

GOVERNOR RICK SCOTT'S 2017-2018 BUDGET

Fighting for Florida's Future



Governor Rick Scott's Fighting for Florida's Future Recommended Budget

Introduction from Governor Rick Scott

I am so proud to have the opportunity to travel our great state every day and meet the hard working Floridians who call the Sunshine State home and the many visitors from all over the world who support Florida's growing economy. Florida has made tremendous strides in the past six years. Our economy has completely turned around because of our unrelenting focus on cutting taxes, reducing burdensome regulations and creating an environment where any job creator – from start-ups, to small businesses, to global corporations – can grow and succeed in Florida. Today, Florida's hardworking businesses have added over 1.25 million jobs since December 2010, far surpassing our goal to create 700,000 jobs in seven years. While this is a great achievement, we can't stop there. We have to fight for Florida's future and ensure our children and grandchildren have the opportunity to succeed in our great state.

Our Fighting for Florida's Future budget cuts taxes by \$618 million to boost our economy

and encourage both large and small businesses to create jobs and build opportunities for generations of Floridians. When jobs are created, it helps the poorest, most disadvantaged families who need a job the most. Included in our proposal is cutting the tax businesses pay on their commercial leases. Florida is the only state in the nation that has this tax and it unfairly targets small businesses.

Working with the Florida Legislature, we have cut \$6.5 billion in taxes over the last six years. However, cutting taxes is not enough to ensure we have a strong economy for our future. We have to use every resource available to us to grow and retain jobs. That is why I am proposing funding and initiatives to ensure we can out-compete other states and nations for major jobs wins and help existing businesses in our state grow. I believe that those who oppose investing in growing Florida businesses simply don't understand how businesses work. We need to compete for jobs here in Florida so we can diversify our economy for generations to come and not only rely on the tourism industry. It is important to point out that before I came into office, state incentives were often awarded before goals, like job creation, were met. But now, Florida companies only receive economic incentives after stringent requirements are met, including proven job growth and wage requirements that ensure a great return on investment for Florida families. This means NO FUNDS are given out as "corporate welfare." Incentives are only awarded to companies who achieve their contractual goals of job creation or capital investment here in Florida.

The Fighting for Florida's Future budget also makes strategic investments in our tourism industry to ensure we continue to welcome record visitors each year.

Just last year, visitors spent more than \$108 billion and generated more than \$11 billion in state and local tax revenue. In addition, this important industry was responsible for nearly 1.4 million jobs that yielded more than \$50 billion in income for the Floridians employed in this industry. Since 2011, over 250,000 jobs have been added in our tourism industry – growing annually at 4.5 percent. Tourism is the foundation of our great state and as these numbers show, it is a major contributor to the success of Florida. Not only does every 85 tourists support one Florida job, but tourism

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supports thousands of small businesses that rely on visitors. If we do not continue to prioritize investments in our tourism industry, our economy will suffer and jobs will be lost.

Since 2011, more than 1,000,000 people have moved to Florida because of our great schools, friendly business climate and beautiful weather. It is no surprise that Florida is the third largest state and fourth fastest growing state in the nation, and when more people move here, we have to continue to invest in areas that are important to families.

I am proud this year that we are able to once again invest historic amounts of funding in our K-12 education system, state colleges and universities.

We are also fighting to keep higher education affordable by holding the line on tuition for the fourth year, **freezing all fees at our state colleges and universities, and capping tuition at our state colleges.**

Teachers are key to preparing our future generations for great careers and we have to make investments to recruit and retain the best educators in our classrooms. This year, **we are proposing \$58 million in funding for teacher recruitment and retention initiatives,** including \$15 million to eliminate initial certification and renewal certification fees for teachers. This investment will save each of Florida's aspiring teachers approximately \$555 on their initial certification and each of Florida's employed public school teachers \$75 for their certification renewal.

