, 2015 unless approved by a two-thirds commission vote. Likewise, proportionate share mitigation for transportation...

[Homeless students need help now](#)

(Winter Haven News Chief © 11/09/2011)

BARTOW - Polk County's homeless students can't wait for the holidays to get assistance, says Dee Dee Wright, the Polk County School District's homeless liaison. They need necessities now, such as warm clothes and food. With cool temperatures already here, Wright said her department is accepting donations for the purchase of new zip-up hoodie jacket...

Have a stellar day! Please see the articles below.



St. Pete Times

Grade Book Blog

Florida lawmakers propose sick leave sharing bill

November 9, 2011

Amid all the [controversy](#) over whether school employees should get large payouts of unused sick leave is lost the generosity that many teachers and other workers seek to demonstrate with their sick leave, but can't.

From time to time, we learn of teachers who want to give away their sick days to ailing colleagues who need the paid days off much more than they do. Yet state law prohibits them from transferring their leave to anyone other than a family member.

This happened in Pasco County two years ago with Bayonet Point Middle [teacher Connie Duffy](#), and a year ago with Martin County [teacher Karen Gangi](#). ... [Read more](#)

Posted by Jeff Solochek at 10:14:56 am on November 09, 2011

Tallahassee Democrat

Dawkins tackles role with drive, optimism

By Ashley Ames

November 9, 2011

With his blue eyes and easy smile, it isn't surprising that his fellow students find Connor Dawkins approachable.

Which is good, since the 18-year-old Chiles High School senior is no stranger to representation. This year, his leadership roles include senior class president, president of the senior board, president of the student district advisory council, and the newest student member of the Leon County School Board. While the initial appointment to the school board came as a surprise, Dawkins has taken to the role, planning the future of student-district relations and new programs aimed at helping his fellow students succeed.

"The role in its most basic form is to relay everything the school board does to the students and get the students' opinions on every policy that is passed and bring that back to the school board," he said. "Sometimes it can be intimidating for (students) to email a school board member, or go straight to a school board member. But talking to me — I hope — wouldn't be as intimidating because I am closer to their age."

Dawkins is number 20 in two decades of Leon County student school board members, selected from a pool of about 10 principal-recommended high school students from across the district. Every year, a student is placed on the board to serve as a liaison between the district and the student body.

Dawkins admits that he was initially flying blind when it came to the school board — "I didn't really know, honestly, when I was first getting into the school board, what it was all about," he said. But that didn't stop him from expressing his ideas.

"I think he stood out just a notch above the other candidates based on his passion for public speaking," said Chris Petley, spokesman for Leon County schools, who helped interview Dawkins for the position. The candidates were asked a series of questions — how they planned on increasing communication between campuses, what their passions and projects would be as school board members — and, although all the candidates had similar experience and GPAs, Dawkins presented an ease that set him apart.

"He is so personable, and that position, you need someone who will be really good with the public," said Randy Pridgeon, LCSD divisional director for secondary schools, who also interviewed students for the position.

Dawkins ultimately wants to see speech clubs in high schools across the county, beginning with the implementation of TEDs — a forum for students to speak on technology, engineering and design, he explained — where students can practice their public speaking in front of their peers. But his primary role as student school board member, he said, is to serve as an intermediary.

"That's the whole reason I am on this, to listen to everyone," he said. "So I do want to take in everyone's opinions and everything, and see what they want to see happen."

"Sometimes it can be intimidating for (students) to email a school board member, or go straight to a school board member. But talking to me — I hope — wouldn't be as intimidating because I am closer to their age."

CONNOR DAWKINS student member, Leon County School Board In his role as president of the student district advisory council — made up of high school representatives across the county — he wants to shift the focus to discussing and forming opinions on local school board policy. Right now, he said, most of the SDAC time is spent planning activities. He wants that to change.

"In recent years, the SDAC had kind of gone toward having students plan activities for the school district, which I still want to do, but I kind of want to get away from that," he said. "I think the main goal of the SDAC needs to be going over policies."

The reason it was created, he said, was so students could discuss school board decisions and voice their opinions.

"Just planning all these events, we can't go over the policies," he said.

On a personal level, Dawkins is quick to laugh and eager to please. Two years ago, he moved to Tallahassee from Colorado with his family after his father lost his job and found work in Florida. Although the transition was a bumpy one for the family — being a sophomore in high school and not knowing anyone was difficult, he confessed — Dawkins determined that he was going to make the experience a positive one.

"After the first few weeks of living here, I decided that if I am miserable, it's not going to be fun at all," he said. "So I decided to turn it around, say it's a fresh start, might as well start fresh, so I did."

Dawkins now calls Tallahassee home, and loves his school, his friends and his college team, which recently changed from the Clemson Tigers (he has lots of family in the South) to the Florida State Seminoles. He loves the zombie apocalypse TV show "Walking Dead," mystery novels and the 1957 film, "12 Angry Men." He works part-time at Chick-fil-A to save up for college, which he hopes will be FSU.

Dawkins was born with one arm and a fused right elbow, something he said has never held him back.

"It's never, ever been a problem, except for the monkey bars — but luckily, the monkey bars don't matter," he said with a smile.

But while it isn't something that defines him, Dawkins said, he does let it drive him.

"I don't want it to define my personality at all, but I do let it drive me to do the best I possibly can in everything I do," he said, "so that people can look at (me) and say, 'Hey, he has one arm and he can do everything.' So people who maybe don't have everything can say, 'Hey, I can do that too.' You know?"

