

Dana Young

Senate District 18



Summary

Campaign Biography

“Dana Young, a sixth generation Floridian, was born and raised in Tallahassee, Florida. In November 2010, she was elected to the Florida House of Representatives and served District 60 until November 2016. In November 2016, she was elected to the Florida Senate (Tampa – 18th District), where she continues the proud family tradition of public service after her father Don Duden (Former Assistant Secretary of the Department of Environmental Protection), her grandfather, Former Florida Senate President Randolph Hodges, and her uncle, Rep. Gene Hodges who also served in the Florida House of Representatives.

“Senator Young is a product of the Florida public school system, and received her undergraduate degree in Political Science from Florida State University. In pursuit of her interest of the law and public policy, Senator Young graduated from the University of Virginia School of Law in 1993, and then returned home to Florida to begin her legal career at Fowler, White, Boggs, P.A. As a member of the firm’s Regulated Industries Department, Senator Young represented a broad spectrum of businesses, landowners, and individuals in areas of regulatory compliance, permitting, zoning, and administrative law proceedings.

“In October 2014, then Representative Young was tapped by Speaker Crisafulli as Majority Leader to serve for the 2015 and 2016 legislative sessions. This follows two years serving as Majority Whip and Deputy Majority Leader under Speaker Will Weatherford. In April 2013, she was appointed by Governor Scott to the Florida Defense Support Task Force. From 2011-2012 she served as Chairman of the influential Hillsborough County Legislative Delegation. She also serves on the Board of Tampa’s Lowry Park Zoo. In 2013 she was appointed to the Board of Trustees for the Florida Aquarium, The Florida Coalition Against Domestic Violence. In 2014 she was appointed to serve on the U.S. Global Leadership Coalition’s Florida Advisory Committee.

Senator Young is a member of GOPAC’s Advisory Board which helps promote the ideas and policies being implemented at the state level, as well as assist with electing new generations of Republican leaders. In August 2017, Senator Young was appointed to the National Conference of State Legislature’s (NCSL) Innovations in State Health Systems Task Force. This task force consists of 35 members and was created to examine the issues and opportunities faced by state policymakers as they reform their state’s health systems.

“Sen. Young has worked tirelessly to pass legislation aimed at creating an exceptional business climate and a world class quality of life for Floridians. In her legislative career she has sponsored and passed numerous bills, which are now law here in Florida

“She and her husband, Matt, have been married for over 20 years and have two daughters, Alexandra and Carson. “ [Official Campaign Biography, [Accessed 8/13/18](#)]

ALEC membership/ties

- Attended 2011 ALEC Annual Meeting in New Orleans

Dana Young attended the 2011 ALEC Annual Meeting in New Orleans, paying for the conference with taxpayer money and ALEC scholarship money

“Nearly 50 legislators, all Republicans, have signed up and can pay for part or all of the conference with public money from their district office accounts. They also are using excess campaign money, and many are bringing spouses at personal expense. "I decided to go because I'm going to learn. I'm a geek in that way," said first-term Rep. Dana Young, R-Tampa. Young said she will use district office money and possibly ALEC scholarship money to pay her registration fee. She's paying for her travel and hotel personally.” [Tampa Bay Times, [8/3/2011](#)]

ALEC model legislation authored/sponsored

Bill Title/Number	ALEC Model Bill	Sponsored/Authoried
HB 7197 - 2011	Virtual Public Schools Act	Co-Sponsored/Voted YES
SJR2 (2011)	Freedom of Choice in Health Care Act	Voted YES
HB 1021 (2011)	Prohibition of Negative Check-Off Act, Political Funding Reform Act	Voted YES
HB 1191 - 2012	Parent Trigger Act	Co-Sponsored/Voted YES
SB 428 (2017)	Defined-Contribution Pension Reform Act	Voted YES

Dana Young co-sponsored & voted for a bill which requires students to take online courses instead of traditional course. In 2011, Dana Young co-sposored and voted for HB 7197, which expands online school offerings, requires incoming high school students to take at least one online

course before graduating, and authorizes the establishment of virtual charter schools. Because virtual and online education company courses can be recognized as public schools, they are eligible to receive the same per pupil funding as traditional schools that provide classrooms, sports training facilities, lunch, and transportation, resulting in windfall profits for online "schools." The legislation is similar in effect to previous ALEC legislation [[CMD; HB 7197, passed 5/2/11](#)]

Dana Young voted to ban Florida from expanding affordable health coverage to people who would otherwise not be able to afford it. In 2011, Young voted yes on SJR 2, which strongly resembles the ALEC model "Freedom of Choice in Health Care Act," a proposed an amendment to the Florida constitution declaring federal health care regulation unconstitutional and banning creation of a single payer health insurance system, a public option, or health insurance exchanges. According to former insurance executive and now-consumer advocate Wendell Potter, this ALEC model bill was "written to deny the citizens of any state that passed it the freedom to set up [a healthcare exchange]" [[The Nation, 7/12/11](#); SJR 2, Signed, [6/13/2011](#)]

