

| |
|-----------------------|
| State Senators |
|-----------------------|

Candidate Name: Michael (Mike) Bennett

Election: General

District: 21

Party Affiliation: Republican

* No Response

Candidate Name: Dave Aronberg

Election: General

District: 27

Party Affiliation: Democrat

Biographical Sketch/Qualifications

- Native Floridian; graduated from South Florida public schools.
- Harvard College, B.A. '93; Harvard Law School, J.D. '96.
- Former Assistant Attorney General in the economic crimes division.
- Former White House Fellow in the Clinton and Bush Administrations.
- Former Special Assistant to the U.S. Department of the Treasury for international money laundering.
- Senate Chair of the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Everglades Restoration; worked to deliver millions in Everglades restoration funds to Southwest Florida.
- Vice Chair of the Senate Criminal Justice Committee; tightened Florida law against sex offenders, identity thieves and those who violate our privacy rights.
- Leads a consumer protection project that has returned more than \$4 million to constituents who complain about being ripped off.
- Named the Legislature's "strongest consumer advocate" in two Florida newspapers.

After reading it in its entirety, what is your position on Amendment 5 which eliminates local property taxes for schools?

Although I co-sponsored the recently enacted bill to cap local government spending and roll back property tax rates, I am concerned about Amendment 5 because it requires billions of dollars in unspecified new taxes to pay for it. I support continued efforts to jumpstart our housing market, but I worry that Amendment 5 will dramatically raise taxes on businesses and consumers, including a return of the dreaded services tax. Thus, I am withholding my support for Amendment 5 until I am assured that it will not result in massive tax hikes and harm the economic well-being of our communities.

What do you think is the most important environmental issue facing Florida and how will you work to address it?

The Everglades serve as a living reminder of Florida's past and are crucial to our State's future. Millions of us depend on the Everglades for our water supply, growth management, biodiversity and eco-tourism dollars. But even with the buyout of U.S. Sugar, the Everglades still face an uphill battle for survival. As Chair of the Senate's

Everglades Oversight Committee, I have worked across party lines to help secure millions for Everglades restoration. But the State cannot save the Everglades on its own. We need the federal government to fulfill its commitment to pay for half of the cleanup effort.

What do you think is the most important economic issue facing Florida and how will you work to address it?

This year's painful budget exposed deep flaws in our tax system, as the abundance of special interest tax loopholes from Tallahassee continues to force up property taxes locally. The legislature should review all the tax loopholes and exemptions and apply a public benefit test to determine which ones are good for our State, and which ones merely exist because a special interest group had a good lobbyist. If we focus on tax reform, rather than just tax relief, we can reduce property taxes for all Floridians -- homesteaders and non-homesteaders alike.

What do you think is the most important health care issue facing Floridians and how will you work to address it?

Nearly four million Floridians have no health insurance. Last session, I supported Governor Crist's "Cover Florida" plan to offer scaled-down insurance policies to the uninsured for \$150 or less a month. This was a good step, but we need to do more. If the federal government does not pass health care reform, then Florida should do it. One successful model is the Federal Employee Health Benefits Plan, which provides universal coverage through an innovative private-public partnership. Everyone should be entitled to the same quality health care coverage as our Members of Congress in Washington.

Candidate Name: Matt Caldwell

Election: Primary

District: 27

Party Affiliation: Republican

* No Response

Candidate Name: Ed Heeney

Election: Primary

District: 27

Party Affiliation: Republican

* No Response

Candidate Name: Aniana H. Robas

Election: General

District: 27

Party Affiliation: Green Party

* No Response

Candidate Name: Garrett Richter

Election: General

District: 37

Party Affiliation: Republican

* No Response
