



# THE FLORIDA SENATE

Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1100

## COMMITTEES:

Fiscal Policy, *Chair*  
Appropriations Committee on Education  
Banking and Insurance  
Education Pre-K -12  
Finance and Tax  
Regulated Industries  
Rules

## JOINT COMMITTEE:

Joint Legislative Budget Commission

## SENATOR TRAVIS HUTSON

7th District

November 20, 2023

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tallahassee - Senator Travis Hutson (R- St. Augustine) and Representative Demi Busatta-Cabrera (R-Coral Gables) today filed SB 544/HB 581 The Swimming Lesson Voucher Program, a bill designed to help children from low-income families obtain swimming lessons at no cost.

Under this bill, children up to age 4 from families with incomes under 200% of the federal poverty level are eligible for free lessons. According to data from the Florida Department of Health, drowning is the leading cause of death for children between ages 1 and 4 and since 2020, 256 children ages 0-4 have drowned in Florida. ([Death Count Query System - FL Health CHARTS - Florida Department of Health](#))

In 2000, the legislature passed a landmark pool safety bill designed to reduce the number of child drownings. This measure focused on preventing kids from accessing residential pools without parental supervision by installing child-proofing devices, such as gates and door alarms. ([Ch 2000-143.pdf \(flrules.org\)](#))

“In the past, we’ve focused on how to physically make pools safer, but this bill is going to save lives by actually teaching high-risk kids how to swim,” Hutson said.

“There is nothing more important to parents than the health and well-being of their children. That’s why we’ve taken a giant step towards providing greater access to swimming lessons for young children in Florida. This common sense, but significant bill aims to eliminate youth drowning deaths in Florida and ensure every child is equipped with the ability to swim in our state,” Representative Busatta Cabrera said.

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#### REPLY TO:

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Senate's Website: [www.flsenate.gov](http://www.flsenate.gov)

**KATHLEEN PASSIDOMO**  
President of the Senate

**DENNIS BAXLEY**  
President Pro Tempore

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