



The Florida House of Representatives

Full Appropriations Council on Education & Economic Development

Larry Cretul
Speaker

David Rivera
Chair

January 21, 2010

Representative Franklin Sands, Minority Leader
Florida House Democratic Caucus
316 The Capitol
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1300

Representative Perry Thurston, Jr.
Democratic Ranking Member
House Finance & Tax Council
410 House Office Building
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1300

Representative Ron Saunders
Democratic Ranking Member
House Appropriations Council
203 House Office Building
Tallahassee FL 32399-1300

Representative Keith Fitzgerald, Policy Chair
House Democratic Caucus
316 The Capitol
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1300

Dear Members:

I was disappointed to learn that you and the members of the Florida House Democratic Caucus are opposed to the transparent process being conducted in the House in order to establish meaningful budget priorities for our state.

All members of the appropriations committees have been asked to participate in a budget prioritization exercise very similar to the conversations taking place at kitchen tables of Floridians every day. This is a common sense approach for those truly interested in a fiscally responsible budget for Florida's future.

January 21, 2010

Page 2

Your refusal to participate in setting priorities for the state budget can only be taken as evidence of one of two facts: either you are unable to set meaningful priorities for our state or simply unwilling to do so. Either way, Floridians can be assured that your abdication of responsibility is a declaration that you and the members of the Democratic Caucus are unable and unwilling to lead this state to economic recovery.

Last year, Speaker Cretul brought more transparency to the budget process than ever before by implementing transparency reforms including having all budget proviso vetted publicly before being placed in the budget. This week's priority setting process, open to all members of the appropriations committees, is just the first step in ongoing budget transparency initiatives. It is unfortunate that members of your party have elected to not to participate in these transparency reforms.

Regarding your obsession with raising taxes on Floridians during these tough economic times, the House Finance & Tax Committee is the appropriate place for that discussion. Each of you is welcome to follow the lead of your fellow Democratic members such as Representatives Bullard and Rehwinkel-Vasilinda and sponsor or co-sponsor legislation that increases taxes on Floridians. I welcome the debate of whether or not the House Democratic Caucus approach of raising taxes on our state's families and small businesses is the best approach to creating jobs and recharging our state's economy.

Sincerely,



David Rivera, Council Chair
Full Appropriations Council on Education & Economic Development

DR/ctr

cc: Larry Cretul, Speaker
Ellyn Bogdanoff, Chair, Finance & Tax Council