Dana Young voted to undermine labor unions. In 2011, Dana Young voted for HB 1021, which bars unions from collecting dues via payroll deductions without written consent. This measure, known as "paycheck protection," has been likened to union busting by opponents because it makes it more difficult for unions to collect dues. In addition, opponents charge that the measure is unnecessary; Florida is already a right-to-work state, no employee is forced to pay dues. [[PolitiFact, 3/22/2012](#); HB1021, passed third reading, [3/25/11](#)]

Dana Young sponsored and voted to allow public schools to be turned over to for-profit corporations. In 2012, Dana Young sponsored and voted for an ALEC model "Parent Trigger" bill, HB 1191, that would allow parents to, by a simple majority vote, require a school district to present a school turnaround plan for a failing school. Educational experts describe such bills as a "Clever way to trick parents into seizing control of their schools and handing it over to private corporations," according to Diane Ravitch, U.S. Assistant Secretary of Education under George H.W. Bush. According to Christopher Lubienski, University of Illinois Associate Professor of Educational Organization "there is not good evidence that the options given [after the trigger is pulled] improve student achievement." [[Center for Media & Democracy, 9/12/18](#); HB 1191, Died in committee, [3/9/2012](#)].

In 2017, Florida State Senator Young voted for a bill to require municipal employees hired after a certain date to enroll in 401(k)-like pension plans, rather than defined-benefit plans. In 2017, Senator Dana Young voted for SB 428, which would require municipal employees hired after a certain date to enroll in defined-contribution rather than defined benefit contribution plans. A defined contribution plan places the financial risk on the employee. Former Florida Sen. Jeremy Ring (D) stated that the bill was purely political and based on no factual evidence whatsoever, arguing, "Go anywhere in the world find one pension expert, one financial expert and bring them to our committee to tell us our pension fund is one bit challenged. For eight years, they could not do that." [[Tallahassee Democrat, 3/14/2017](#); [SB428, Died in Governmental Oversight and Accountability, 5/5/2017](#)]

Other Hits

In 2010, Pro-Dana Young mailers criticized her political opponent for supporting same-sex marriage & gay adoptions. In 2010, while running for Florida House District 57 against Democrat Stacy Frank, campaign mailers supporting Dana Young criticized Frank for supporting same-sex

marriage and gay adoptions. The campaign mailer stated, "Frank Supports Gay Marriage: Traditional marriage is under attack. Stacy Frank is on the other side: she supports gay marriage. When you vote, cast your vote for marriage between a man and a woman. Say no to Stacy Frank" The mailer also included text saying, "Frank Supports Gay Adoptions." [Equality Florida, [11/2/2010](#)]

Shortly after the Parkland Highschool Shooting, Dana Young missed 3 Senate votes including a vote to tighten requirements for storing guns around children. The Tampa Bay Times reported, "During the Saturday Senate session, Young missed three amendment votes. One would have banned assault rifles, the main focus of Democrats and student protests following the high school shooting. Another would require that law enforcement be notified of an attempt to buy a gun by a person prohibited from buying one, and the third would tighten requirements for storing firearms around minors." [Tampa Bay Times, [3/6/2018](#)]

In 2010, Dana Young released a mailer "showing her aiming what appears to be an assault-style rifle, with a large American flag and a copy of the Constitution in the background, in which she advertised her NRA "A" rating." [Tampa Bay Times, [3/6/2018](#)]

After an agriculture company gave Dana Young a \$5k helicopter ride & a campaign contribution for \$15k it received \$13 million in new state contracts. The Tampa Bay Times reported, "Last year, a South Florida water agency ran out of money for a program that pays ranchers to hold back excess rainwater from filling up Lake Okeechobee too fast, a practice known as water farming. A major agriculture corporation, Alico, asked the Legislature to instead use state taxpayer money to keep the project rolling. Alico had a lot at stake in trying to prop up the water-farming project. If the project were revived by the Legislature, Alico would get the largest contract, worth more than \$120 million over the next 11 years. Before last year's session, Alico took key legislative leaders on a four-hour helicopter ride around Lake Okeechobee that cost about \$5,000. On board for a Jan. 22, 2014 flight: state Rep. Dana Young, R-Tampa...Two weeks later, on Feb. 5, 2014, Alico wrote a \$15,000 check to Young's political action committee, the Florida Conservative Leadership Fund...Alico got what it wanted. In May 2014, the Legislature voted to approve a \$77.1 billion budget that included \$13 million for several new water-farming contracts to be let by the South Florida Water Management District." [Tampa Bay Times, [12/9/2015](#)]

Dana Young initially claimed she did not recall the \$5k helicopter ride before changing her story. From the Tampa Bay Times, "As for Young, the Tampa legislator initially said she did not recall taking a helicopter trip to look at an Alico project. After checking her calendar, she emailed the Times/Herald a statement confirming she went on the trip. 'It was helpful seeing first hand these projects that as a legislator we may be asked to make decisions about on an ongoing basis,' she wrote." [Tampa Bay Times, [12/9/2015](#)]