We are also continuing to make historic strides to protect Florida's lands and ensure that the future of our state's pristine environment is beautiful for generations to come. **Our Fighting for Florida's Future budget invests nearly \$4 billion in our environment, with record funding once again for our springs and \$60 million for the new Indian River Lagoon and Caloosahatchee Clean-Up Initiative.**

With more and more people traveling our state, transportation is key to growing our economy and we are investing **more than \$10 billion for transportation infrastructure, with more than \$178 million in our ports this year.** Our ports are key to positioning Florida as the global hub for trade and encouraging economic ties with Latin America and beyond.

We are also focused on helping Florida's most vulnerable by providing funding to remove everyone off of the critical needs waiting list at the Agency for Persons with Disabilities for the fourth consecutive year; help those with unique abilities get employment services; and make investments to help the frailest people on the Home Care for the Elderly program waiting list.

In 2016, our state's preparedness efforts and law enforcement were put to the test like never before. Hurricanes Matthew and Hermine caused significant damage to many communities and especially to our world-class beaches. **That is why our Fighting for Florida's Future budget invests more than \$61 million to address hurricane damage and repair and restore our beaches.** This funding is in addition to the nearly \$15.8 million authorized through Executive

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Orders [16-230](#) and [17-16](#) for state matching funds for emergency beach restoration projects bringing the total to \$77 million.

In June, Florida came under attack when a terrorist, inspired by ISIS and filled with hate, stormed into Pulse Nightclub and killed 49 innocent people. We will never forget this tragic loss of innocent life. **The Fighting for Florida's Future budget proposes \$5.8 million for the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) to hire 46 new employees dedicated to counterterrorism.** This will better enable Florida to work hand-in-hand with local, state and federal intelligence agencies to establish a planned, deliberate and comprehensive effort in support of domestic security.

I have been in office long enough to know that every year there are always people who say we cannot afford to cut taxes, make strategic investments in areas that are important to families and provide savings to taxpayers. But, they are wrong. Since 2011, our state's economy has grown by 24 percent. During this same time, our state general revenues have grown by \$6.8 billion while we have cut taxes for Florida families by more than \$6.5 billion and paid down more than \$7.6 billion in debt.

Additionally, for Fiscal Year 2017-2018, total available General Revenues exceed the recurring base budget by \$2.8 billion. We have the funds to fight for Florida's future while wisely protecting tax dollars to ensure we get the best return on the investment of families' hard-earned tax dollars.

We have fought so hard to turn our economy around, and now it is up to us to fight for our future generations. I have exactly 706 days left in office, and I will fight until my very last moment as Governor to make Florida the best place in the world for our future generations. It is incumbent on all of us to make Florida a better place and we have to make investments that help our children and grandchildren for decades to come.

Sincerely,

Governor Rick Scott

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Fighting to Cut Taxes for Florida's Future - \$618 Million in Tax Cuts

Governor Scott is committed to reducing the burden of taxes on Florida families and ensuring taxes are cut for Florida's future generations. The Fighting for Florida's Future budget proposes to cut taxes by more than \$618 million. Florida's per capita state tax burden is the second lowest among all states at \$1,806, but Governor Scott is committed to continuing to cut every possible tax to help Florida's future generations. These tax cuts will encourage both large and small businesses to create more jobs and build opportunities for generations of Floridians.

Governor Scott's \$618 million tax cut package includes:

