

Dear Friends,



This week I have been focusing on strengthening Florida's economy during a trade mission to Brazil. With more than 200 business and government leaders joining me, we are here to do business. Brazil is Florida's number-one trade partner, and we are working to expand trade opportunities in agriculture, aviation, biofuels and renewable energy.

Throughout this mission, I have met with senior government officials, business leaders, and participated in a Brazil-Florida Ethanol Roundtable. We are strengthening our relationship with Florida's top international trade partners by identifying new ways to partner with companies and business leaders in Brazil, and also Chile and Argentina. We are also learning new ways to preserve our most precious asset, our beautiful natural environment.

Because there is gold in green, we are learning from Brazil's expertise in ethanol production. Brazil does not rely on other countries for energy like we do in the U.S. Also, eight out of every 10 new cars in Brazil run on ethanol produced from sugarcane. I believe Florida can follow Brazil's example and expand our own ethanol production and use.



We have also been promoting Florida as a tourism destination. Florida's economy benefits when visitors come to our state, and Brazilians love coming to the Sunshine State. They enjoy our friendly business environment and our climate. In fact, over 350,000 Brazilians live in Florida, and another 400,000 travel to our state every year to vacation and conduct business.

During this trade mission, Florida businesses have formed new business partnerships with Brazilian companies. Renewable Fuels of Tallahassee and the Controlsud International Group signed a \$182 million funding agreement to improve clean energy production. Bolivar BioFuels is negotiating a \$125 million deal to build an ethanol plant in Florida. Another company closed four out of five deals at the MatchMaker Business Expo.



Free and fair trade is important to diversifying Florida's economy. I also had the opportunity to encourage expanded trade with Argentina and Chile. The economy of Argentina has proven itself to be one of the most resilient in Latin America following the economic decline earlier in this decade. Chile is Florida's sixth largest trading partner. Since the free trade agreement between the U.S. and Chile in 2004, our bilateral trade has more than doubled.

Florida is recognized as the Gateway to the Americas throughout the Western Hemisphere, as well as the world. It is important that we promote our great climate, hospitality and rich tapestry of cultures - as well as our business friendly environment - so that the world knows that Florida is open for business.

May God bless you and the great state of Florida,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Charlie Crist".

Captions:

Top photo: Governor Charlie Crist stands before the flag of Brazil during a stop on the Team Florida Trade Mission to Florida's number-one international merchandise trade partner.

Middle photo: Governor Charlie Crist signs a Memorandum of Understanding with Governor Jos Serra of the State of So Paulo, Brazil, to enhance business and cultural exchange between the two states.

Bottom photo: Governor Charlie Crist celebrates Florida-Brazil relations with Embraer North America president Gary Spulak, left, and Embraer president and CEO Frederico Curado.

To view more photos of the Governors trade mission to Brazil, visit <http://www.flgov.com/brazil>.