



Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Thursday, April 21, 2011

MEDIA CONTACTS:

Ryan Wiggins for Florida TaxWatch
(850) 222-5052, rwiggins@floridatxwatch.org

Chris Mitchell for Reason Foundation
(310) 367-6109, chris.mitchell@reason.com

Jose Gonzalez for Associated Industries of Florida
(850) 224-7173, jgonzalez@aif.com

**A NEW MODEL FOR FLORIDA: A CONTINUUM OF CARE TO IMPROVE
OUTCOMES IN CORRECTIONS**

~Delivering new levels of public safety while achieving cost savings for taxpayers~

TALLAHASSEE, FL--Florida Tax Watch, Reason Foundation and Associated Industries of Florida today held a tele-press conference to applaud the Legislature's bold efforts to reform the corrections system in Florida. Dominic Calabro, President and CEO of the nonpartisan, nonprofit research institute and government watchdog Florida TaxWatch, was joined on the statewide media call by Dr. Adrian Moore, Vice President of Policy with Reason Foundation, and Barney Bishop, President and CEO of Associated Industries of Florida.

"It's far past time to take a new approach to rehabilitation of offenders," said Dominic Calabro, President and CEO of Florida TaxWatch. "For years, the corrections system has been a revolving door, with inmates leaving prison only to return within a few years, costing the taxpayers tens of millions of dollars, if not hundreds of millions, each year. A new paradigm is needed that holds offenders accountable while ensuring they have the training, education, and life skills to successfully reenter society and not return to prison. The continuum of care approach using public-private partnerships, as outlined in the Florida TaxWatch report from January 2011, would improve the system by streamlining the process from entry into the correction system through full reintegration into the community following release, which will enhance public safety while saving taxpayer dollars and ensuring offenders are held accountable for their crimes."

Dr. Adrian Moore, Vice President of Policy with Reason Foundation added, "Transforming the way Florida operates its prisons is an important step to lowering the state's recidivism rate and improve rehabilitation of offenders. The public-private partnership model institutes a system of accountability that promotes innovation from the private sector, matched with high levels of regulation and oversight from

the public sector. Public-private partnerships are the wave of future and Florida should get on board so we can maximize the benefits of Floridians.”

The two independent policy groups released a policy brief in January outlining a proposal to create a continuum of care in corrections through public-private partnerships. The forward-thinking reforms authored by Mr. Leonard Gilroy and Dr. Adrian Moore offers a blueprint for lawmakers and decision-makers to successfully change the status quo system and deliver new levels of public safety while achieving cost savings for Floridians.

- ✓ **Improved rehabilitation of offenders and lower recidivism** is a key goal in public-private partnerships. By combining the innovation of the private sector and the right level of regulation and oversight from the public sector, an outcomes-driven system can be implemented that yields successful rehabilitation and reintegration programs that, over time, will reduce Florida’s high levels of recidivism.
- ✓ **Creating a system of accountability** is fundamental to the public-private partnership model as the current correctional system lacks a single authority responsible for successful inmate rehabilitation and community reintegration programs to avoid inmates from recidivating. Public-private partnerships, for the first time, create an outcomes-based system that holds the private partner accountable for providing safe and secure prisons, and for effectively rehabilitating inmates.
- ✓ Generating at least **\$30 million in taxpayer savings a year** by transforming Florida’s corrections system and adopting a public-private partnership model.

Barney Bishop, President and CEO of Associated Industries of Florida stated, “Associated Industries of Florida agrees that the time is now to reform the way Florida handles its corrections system. Moving towards a model that empowers the private sector to share new, innovative tools will bring cost savings to the state and keep our communities safe. Adopting a public-private partnership will create a true accountable corrections system that holds both the private and public sector responsible for providing safe prisons and for effectively rehabilitating inmates.”

###

Florida TaxWatch is a statewide, non-profit, non-partisan research institute that over its 31 year history has become widely recognized as the watchdog of citizens’ hard-earned tax dollars. Its mission is to provide the citizens of Florida and public officials with high quality, independent research and education on government revenues, expenditures, taxation, public policies and programs and to increase the productivity and accountability of Florida state and local government. Its support comes from homeowners and retirees, small and large businesses, philanthropic foundations, and professional associations. On the web at www.FloridaTaxWatch.org.