- **Decreasing the Tax on Commercial Leases by \$454 Million** – Florida is the only state that has a tax on commercial leases which unfairly targets small businesses. Governor Scott is proposing to reduce the tax on commercial leases by 25 percent in 2018, saving Florida businesses \$454 million a year.
- **Sales Tax Holidays to Save Families \$98 Million** – The Fighting for Florida's Future budget includes funding for four sales tax holidays which will save Florida families an estimated \$98 million in the upcoming fiscal year. These sales tax holidays include:
 - \$72 million from a 10-day back-to-school sales tax holiday;
 - \$7 million from a nine-day disaster preparedness sales tax holiday;
 - \$18.4 million from a three-day veteran's sales tax holiday; and
 - \$500,000 from a one-day camping and fishing sales tax holiday.
- **Providing a One-Year Sales Tax Exemption on College Textbooks to Save Students \$48 Million** – Governor Scott is proposing to exempt the purchase of college textbooks from the sales tax for the 2017-18 academic year. The prices of college textbooks have increased significantly, often exceeding \$100 per book. Exempting college textbooks from the sales tax is expected to save Florida students \$48 million. A student taking five courses per semester will save a minimum of \$60 per year.
- **Cutting the Business Tax to Save Businesses \$15 Million** – Governor Scott is proposing to exempt 22.5 percent of businesses from having to pay income taxes by increasing the corporate tax exemption from \$50,000 to \$75,000. Eliminating this tax will provide annual savings of \$15 million and ensure more small businesses can hire more workers, providing Florida families with jobs. This will eliminate these taxes for more than 80 percent of Florida's businesses. This exemption was increased from \$5,000 to \$25,000 in 2011 and \$50,000 in 2012.
- **Exempting School Book Fairs from the Sales Tax to Save Families \$3 Million** – Governor Scott is proposing to exempt the purchases of books at school book fairs from the sales tax, saving Florida families \$3 million each year.

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Fighting to Cut Fees for Floridians

Governor Scott has been fighting to eliminate fees and unnecessary regulations since his first day in office. For every one government job that was eliminated because of increased efficiencies, 177 new private sector jobs have been gained under Governor Scott. Governor Scott's Fighting for Florida's Future budget includes \$8.1 million in additional annual fee cuts for Florida's seniors, teachers, veterans and businesses, all while maintaining the quality of services provided. Some of the fee cuts include:

Fee Cuts for Seniors

Waives Fees for Transferring Vehicle Title for Surviving Spouses

Spouses who lose their loved one should not be required to pay the fee to retitle a vehicle. The Fighting for Florida's Future budget proposes waiving the \$70.00 retitling fee due to a spouse's death. This is expected to save Floridians \$1.6 million annually.

Free Replacement and Renewal ID Cards for Citizens 80 and Over

The Fighting for Florida's Future budget proposes to exempt seniors from paying the \$25 fee on new or replacement ID cards. This is expected to save Floridians \$700,000 annually.

Free Original ID Cards for Citizens 80 and Over Who Surrender Their Driver License

Many senior citizens are forced to or decide to no longer hold a driver license to operate a motor vehicle, yet still need an ID card. The Fighting for Florida's Future budget exempts citizens over the age of 80 from paying the \$25 fee who surrender their license. This is expected to save \$2.3 million for Florida's seniors.

Fee Cuts for Veterans

Free Veterans Designation on New Identification, Licenses and Renewals

Florida is the most military friendly state in the nation, and having a veteran's designation on an ID or driver license makes accessing some of these advantages easier. The Fighting for Florida's Future budget recommends eliminating the \$1 or \$2 fee required to get this designation on ID or driver license when either renewing or replacing a license. This is expected to save Florida's veterans about \$58,000 annually.

Free Original Commercial Driver's Licenses for Veterans

Governor Scott will continue making Florida the most military and veteran friendly state in the nation by eliminating the \$75 fee for veterans who obtain an original commercial driver's license. This is expected to save Florida's veterans about \$141,000 annually.

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Fee Cuts for Businesses

Reduces All Fees Associated with Commercial Driving Schools by 50%

This will cut the new application fee from \$50 to \$25, the new issuance fee from \$200 to \$100, and the annual renewal fee from \$100 to \$50. This is expected to save Floridian's \$25,000 annually.

Reduces Delinquency Fees

Individuals who are late renewing their license must currently pay a separate "delinquency fee" in addition to their renewal fee ranging from \$25 to \$260. The Fighting for Florida's Future budget recommends reducing delinquency fees to a flat rate of \$25, saving licensees \$680,000 annually.

Reduces Building Permit Surcharge

Currently, to help fund the enforcement of the Florida Building Code, local builders are required to pay a 1.5% surcharge on building permits. The current surcharge amount creates increased construction costs for consumers. The Fighting for Florida's Future budget will reduce the surcharge amount from 1.5% to 1%, resulting in nearly \$2.6 million in annual savings for consumers while still maintaining sufficient funds for code enforcement activities.

