

METZ of the House of Representatives after clearing its final two committees in the lower chamber.

HB 7015 would impose

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Lawyer Division's Law Student Division, the event features projects organized by law schools throughout the state and encourages lawyers, students, and volunteers to serve those in need.

"One of the main goals of the Law Student Division is to bridge the gap

organizations at the university to host the Youth Law and Justice Conference for the second year in a row.

More than 70 middle and high school students attended the daylong conference,

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appropriations committees on April 3 approved bills

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Bills to speed foreclosures advance in both chambers

By Gary Blankenship
Senior Editor

Bills to streamline the residential mortgage foreclosure process advanced in both the Florida House and Senate as they neared mid-term of their 2013 Regular Session.

Both chambers added a provision making it easier to hire retired judges to hear the cases, and the Senate version also featured a controversial proposal requiring some notices of foreclosure sales be placed on Internet sites rather than printed legal notices in newspapers.

Both bills drew criticism from a grassroots citizens group that said the bills failed to punish banks that flooded courts with faulty paperwork in the robo-signing scandal and won't give homeowners enough time to explore all their defenses.

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The bills — HB 87 and SB 1666 — have several

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Lawmakers to work with the courts on death penalty

By Jan Pudlow
Senior Editor

The Supreme Court has heard "loud and clear" the concerns of the Legislature about murderers who languish on death row for decades, so Rep. Matt Gaetz agreed to temporarily postpone a vote on a proposed constitutional amendment that would take away the court's rulemaking authority in death penalty appeals.

"I have really cool news to report on this joint resolution," Gaetz, a Republican attorney from Ft. Walton Beach, told the House Justice Appropriations Subcommittee on April 4.

"We always know that

constitutional amendments ought to be saved only when they are absolutely necessary. Here's the great news: Largely as a result of the work of Rep [Dave] Kerner and also Rep. [James] Grant, we have an agreement with the judicial branch. And that agreement was codified when the chief justice issued an administrative order creating this task force to do the provisions of the bill that are procedural in nature through the court, cooperatively,



GAETZ

allowing them to take procedure and us to take substance. And so with that, I would ask that we temporarily postpone the joint resolution, because I think we will be able to do this without a constitutional amendment."

Without the constitutional vehicle to drive it, the "Timely Justice Act of 2013" (CS/HB 7083) — aimed to speed up appeals and curb successive motions — passed 8-3 on its second committee stop.

However, in the Senate



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on April 1, despite pleas to wait for a new group created March 22 by Chief Justice Ricky Polston to do its work to make death penalty appeals more efficient, the Senate Judiciary



JOYNER

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THE HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY BAR Leadership Institute members and their families beautified the landscaping at Tampa's Alpha House, a shelter for homeless pregnant women. They spent the morning digging up weeds and roots, planting 177 grasses and bushes, fertilizing, and mulching five flower beds at the Bonnie Center, one of several buildings in Alpha House's "Alpha Village." The Leadership Institute members donated not only several hours of their time, but also over \$400 to purchase supplies, including cypress mulch, potting soil, and weed barrier to make it a low-maintenance landscape.

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