

**For Immediate Release:**

February 18, 2016

**Contact:**

**Michael Williams**

(850) 717-4940, [Michael.Williams@MyFloridaHouse.gov](mailto:Michael.Williams@MyFloridaHouse.gov)

**Kristen McDonald**

(850) 717-5129, [Kristen.McDonald@MyFloridaHouse.gov](mailto:Kristen.McDonald@MyFloridaHouse.gov)

**Florida House Passes Legislation To  
Increase Access, Choice, and Affordability  
For Florida Students**

**Tallahassee, FL-** The Florida House of Representatives today passed a series of bills to strengthen Florida's K-12 and higher education systems. These education bills are highlighted by their focus on increasing access, choice, and affordability for our students and our military and their families. The House passed bills to improve college affordability, increase access to career education opportunities, expand school choice options, codify performance funding for the Florida College System and the State University System, establish an emerging preeminence designation for universities that meet certain standards, make the Best and Brightest Scholarship Program permanent, and make our education system more veteran-friendly.

“The Florida House is committed to making Florida’s education system the best in the nation,” said House Speaker Steve Crisafulli (R-Merritt Island). “We voted out a comprehensive education reform package that does numerous things, including empowering parents and students to choose educational options that best fit their needs and allowing us to keep postsecondary education affordable for Floridians, particularly for our veterans and their families. Additionally, by creating the emerging preeminence designation and codifying performance funding in law, we are challenging our colleges and universities to expand their research and academic abilities to give our students a world-class education that helps them get jobs after graduation.”

“In the House, it is our goal for Florida’s education system to focus on student success. To that end, we passed a number of important bills today that will increase education options, make college more affordable, bring the best teachers into our classrooms, and strengthen our universities,” said House Education Committee Chair Marlene O’Toole (R-Lady Lake). “By continuing to support bold reforms, we are ensuring Florida students have access to the best possible education environment.”

“With the passage of these important bills today, we are ensuring Floridians have more opportunities to receive a first-rate education, from grade school through graduate school. More opportunities will mean a brighter future for more of Florida’s students,” said House Education Appropriations Subcommittee Chair Erik Fresen (R-Miami).

**Passed Legislation**

HB 7017 – Career and Adult Education

CS/HB 7019 – Post Secondary Access and Affordability

CS/CS/HB 7029 – School Choice

CS/HB 7043 – Education

HB 799 – Out-Of-State Fee Waivers for Active Duty Servicemembers

CS/HB 1157 – Postsecondary Education for Veterans

CS/CS/CS/HB 669 – Educational Choice

For more information, please visit [MyFloridaHouse.gov](http://MyFloridaHouse.gov)

###