



PRESS RELEASE

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STATEMENT BY:

Barney Bishop III, President & CEO, Associated Industries of Florida

Regarding Gov. Rick Scott's First State of the State Address

“Gov. Rick Scott has outlined a sound strategy to move Florida forward. From the beginning, his mantra of “jobs” has struck a responsive chord among Floridians, more than a million of whom are out of work right now. And, his “jobs budget” sets the right tone considering the financial dire straits we are facing. Just like any family or business struggling with less income, we as a state are going to have to cut back expenses. It’s a disappointing reality, but the fact is we cannot produce new income out of thin air. When the Governor calls for shared sacrifice, we know it is a bitter pill but it is also the medicine we must take.

We are mindful of the Governor’s vision of a state where rules and regulations will be measured by the yardstick of whether they create or impede jobs.

We appreciate his focus on education reform where our children – our future – will benefit from the same focus that President Obama has placed on the quality of teachers and administrators guiding our students’ education journey.

Gov. Scott’s message of tort reform is especially needed to assuage the fears of a business community continually harassed by lawsuits that drive up the cost of products and services.

Over the years, each and every Florida governor has learned that state employees are dedicated, hard-working and often unappreciated. However, given our budget shortfall, there can be no sacred cows. It is inappropriate to expect all taxpayers to fund all civil servants’ pensions and health care costs while private-sector employees are losing their jobs and having to balance their budgets with less.

Associated Industries of Florida believes Gov. Scott has the proper vision for our state. We must live within our means. No society has ever survived without some fiscal discipline. And, when our economy inevitably turns around, then we can revisit the budget cuts and restore services to appropriate levels.”

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