

The Florida Times-Union

Florida Morning: Weatherford hits back at Fins - Sanford wins special election - no 'evidence' of retaliation at Citizens

By: [Matt Dixon](#) – May 8, 2013

House Speaker Will Weatherford fires back at Miami Dolphins

The Miami Dolphins' owner and top executive have spent the better part of five days blasting House Speaker Will Weatherford since their bid for public funds to renovate Sun Life Stadium died on the House floor Friday night in Tallahassee. On Tuesday, Weatherford fired back, denying assertions by Dolphins owner Stephen Ross and CEO Mike Dee that he had promised to bring the bill to a vote and expressing significant doubt that the House would have passed it. Palm Beach Post <http://tinyurl.com/cnhlpr2>

Rubio meets with conservatives who want immigration bill to move to the right

Sen. Marco Rubio this afternoon met with more than two dozen conservatives, from religious leaders to tea party activists, who offered an array of suggestions on how to make the immigration bill more palatable to Republicans. "Everybody has concerns about the bill," said Alex Nowrasteh, a policy analyst with the Cato Institute, who was one of the first to emerge from the hour-long gathering at Rubio's office. Tampa Bay Times <http://tinyurl.com/bmtb9kp>

Inspector General: No 'evidence' of retaliation in abrupt firings of Citizens investigators
Last October, four corporate investigators at Citizens Property Insurance Corp. were called into a conference room, asked to sit down, and told their services would no longer be needed. The bearer of the bad news was one of several company executives who had been implicated in a six-month investigation into corporate misbehavior, large severance packages and sexual harassment at the state-run insurer. Tampa Bay Times <http://tinyurl.com/cxsomva>

Photos: Scott's teacher-pay tour lands in Ocoee

Gov. Rick Scott paid a visit to Ocoee Middle School to tout the \$480 million in his new state budget earmarked for teacher pay raises, Tuesday. The governor is on a five-day, statewide "Teacher Pay Raise Pep Rally tour," including stops in Sunrise, West Palm Beach, Ponte Vedra, Ocoee and Tampa. Orlando Sentinel <http://tinyurl.com/ccxq3km>

Marco Rubio pushes back against Jim DeMint/Heritage Report

Sen. Marco Rubio, who kept silent yesterday as the Heritage Foundation released a study asserting massive costs under immigration reform, sharply pushed back today and offered up his parents as evidence of the immigrant contribution. Miami Herald <http://tinyurl.com/c6atomo>

FEC fines 3 men, 2 companies for illegal contributions to Rep. Vern Buchanan

The Federal Election Commission has fined three men and two Tampa companies a total of \$16,000 for illegal campaign contributions to U.S. Rep. Vern Buchanan, R-Sarasota. The FEC's case was prompted by a 2009 Tampa Bay Times story about contributions made in the name of Terry Keith Howell, a registered Democrat who was bankrupt when he gave \$8,800 to Buchanan. Tampa Bay Times <http://tinyurl.com/brdvpum>

High-profile names on witness list for Kelly Mathis, attorney for Allied Veterans of the World

Several state and local leaders are on the witness list for the Jacksonville lawyer accused of being the mastermind behind a veterans charity that prosecutors say was actually a \$300 million gambling operation. Florida Times-Union <http://tinyurl.com/dyvddrt>
Not Florida

Ex-South Carolina governor Sanford beats Colbert Busch in special House election

The conservative electorate of South Carolina's 1st Congressional District voted Tuesday to resurrect the political career of disgraced former governor Mark Sanford (R) by returning him to his former House seat. Sanford's special-election race against Democrat Elizabeth Colbert Busch, 58, a businesswoman and first-time candidate, took twists nearly right up to the last moments. But in the end, he cruised to an easy victory, winning 54 percent of the vote to Colbert Busch's 45 percent. Washington Post <http://tinyurl.com/br4zpaw>

As red ink recedes, pressure fades for budget deal

After four years of trillion-dollar deficits, the red ink is receding rapidly in Washington, easing pressure on policymakers but shattering hopes for a summertime budget deal. Federal tax revenue is up and spending is down thanks to an improving economy, tax increases that took effect in January and the automatic budget cuts known as the sequester. Washington Post <http://tinyurl.com/cqmbvaf>

Obama's cigarette tax up in smoke

Remember the cigarette tax hike President Barack Obama proposed in his big budget rollout?

The White House barely does. Presidential budgets are all about theater. But this year's was more theatrical than most: Its biggest single new proposal — the sin tax to generate \$78 billion to fund a preschool education program — vanished almost as soon as Obama announced it four weeks ago Wednesday. Politico <http://tinyurl.com/d6vfkes>

Immigration's new ally: Tea partiers

Immigration reform supporters are about to get some new conservative bonafides — prominent tea party backers.

Several conservative activists and tea party group leaders are meeting with Sen. Marco Rubio Tuesday afternoon to discuss immigration reform, including a list of what they support – and don't. Politico <http://tinyurl.com/d2vkexf>

K Street firms fear backlash from new scrutiny of political intel work
K Street is worried that renewed scrutiny of political intelligence services could lead Congress to rush through legislation hampering the growing practice. Lobbyists and political operatives are concerned that lawmakers will attempt to use a sudden surge in healthcare stocks — allegedly traced to a K Street tipster — to criminalize a portion of their work. The Hill <http://tinyurl.com/cphyjps>