



Dean Mead engages the community with its Brevard Business Briefings series featuring leaders of the Florida Legislature

By: Robert N. Manning

With the clock ticking toward the upcoming Florida legislative session in March, more than 100 community leaders turned out for a preview of what to expect in Tallahassee. Moderated by attorney Peter M. Dunbar of Dean Mead's Tallahassee office, Senator Thad Altman (R- Rockledge) and Representative and Speaker-Designate Steve Crisafulli (R- Merritt Island) participated in a panel discussion and fielded questions from community leaders on hot topics facing the Florida Legislature.

Both lawmakers agree the upcoming legislative session will be brighter for Floridians thanks to a projected \$850 million dollar budget surplus. Sen. Altman wants to emphasize tax reform, especially the repeal of vehicle tag and title fees. "Tax cuts are going to be a big priority," Altman said. "For years we've been wanting to repeal the driver registration taxes that were passed a few years ago. I think this will be the year that we do that. That was an across the board increase."

Rep. Crisafulli wants to push for funding to clean muck from the Indian River Lagoon. He sees water issues as an immediate statewide concern. Rep. Crisafulli said, "It's not just this region that is having the challenges with regard to water and I see it as something that we have to, first and foremost given the budget situation we're in, to take advantage of that and try to prioritize funding toward projects that will have an immediate impact."

Sen. Altman and Rep. Crisafulli expect the following issues to receive attention during the next legislative session:

- State Pension Reform
- Job Creation and Economic Development
- Tax reform
- Addressing Medicaid Expansion
- Commercial space operations

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extensive involvement of the firm in the legislative process creates a type of synergy, increasing the firm's effectiveness and, thus, the client's presence in the process.

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