

CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER  
**JIMMY PATRONIS'**

# WEEKLY RUNDOWN

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF FINANCIAL SERVICES

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Volume 15 | Number 3 | January 17, 2018

## Dear Fellow Floridians:

The numbers don't lie. More than 15 percent of firefighters reported having made at least one suicide attempt during their time in the fire service, compared to about 2 percent of the general population. Forty-six percent of firefighters reported having thought about suicide, compared to about 5 percent of the US population. These statistics are alarming and this is what we are fighting to change this session.

There is a measure moving through the Florida legislature that makes PTSD/mental health a covered, on-the-job injury under workers' compensation and I stood with first responder families and Sen. Lauren Book, Sen. Dana Young, and Rep. Willhite to urge lawmakers to support this measure. Our first responders arrive on any emergency scene without hesitation, without question. We can only imagine how difficult it is to face what they see daily. I'm putting the full weight of my office to increase benefits this legislative session for our first responders who suffer from PTSD. It's time Florida steps up for our fearless first responders.

Sincerely,



**Jimmy Patronis**  
Chief Financial Officer  
State of Florida

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## News of Interest

Panama City News Herald: [Patronis backs eliminating credit freeze fee](#)

Florida Politics: [Jimmy Patronis backs expanding PTSD benefits for first responders](#)

WGCU: [We talk about post-Irma insurance issues with Florida's CFO](#)

Associated Press: [Opioids, wildfires, PTSD among Florida Cabinet priorities](#)

Capitol News Service: [CFO Patronis supports Daylight Savings change](#)

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## Take Immediate Action to Fight Flu Epidemic

Chief Financial Officer and State Fire Marshal Jimmy Patronis calls on state organizations and companies to take immediate action to fight the flu epidemic. Recent reports state there have already been more than 20 pediatric deaths associated with the flu, with two of those deaths occurring right here in Florida. In an open letter, CFO Patronis encourages Department of Financial Services (DFS) offices, Florida Health Insurance Companies and HMOs, Florida Fire Marshals and Fire Departments, Florida State Chartered Banks and Credit Unions, Florida Licensed Insurance Agents, and Florida Healthy Kids to help Florida fight the flu epidemic. [Click here for a copy of the letter.](#)



"The flu epidemic has been deadly and everyone has the responsibility to ensure Floridians stay healthy," said CFO Jimmy Patronis. "I've been an ardent fighter for preventative medicine, and the flu vaccine is a good way to protect your health and the health of others."

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## CFO Patronis on Passage of Credit Report Freeze Fee Bill Out of Final House Committee

Chief Financial Officer (CFO) Jimmy Patronis issued the following statement regarding the unanimous

approval of House Bill 953, sponsored by Rep. Shawn Harrison (R-Tampa), by the Florida House of Representatives Commerce Committee.

"In today's digital world data breaches have become our reality, and it's important for Floridians to be able to easily freeze their credit to protect themselves from fraud. This vote in the House Commerce Committee is a win for Florida consumers.

"Thank you to Rep. Harrison for his steadfast commitment to eliminating the credit report freeze fee, to Commissioner Putnam for his work with me on this issue, and Senator Jeff Brandes (R-St. Petersburg) for his leadership on this issue in the Senate. I look forward to seeing this measure pass this legislative session."

The next stop for HB 953 is the House floor.

## CFO Sponsors Resolution for Florida Thrift Week

Chief Financial Officer Jimmy Patronis along with Governor Rick Scott and members of the Florida Cabinet on Friday signed a resolution declaring January 14-20, 2018 as "Florida Thrift Week." The resolution was done in partnership with the James Madison Institute (JMI), a Florida-based research and educational organization with the mission of keeping Floridians informed about their government, to renew the study and teaching of thrift to Floridians.



"Fifty percent of Americans lack a rainy-day fund and nearly 20 percent spend more than their income," said CFO Jimmy Patronis. "The importance of saving money is deeply rooted in American history and I am proud to sponsor a resolution that renews this historic educational movement. I encourage Floridians to practice thrift each day and strive for financial success."

The Department of Financial Services has a selection of financial education programs developed to help Florida's consumers build financial independence. The most recent financial literacy program, Finance Your Future, is a free, interactive online course designed to educate Florida's middle and high school students to use core money management concepts. The Department recently launched the Finance Your Future app. It is free and available for download in the Apple and Google Play stores.

In addition, JMI offers a free curriculum guide, "All About the Benjamins: Understanding the Value of Thrift", that has been used extensively in Florida high schools to teach students about the importance of thrift and other American values.

"National Thrift Week" was first observed January 17, 1916. The YMCA hosted the event on Benjamin Franklin's 210th birthday to honor his devotion to promoting one of the oldest American values - thrift. Considered as a true thrift advocate, Benjamin Franklin believed in the American people's ability to

collectively achieve financial independence through hard work, frugality and generosity.

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## Operation S.A.F.E., Be Scam Smart Workshops

Florida Chief Financial Officer Jimmy Patronis invites you to participate in [Operation S.A.F.E., Be Scam Smart](#), a free workshop for seniors, their families, and caregivers.



The Florida Department of Financial Services launched Operation S.A.F.E. (Stop Adult Financial Exploitation) as part of CFO Patronis' [On Guard for Seniors](#) initiative. Be Scam Smart workshops help inform, empower, and protect Florida's seniors from financial scams and fraud. If you want to make sure your savings are protected, register for this workshop and get a better understanding of how scam artists and scams work.

Be Scam Smart by learning more about:

- How to Spot Fraudulent Behavior - Are you at risk?
- Common Scams that Target Seniors - Is this too good to be true?
- How to Fight Identity Theft - Protect, Prevent, Police

Feedback from seniors who attended a Be Scam Smart workshop:

*"Really learned a lot of valuable information." - Jacksonville*

*"This was a very valuable topic of interest in our present world." - Arcadia*

*"I live alone and learned a lot of helpful information that I can share with other seniors." - Zephyrhills*

*"As a result of this presentation I will be more aware of what is going on around me." - Pensacola*

*"The info was very good and eyes opened more than ever." - Ormond Beach*

Find out more about us in the [About Us](#) section or [Register](#) for an upcoming event, including the following workshops:

### **Tuesday, January 23 - Miami**

5:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.

First National Bank of South Miami

5750 Sunset Drive, Miami, FL 33143

[Register](#) | [Directions](#) | [Flyer](#)

### **Thursday, January 25 - Vero Beach**

10:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

United Way of Indian River County

1836 14th Avenue, Vero Beach, FL 32960

[Register](#) | [Directions](#) | [Flyer](#)

If you would like to [request a workshop](#) in your area, let us know.

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# Florida Economic Briefs

## **Florida named the best state to retire**

Florida was named 2018's best state to retire by the financial website WalletHub over states like Colorado (2), South Dakota (3), and Iowa (4). Florida's ranking was based on a combination of its affordability, total quality of life, and healthcare infrastructure.

Source: **WalletHub**

## **A closer look at the fastest growing states, including Florida**

In 2014, Florida overtook New York as the third most populous state in the country. Florida has continued to grow at a near nation-leading pace. The state's population grew by 1.8% in 2016, far more than the 0.7% national population growth rate.

Source: **24/7 Wall Street**