Ashley Dawkins, his mother, said Connor is someone with a perpetual glass-half-full perspective, a ray of sunshine in the family.

"He is always positive, always looks on the bright side, always makes us laugh," she said. "He helped the whole family kind of weather the move because of his positive outlook."

Ashley said she is proud of her son — who both she and his father, Jim Dawkins, watch every time there is a school board meeting. Connor was truly suited to the position, she added.

"He doesn't meet anyone that he can't be a friend with," she said.

Dee Dee Rasmussen, a member of the Leon County School Board, said Dawkins is one of the most exceptional students she has ever seen.

"He is one of those precocious young men who is not only intelligent, but compassionate and passionate," she said. "He is just a remarkable young man from every perspective."

In addition to his graduation in the spring, college applications and future aspirations — he is considering a career in sports management — Dawkins is excited to move forward with his ideas.

"By the end of the year, I want to have our TEDs up and functioning, with multiple people involved from all the schools around the county," he said, adding that the shift to SDAC policy discussion was also a priority. "Then I want to begin the talks with every school about starting a speech club."

He sees his involvement continuing, even after his time on the board is up.

"Hopefully, if I go to Florida State, I can still stay involved and try to get that started here in the county," he said.

Tallahassee Democrat

A house that Godby students built heads off to be a home

November 9, 2011

After nearly a year of planning, designing and construction by almost 100 students at Godby High School under the direction of teacher Roy Albertson, this 1,100-square-foot, two-bedroom, one-bath home leaves the school en route to Monticello, where it will be fitted on a lot for a new homeowner. The project, which cost \$45,000, was designed to provide handicapped accessibility. This is the third such home that has been constructed at Godby. Albertson said within a few weeks, another home is going to be started. "It's a great opportunity for the kids to gain confidence and learn about the building process," Albertson said.

Tallahassee Democrat

FSU law students win Mock Trial

By Hassan Shehzad Democrat writer

November 9, 2011

For a second year in a row, the Florida State University College of Law Mock Trial Team has won first place in the E. Earle Zehmer Memorial Mock Trial Competition.

According to FSU, the 2011 competition, hosted by the Florida Justice Association Young Lawyers Section, was held last weekend in Tampa.

Winning team members are third-year students Raul Arispe of Los Angeles and Marshawn Griffin of Pensacola, and second-year students Joey Chindamo of Longwood and Jennito Simon of Pompano Beach. They were coached by Tallahassee attorneys Dana Brooks, a shareholder at Eubanks, Barrett, Fasig & Brooks, and Matt Liebenhaut, who practices at the Law Office of Matt Liebenhaut.

"We are all so proud of our Mock Trial Team for winning this important statewide competition for a second year in a row," said Dean Don Weidner. "Special thanks go to the student competitors and to their coaches."

Other law schools competing in the event were University of Miami, Stetson University, Florida Coastal School of Law, Florida International University and Nova Southeastern University. Each school sent two teams to the competition.

This Mock Trial victory adds to a long list of recent competition successes for Florida State's advocacy teams. Most recently, the Moot Court Team won first place in the World Finals of the 2011 Manfred Lachs Space Law Moot Court Competition in Cape Town, South Africa.

Tallahassee Democrat

Slot machine decision being appealed

By Bill Kaczor

November 9, 2011

An appellate court decision that said the Legislature can approve slot machines anywhere in the state is being appealed to the Florida Supreme Court.

If allowed to stand, that ruling would allow lawmakers to permit destination casino resorts in Florida. Bills have been filed for the 2012 legislative session, which starts Jan. 10, to license three such resorts in South Florida.

Also, the Palm Beach County Legislative Delegation voted 9-1 Tuesday to file a local bill that would allow slots at the Palm Beach Kennel Club, a dog racing track. Such bills affecting a single jurisdiction ordinarily pass with little or no opposition if they are backed by the local delegation, but any expansion of gambling can expect to draw heavy opposition.

The casino legislation is being opposed by some on moral grounds as well as competing interests. Tourism-related businesses such as Walt Disney World also are lining up against casinos because of the fear they'll tarnish Florida's family-friendly image.

A three-judge panel of the 1st District Court of Appeal last month upheld a 2009 law allowing the machines at Hialeah Park although the horse racing track had been excluded from a 2004 state constitutional amendment permitting slots at other pari-mutuel facilities in Miami-Dade and Broward counties.

Appeals have been filed by competing pari-mutuels that received slots approval through the amendment.

Joel Perwin, a lawyer for two of those competitors, said on Tuesday he'll argue the Hialeah law is inconsistent with the amendment.

"The district court took a very narrow view," Perwin said.

Perwin's clients, Flagler Dog Track and Florida Gaming Centers Inc., which owns Miami Jai-Alai, filed their notice of appeal last week as did Calder Race Course Inc. The Supreme Court first must decide whether to take jurisdiction. If it does, the justices then will hear arguments on the merits of the case.

The appellate court ruled the amendment doesn't prohibit lawmakers from approving slots at facilities other than those that meet the amendment's criteria. Adopted by voters in 2004, it permitted slot machines at seven horse and dog tracks and jai alai frontons that had been active in Miami-Dade and Broward in the two years before the amendment went into effect if approved in local referendums. Broward voters authorized slots in 2005. Miami-Dade voters followed in 2008.

The legal dispute does not affect casinos operated by the Seminole Tribe. They are covered by federal law and an agreement with the state.