Eliminates Sales and Use Tax Registration Fees Using Paper Applications

Many businesses are required to pay sales and use taxes each year. Currently businesses are not required to pay any fee if filed online, however, if filed using paper application they are charged a \$5 fee. The Fighting for Florida's Future budget eliminates this \$5 fee, saving Florida businesses more than \$130,000 annually.

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Fighting for Florida Jobs

Governor Scott ran on a mission to turn Florida's economy around and while Florida has added more than 1.2 million jobs in just six years, he will keep fighting for jobs until his last day in office.

Supporting Job Growth in Florida

Governor Scott knows that when businesses succeed, jobs are created and generations of Floridians benefit from being able to provide for their families. That is why the Governor is continuing his hard work to secure a bright future for Florida by diversifying the economy and supporting business through low taxes and a smart regulatory structure. Today, Florida is well positioned for continued growth which helps Florida's poorest families by providing even more opportunities to get a great job. However, there is still more to be done to ensure that future generations of Floridians live in a state that provides boundless opportunities for success.

The Fighting for Florida's Future budget recommends \$85 million for economic incentives for the sole purpose of bringing more jobs to Florida. This essential funding is provided for economic development incentives such as the Quick Action Closing Fund, the Qualified Targeted Industry Tax Refund, Defense Contractor Tax Refund and Brownfield Redevelopment Tax Refund. A key component of this funding is the flexibility to react quickly to economic opportunities, which will enhance business retention and job creation.

Additionally, the Fighting for Florida's Future budget invests approximately \$119 million for Florida's economic development public-private partnerships, including \$76 million in marketing dollars for VISIT Florida, \$19.5 million for operations and job creation funding for Space Florida and \$23.5 million for the operations of Enterprise Florida.

Governor Scott also knows that the state's economic development public-private partnerships must do everything they can to make sure every tax dollar under their purview is spent wisely and with full transparency. The Governor has already requested these organizations to increase their level of financial disclosure similar to what is required of Florida's state agencies. Governor Scott will also work with the Legislature this year to pass comprehensive legislation that will require full financial accountability to Florida's taxpayers, including detailed online disclosure of spending, contracts, financial reports, and project performance information.

Fighting for Florida Tourism

Visitors come to Florida year-round to enjoy the pristine environment, world class beaches and the state's many recreational and cultural treasures. Florida has welcomed more than 478 million tourists since 2011 with the help of VISIT Florida. The organization has successfully marketed the state to the world as a premier tourism destination and Florida's prolific increase in tourists has directly coincided with the additional marketing resources championed by Governor Scott since taking office. The Fighting for Florida's Future budget includes \$26 million to maintain total funding for VISIT Florida at \$76 million, which will build on its success in attracting more tourists to the Sunshine State. For every dollar invested in VISIT Florida, taxpayers saw a return of \$3.20. During 2015, more than 106.6 million visitors

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came to Florida, an increase of 7.9 percent over 2014. These visitors spent more than \$108 billion while enjoying Florida, up 3.9 percent over 2014 and generated \$11.3 billion in tourism related state and local tax revenue, up 7.6 percent over 2014. This is reflected in 2015 estimates of nearly 1.4 million jobs and more than \$50 billion in payroll related to tourism. These figures are definitive proof that tourism is not only a massive contributor to Florida's economy, but essential to the success of businesses throughout Florida that rely on visitors to continue growing and creating more jobs.

Fighting to Increase Trade

With the continued expansion of Florida seaports, the Fighting for Florida's Future budget continues to invest in exports to global markets. The Fighting for Florida's Future budget recommends \$1 million to continue two highly successful export diversification and expansion programs. These programs help diversify Florida's economy and increase Florida's international trade and exports through Target Sector Trade Grants and Export Marketing Plan assistance. Providing these resources is key for Florida to maintain its preeminent position as an economic gateway to Latin America and the Caribbean. In 2015, Latin America and the Caribbean accounted for 57 percent of total Florida merchandise trade. This amount represents more than 25 percent of all trade between this region and the United States. Florida's top five merchandise export destination are all in Latin America and the Caribbean and include Brazil, Colombia, Chile, Argentina and the Dominican Republic.

