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**Leader Fentrice Driskell's Sickle Cell and Abandoned
Cemeteries Bills Headed to DeSantis' Desk**

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. - Leader Fentrice Driskell (D-Tampa)'s bills, [House Bill 1481](#)/[Senate Bill 1352](#) and [HB 49](#)/[SB 430](#) have unanimously passed through the Florida Legislature and are now headed to the Governor's desk.

HB 1481/SB 1352 will establish a statewide registry for individuals diagnosed with sickle cell disease. In addition, it requires the Florida Agency for Health Care Administration to examine and publish reports on sickle cell medications, treatments, and services available for Medicaid recipients. This initiative aims to enhance the monitoring of sickle cell treatment throughout the state, increase transparency, and prepare Florida Medicaid for the potential coverage of new drugs that can help cure the disease. By enabling better data collection on those living with sickle cell disease under Florida Medicaid, this bill intends to improve patient awareness regarding treatment options and available resources.

HB 49/SB 430 aims to enshrine the recommendations of the 2021 Abandoned African American Cemetery Task Force into law. The bill establishes the Historic Cemeteries Program and the Historic Cemeteries Program Advisory Council within the Department of State's Division of Historical Resources to promote and facilitate the education and upkeep of abandoned and historic cemeteries. It also allocates a sum of \$1 million for abandoned cemetery research and grants to aid in the repair, restoration, and maintenance of African American cemeteries. The passage of this bill represents a significant opportunity for many Floridians to finally pay tribute to their ancestors and loved ones with the dignity and honor they have always deserved.

"It is with immense pride that I announce the successful passage of **HB 1481/SB 1352** and **HB 49/SB 430** with bipartisan backing through the Florida Legislature. I am grateful for the collaboration of Representative Campbell and Senator Rouson on our sickle cell bill, which will provide relief to some of Florida's most vulnerable communities and help bolster the state's preparedness for their treatment. I am also thankful for Senator Powell's and Senator Davis' assistance on our abandoned

cemeteries bill, which has been a heartfelt labor of love, honor, and respect for those who were forgotten and often mistreated. The unanimous support of my colleagues in both the House and the Senate for both bills is deeply appreciated, and I look forward to the opportunity to bring them to the Governor's desk," said **Leader Driskell**.

"Sickle cell disease is a painful and prevalent genetic disorder that disproportionately affects our communities. Unfortunately, discrimination and lack of understanding within the healthcare system often leaves patients without the proper care and compassion they need. With the passage of HB 1481/SB 1352 Floridians with Sickle Cell can rest assured that the state is working to understand their needs and provide support. I would like to thank Leader Driskell and my colleagues for their support in fighting this crisis," said **Representative Campbell**.

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