

Dear Friends,

During recent months, I have met with business leaders throughout the state to discuss ways to keep Florida's economy vibrant and enhance our business friendly environment. I have also received input from the Florida Chamber of Commerce, Associated Industries of Florida, the Florida Economic Development Council and Enterprise Florida's board of directors. Florida's business leaders are some of the most innovative in the nation and have tremendous insight into how we can strengthen our business friendly atmosphere.

I want to share with you some of the ideas we have planned for the future of Florida's economy. Our goal is to make sure that Florida is competitive in the global market. We are developing our plans based on sound research and proven practice. To keep Florida competitive, we must expand our capacity for innovation. That means attracting industries focused on finding ways to do things better and faster.

Innovation is the heart of the entrepreneurial spirit, and the entrepreneurial spirit is woven into the DNA of Florida's economy. Innovation – doing things better and faster – will set off a chain reaction that will fire Florida's economic engines. Innovation leads to being more productive. Productivity leads to competitiveness, and a competitive state becomes a prosperous state. Prosperity is our goal – for our people, for our communities, and our state.

I look forward to working with members of the Florida Legislature and business leaders to build on these principles and move forward with a strategy to strengthen Florida's economic future. My framework for achieving Florida's competitive advantage includes six essential drivers for Florida's innovation economy.

- **Sustainable growth** will ensure that our communities grow in a balanced way, that we preserve our state's beauty and that we are a leader in clean technologies.
- A **competitive business climate** can be nurtured by lowering the cost of doing business in Florida. January 29th is a step in the right direction, but we have more work to do.
- A **multimodal infrastructure** created by improving all of our ports – seaports, airports, spaceports and railports – will ensure paths to and from markets.
- **Research and development** will create new products and processes in targeted industries such as the clean technology.
- **Entrepreneurial systems** such as improved access to capital and business incubation will ensure Florida-based businesses – in urban and rural communities alike – grow and prosper.
- Improved education and workforce training will ensure Florida has **world-class talent** available in an innovation economy.

Florida's brightest days are ahead of us. I believe we can build on our past success by learning from sound research and proven practice. We can tap into Florida's entrepreneurial spirit and create opportunity for unparalleled prosperity.

May God bless you and give us a prosperous new year.

