

# Kelli Stargel

## Florida Senate District 22



### Summary

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#### Campaign Biography

*Senator Kelli Stargel was elected to the Florida Senate in 2012 after serving four years in the Florida House of Representatives. She works as the investment property manager for her family-owned small business in Lakeland.*

*Senator Stargel has served as the Chair of the Higher Education Committee, as the Chair of the Regulated Industries Committee and is a member of the Judiciary Committee, among others.*

*Senator Stargel has received a number of awards from various organizations over her time in the Legislature. Some of the highest recognitions include the Florida Chamber's Distinguished Advocate Award, the Foundation for Florida's Future A+ Award, the United States Digital Learning Association Eagle Award in 2013. In 2015, she was honored to be the Polk County Police Chief Association, Legislator of the Year and the Legislator of the Year for the Florida Farm Bureau. This year she has been recognized as the Legislator of the Year for several other groups, including the FL. Forestry Association and the FL. Health Care Association.*

*Senator Stargel is on the FHSAA Public Advisory Commission, and is an appointee to the Education Commission of the States. She and her husband, John Stargel, have five children and two grandchildren.*

[Campaign Biography, [Accessed 9/28/17](#)]

### ALEC membership/tie

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ALEC State Co-Chair, 2015 [Tampa Bay Times, 7/21/15]

Signed ALEC letter in 2013 to Senator Dick Durbin re: Durbin's request to identify ALEC's funders

### **ALEC model legislation authored/sponsored**

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<b>Bill Title/Number</b>	<b>ALEC Model Bill</b>	<b>Sponsored/Authorred</b>
HB 7197 (2011)	Virtual Public Schools Act	Cosponsored and <a href="#">voted ye</a>
HB 1021 (2011)	Prohibition of Negative Check-Off Act, Political Funding Reform Act	<a href="#">Voted ye</a>
SB 534	Living Wage Mandate Preemption Act and Prevailing Wage Repeal Act	<a href="#">Voted ye in Appropriations Committee</a>

**Kelli Stargel, as a member of the Florida House of Representatives voted for the Virtual Public Schools Act in 2011.** HB 7197 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](#)), [[HB7197, Passed Florida House, 98-19, 5/2/11](#)]

**In 2011, as a member of the Florida House of Representatives, Stargel voted yes on “paycheck protect.”** HB 1021 bars unions from collecting dues via payroll deductions without written consent. “This measure 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 Florida House, 73-40, 3/25/2011](#)]

**Florida State Senator Kelli Stargel voted to strip local government of the freedom to pay workers what they want- prohibiting local governments from establishing living wage, prevailing wage, and other labor standards for public works projects.** Kelli Stargel voted yes on SB 534 in 2017. J.B. Clark, a lobbyist for the Florida Electrical Workers Association, called the bill “an attack” on the home rule powers of local governments, stating, “Workers are also collateral damage in that, when those home rules are lost.” (Palm Beach Post, [4/21/2017](#)), [[SB534, Laid on table, 4/27/2017](#)]

### **Other Hits**

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**State Senator Kelli Stargel’s charter schools bill could cost her district \$15 million in Title 1 funds.** According to The Ledger, Stargel cosponsored a bill that would divert Title 1 funds from traditional public schools in Polk to charter schools. In response to the bill, Polk School Board member Billy Townsend stated that, “Kelli Stargel and the Florida legislature have no interest whatsoever in educating and serving the communities served by [...]” local public middle schools. (The Ledger, [5/4/2017](#)) [[SB 1362, died on calendar, 5/5/17](#)]

**State Senator Kelli Stargel proudly stands behind controversial abortion bill at Florida GOP meeting in Tampa.** Sen. Stargel sponsored SB 1722. The bill's companion in the House, HB 1411, passed the Florida legislature in 2016. Both bills prohibited state funding for routine care at abortion clinics. "Such measures could force clinics to close by blocking money for preventative care at the same facilities that provide privately funded abortion. Further, the bill includes a provision that requires doctors performing abortions to have admitting privileges at nearby hospitals, a type of formal affiliation that can be difficult to obtain." (Florida Politics, [5/16/2016](#)) [[SB 1722, companion bill passed, 4/4/2016](#)]

**State Senator Kelli Stargel introduced a bill that would allow women who undergo abortions to sue their doctors for emotional distress up to a decade after the procedure.** One of Stargel's constituents stated, "This bill is yet another attack on access to safe, legal abortion care. Stargel's bill attempts to intimidate physicians who perform legal abortions, a procedure with an incredibly high safety record, by increasing their exposure to frivolous lawsuits. It would significantly increase the risk physicians face in providing safe and legal abortion care." (News Channel 8 WFLA, [3/1/2017](#)) [[SB 1140, Died in Judiciary, 5/5/2017](#)]

**State Senator Kelli Stargel supported mandatory-minimums for fentanyl tracking.** Stargel's colleague Senate Minority Leader Oscar Braynon argued that mandatory minimums break up families, and send addicts to prison. Orlando Weekly reports that both Florida Democrats and some Republicans have acknowledged that mandatory-minimum sentencing has not worked in the past. But, "Sen. Stargel, argued that the dangers of fentanyl justified mandatory-minimum sentences. Stargel said her daughter has lost two friends to fentanyl overdoses. 'This is a very, very serious drug, and fentanyl is killing people,' Stargel said." (Orlando Weekly, [5/2/2017](#)) [[HB 477, passed House, 4/20/2017](#)]

**State Senator Kelli Stargel responded to gun violence saying "Thoughts and prayers are really the only thing that's going to stop the evil".** In 2017 Stargel introduced legislation to allow guns in religious schools including private schools and day-care facilities. According to Miami Herald, Senate Bill 1330, "Would create an exception to the statewide ban on guns in schools by letting private schools with "a religious institution ... located on the property" have the option of allowing concealed weapons on the premises, as any other private property has the right to do." After the Stoneman Douglas High School shooting, Stargel changed her mind and said the only response should be, "Thoughts and prayers are really the only thing that's going to stop the evil from within the individual that is taking up their arms to do this type of massacre." (Arkansas Time, [3/4/2018](#))( Miami Herald, [4/7/2017](#)) [FL SB 1330, [read in Senate died in House, 4/19/2017](#)]

**State Senator Kelli Stargel opposed completely banning child marriages, as she wanted to allow for "Romeo and Juliet" situations.** Stargel feared completely banning child marriages, as she believed, "Passing this legislation we're severely limiting the options to a pregnant young girl to either abortion, adoption or single parenthood and I think they should have another option on the table which is marriage." Stargel told the committee, she wanted to "stop the atrocities" but allow "what we call Romeo and Juliet" marriages. Since 2012, Florida issued 1,828 marriage licenses to couples that included at least one spouse who was under 18 and some were as young as 13. Ultimately, the new legislation allows for child marriages in some circumstances. (Herald Tribune, [11/27/2017](#)) [FL SB 140, [became law, 3/36/2018](#)]