



FLORIDA GOVERNOR
Charlie Crist
44TH GOVERNOR OF THE GREAT STATE OF FLORIDA

December 2, 2008

Dear Friends,

Today, I joined many of our nation's Governors in Philadelphia to meet with President-elect Barack Obama to discuss our nation's need for an economic recovery package. In preparation for that meeting, I have today sent to President-elect Obama a letter outlining Florida's priorities for such a plan. I am committed to securing Florida's economic future and working with our federal partners to restore consumer confidence, revive our job market and provide relief to families who are struggling under the weight of their financial obligations.

While Florida is facing many of the same economic challenges other states are experiencing, the Sunshine State currently has the third-highest home foreclosure rate in the nation, a seven-percent unemployment rate, and a projected state revenue shortfall of roughly \$6 billion for the current and next fiscal year. Without doubt, these challenges have led us to take decisive and immediate action. We at the state level have taken the fiscal responsibility our people deserve, resulting in Florida's recently receiving national recognition by the CATO Institute.

In August, my administration announced a program to accelerate the timeline for previously funded state public works projects. We have sped up 179 transportation projects, creating an estimated 38,000 jobs and pumping \$1.4 billion into Florida's economy sooner than previously planned. We are also working with the state's banking and mortgage lending industry to voluntarily provide relief to Floridians facing foreclosure. To assist Floridians without health insurance for six months, or who have recently become unemployed, in January we will implement the Cover Florida plan that will provide Florida's nearly 4.8 million uninsured with affordable catastrophic and non-catastrophic health coverage options, without using tax dollars.

While these actions take bold steps forward in boosting Florida's economy and helping Floridians, states are limited in their ability to provide broad-based economic stimulus. These conditions require states to partner with the federal government. To that end, I have outlined the following priorities as important to further developing Florida's economy:

- To assist budget constraints pertaining to Medicaid rolls, I strongly support an adjustment in the Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP). In working with our Congressional delegation, Florida is eligible for an estimated \$991 million in FMAP funding.
- I also support the inclusion of funding for infrastructure projects that can be immediately constructed. As a donor state, Florida deserves its fair share of these federal transportation dollars to upgrade our infrastructure. The Florida Department of Transportation has identified \$7 billion in projects ready to begin within 90 to 120 days. This infusion of federal support could provide \$39 billion in economic benefits and create an additional 195,000 jobs.
- Finally, it is tremendously important that during these global financial challenges, we keep America's goods and services moving through the use of free and fair trade. Florida is the home to 14 seaports, and international trade is vital to our economy. I urge consideration and passage of the Colombian Free Trade Agreement. It is estimated that such an agreement could increase Florida's exports to Colombia by \$161 million and create an additional 1,775 additional jobs in the first year alone.

In addition to these considerations, I also urged President-elect Obama to take into account the approaching retirement of our nation's Space Shuttle fleet. This transition will require a strong federal-state partnership and commitment to working with local communities to provide economic opportunities for individuals impacted by the shuttle retirement. I invited him to join us in Florida for an upcoming launch of the Space Shuttle and to discuss the future of our nation's space program.

I have no doubt that Florida's economy will once again flourish. I look forward to working with President-elect Obama and his administration in the months ahead to stabilize our nation's economy, grow jobs and provide relief to our neediest citizens.

May God bless our nation and our great state.



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I would like to keep you informed about actions my administration is taking on economic issues, as well as many other topics, if you are interested. I invite you to click the link below and select the issues you want to learn more about. Feel free to select as many topics as you like.

Thank you and God bless. It is a privilege and honor to serve you as Governor.

<http://www.flgov.com/issuesignupform>

Handwritten signature of Charlie Crist in blue ink.

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