

Dear Friends,

Several events this week focused attention on the fact that nothing is more important than the safety of Floridians. First, Lt. Governor Jeff Kottkamp and I participated in Florida Missing Children's Day, held the second Monday of September each year. We mourned with the families of missing children and joined law enforcement officers to recommit ourselves to doing everything we can to keep our children safe. Our children are our most precious resource, and we must work together each and every day to protect them.



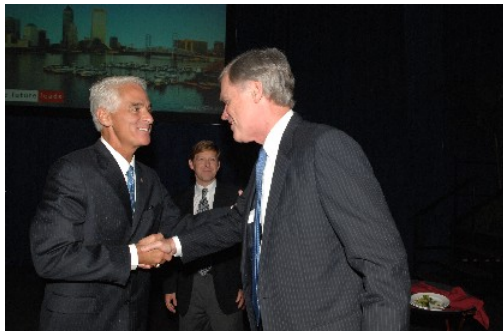
On Tuesday, our nation marked the sixth anniversary of the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. We continue to grieve for the precious lives lost on that horrific day, but we also remember with pride the courage and perseverance that is the American spirit. As Americans, we are blessed with freedom and opportunity unlike any other people in the history of the world. We also honor the memory of the firefighters and first responders who selflessly risked their own lives to save another.

On Thursday, tragedy fell on Florida as one Miami-Dade police officer was killed and three others were injured in the line of duty. My thoughts and prayers go out for the families and friends of these brave officers. They are truly heroes. I applaud their dedication and courage in the face of danger and their ability to make quick decisions under extreme pressure. They exemplify the outstanding work Floridas law enforcement officers do every day.

* * * * *

This week, I also focused on Floridas economy. Floridas economists have predicted a tighter budget than expected. To assist the leaders of the House and Senate as they consider ways to address our budget shortfall, I have proposed recommendations for adjusting our state spending. I have also recommended ways to rev up our economy. The goal is to generate new revenue, without burdening the people of Florida.

The first part of my economic stimulus package provides help for first-time home buyers. We can bring home ownership within reach of as many as 3,000 lower-income families by helping them with a down payment and a lower interest rate.



Next, I am asking the Legislature to give school districts, community colleges and state universities the funds they need to begin construction projects right away. Typically, these funds would not be available until next summer after the 2008 regular legislative session. By releasing these funds earlier than usual, we can put more construction workers to work.

Finally, we can fast-track some of our transportation projects such as the I-95 Express Project and improvements to Floridas seaports. By easing South Florida congestion and investing in our deep-water ports, we will spark our states commerce and international trade.

May God continue to bless you and the great State of Florida,

Charlie Crist