



THE FLORIDA SENATE

SELECT COMMITTEE ON FLORIDA'S ECONOMY

Location

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Senator Don Gaetz, *Chair*

Senator Jeremy Ring, *Vice Chair*

Senate's Website: www.flsenate.gov

December 19, 2008

Dear,

As you are keenly aware, nearly every Florida business and millions of Florida families are feeling the effects of what has been called the worst economic downturn in a generation. This severe recession was not of our making, but it is certainly now ours to responsibly combat and overcome.

Of course, we in Florida cannot achieve economic recovery alone. The Florida Legislature cannot solve the global economic crisis any more than government can create prosperity. However, Senate President Jeff Atwater has committed that state government will seize every opportunity to improve the odds in favor of our businesses, our families, and our communities. And, we need your help.

On behalf of President Atwater and the Florida Senate, we are writing to you today to ask for your leadership and your personal involvement to create an environment in which our state can come out of this recession sooner, stronger, and with resilience.

Last week, President Atwater established the Senate Select Committee on Florida's Economy to: (1) create incentives and eliminate impediments to economic recovery and growth; and, (2) ensure that government functions more simply, more transparently, less expensively, and more effectively.

We don't for a moment underrate the severity of the economic crisis our state faces and we acknowledge our limits. There are no quick fixes or easy solutions. For the future, though, the opportunity is transforming. The right decisions now can provide a foundation for both recovery of Florida's existing industries and creation of a new 21st century innovation economy, focused on high paying and sustaining jobs throughout the state. Long-term goals include creating an environment for entrepreneurship to thrive, attracting out-of-state businesses to Florida and promoting growth of existing Florida businesses.

You are a recognized leader in Florida's economy. You take risks. You create jobs, opportunity and prosperity. The Senate values your experience and respects your insights. That is why we are inviting you to join the work of the Select Committee in considering three questions, the answers to which will form our state's economic policy, change our laws, and, if necessary, change our Constitution.

Short term and longer term, being very specific:

JEFF ATWATER
President of the Senate

MIKE FASANO
President Pro Tempore

December 19, 2008

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1. What are the barriers to economic recovery and growth which may be within the control or subject to the influence of local or state government?
2. What are the most redundant, overlapping or non-essential regulatory activities – state or local -- which increase costs and inhibit economic growth?
3. What incentives will best encourage business development and make Florida more competitive, including any changes in our state's tax structure. What is working, what is not and what are we missing?

Recognizing that your time is precious, would you please email your initial comments to us as soon as practical at floridaseconomy@flsenate.gov ? Your guidance will be shared with every member of the Select Committee. In turn, we will be following up after we hear from you and inviting your participation in developing and evaluating policy options.

Please know, this effort is not a study and we are not filing a report for someone else to act upon or to be placed on a shelf gathering dust. President Atwater has described our Committee as “hard-wired to the Senate floor” with our initial legislation due at the onset of the 2009 Session of the Legislature (March 1). More importantly, our assignment continues for the next two years to ensure we leave no stone unturned.

Like you, we believe in Florida's future but we believe that future has to be earned. Ahead are hard work and tough choices. But of one thing we are sure – leadership begins with listening. The Florida Senate is ready to listen to you.

Respectfully,



Senator Don Gaetz
Chairman



Senator Jeremy Ring
Vice Chairman

Enclosure:
Statement from President Atwater