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Welcome to the May edition of the NAFSL newsletter. This month we offer some commentary on an incident that occurred recently in the Florida legislature. Also, a former state legislator and veteran receives an accolade, and the NAFSL will be on the road. Finally, find out what Save My Constitution is up to.

Last month, the Florida legislature convened a special session to take up some unfinished business involving redistricting and other matters. Unfortunately, behavior and antics unbecoming of elected state legislators erupted in the House chamber during debate. [Associated Press](#) As a result, decorum and respect for the legislative process was violated and the tenets vital to representative governance were compromised.

Moreover, this past legislative session, Floridians witnessed tactless interruptions during committee hearings where legislators were shouted down and insulted during discussion and debate. Apparently, the response at the time from leadership was not adequate to discourage this errant behavior from reoccurring.

In these situations, the Speaker and Senate President have the authority to engage the Sergeant at Arms to restore order and remove protesters in committee hearings or in the chamber. Additionally, the Minority Leader has the solemn responsibility, even when there is disagreement on an issue, to respect order during the legislative process and discipline their caucus as needed.

Commenting on a similar situation in Texas, [the NAFSL pointed out](#) the fundamental roles and responsibilities of elected legislators, including the presiding leadership, that are paramount for a representative form of government to properly function.

Recently, the NAFSL developed a working relationship with the [National Institute for Civil Discourse \(NICD\) at the University of Arizona](#). They are developing a handbook for legislators on bridging the partisan divide and improving the function of state legislatures. In addition, they offer and facilitate a series of workshops on civil discourse for state legislatures.

Moving forward, the leadership in state legislatures across the country need to be proactive in promoting and protecting the [principle of representative governance](#). Moreover, it is essential that all state legislators have a thorough understanding and respect for this concept of governing that is [guaranteed](#) to the states in the US Constitution.

Next week, the Florida legislature will convene yet another special session to address a serious problem involving property insurance. There is hope for civil discourse and true representative governance.

In The News:

Congratulations to former State Representative Stan Jordan (FL) for being inducted into the Florida Veterans Hall of Fame.



Pictured (L to R) Former Representative Jim Kallinger (FL), former Representative Juan Zapata (FL), former Representative Stan Jordan (FL), and former Lt. Governor Jeff Kottkamp (FL).

Reminder:

The NAFSL will have a booth at the [American Legislative Exchange Council \(ALEC\) Annual Conference](#) this July 27 through 29 in Atlanta, GA. If you are able to attend the conference, please let us know so we can coordinate and make sure we connect while there.

Also, we have been invited to attend the [National Conference of State Legislatures \(NCSL\) Annual Legislative Summit](#) this August 1 through 3 in Denver, CO. Let us know if you are planning on being there.

Florida Constitution Revision Commission (CRC)

Not long ago, a group of former State Legislators, under the banner “Save My Constitution”, successfully ushered a joint resolution through the Florida legislature that will put an amendment on the ballot this November to repeal the CRC. We covered this issue in one of our [previous newsletters](#). If you are interested and would like to find out more about the Save My Constitution effort, please let us know and we will connect you with them.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James Kallinger".

James Kallinger, President
National Association of Former State Legislators

American federalism means “a proper respect for state functions, a recognition of the fact that the entire country is made up of a Union of separate State governments, and a continuance of the belief that the National Government will fare best if the States and their institutions are left free to perform their separate functions in their separate ways.” U.S. Supreme Court Justice Hugo L. Black