In 2016, Enterprise Florida provided 128 target sector trade show grants. Eligible small and medium-sized companies can apply for these grants to help offset costs and enable businesses to participate in Enterprise Florida trade shows and select U.S. certified trade exhibitions in target sectors. Being able to participate in such trade shows allows smaller Florida businesses to make vital contacts abroad and lay the foundation for future trading relationships. Assisting Florida businesses to successfully trade in worldwide markets is key to ensuring Florida's long term economic prosperity.

Florida Flex (Quick Response Training)

The Fighting for Florida's Future budget invests an additional \$11 million in Florida Flex for a record total of \$20 million to help continue diversifying Florida's economy. This increase will build on the program's success by providing businesses, both large and small in targeted industries, with matching funds related to specific training activities for workers who will be moving into new jobs created in Florida.

Investing in Florida's Future Workforce

Governor Scott is committed to making Florida the best state in the nation for workforce development so Florida's economy can continue to diversify and attract more businesses. Since 2011, Governor Scott has directed investments of more than \$1.6 billion for communities to ensure the best workers are available to Florida's job creators.

The Fighting for Florida's Future budget recommends more than \$283 million for Florida's 24 Regional CareerSource Boards responsible for providing workforce services directly linked to job seekers and businesses. This includes job placement, recruitment assistance and skills

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training. The Florida workforce system helped place more than 413,000 Floridians in jobs during 2016, including more than 16,800 Florida veterans.

Fighting for Great Transportation for Florida's Future

The Fighting for Florida's Future budget invests \$10.1 billion for the Florida Department of Transportation's Work Program to ensure that more than 20.7 million residents and 106.6 million visitors are able to move safely and effectively throughout the state. The Fighting for Florida's Future budget makes the following transportation investments:

- \$4.1 billion to expand transportation system capacity, which includes adding 206 new lane miles;
- \$978.2 million for maintenance and operation;
- \$658.6 million for resurfacing more than 2,142 lane miles;
- \$618 million for transit program improvements;
- \$300.8 million for scheduled repairs of 61 bridges and replacement of 16 bridges;
- \$257.8 million for aviation improvements;
- \$178.2 million in seaport infrastructure improvements;
- \$175.6 million for safety initiatives; and
- \$82.7 million for bike and pedestrian trails.

Investing in Florida's Future Transportation Infrastructure

Florida is the fourth fastest growing state in the nation with a population of more than 20.7 million. As the nation's third largest state, transportation infrastructure continues to be vital to the support of Florida's growing population and a driver to Florida's rapidly growing economy.

Florida remains at the leading edge of transportation innovations and has been recognized for inventive funding solutions to enhance capacity of transportation infrastructure. Since 2011, Governor Scott has overseen the investment of more than \$63 billion in funding for roads, bridges, airports and seaports. This includes priority investments in Florida's seaports exceeding \$1.2 billion. Port infrastructure investments support and build on the 103 million tons of cargo worth \$49.8 billion, and the 15.2 million cruise passengers that passed through the state's ports in 2015.

Florida's proximity to Latin America and the Caribbean remains critical to the state's major role in the nations' trade, accounting for 25.2 percent of all U.S. waterborne exports and 19.1 percent of all U.S. waterborne imports to and from this growing region in 2015. Improvements such as completing the deepening of the Port of Miami and planned deepening at JAXPORT are vital to Florida being able to accommodate the large cargo ships traveling through the recently widened Panama Canal. To date, Florida's ports investments have resulted in an economic value of more than \$117 billion – a \$15 billion increase since 2012.

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Fighting to Keep Government Efficient for the Future

The Governor's total recommendation in the Fighting for Florida's Future budget for Fiscal Year 2017-2018 is \$83.5 billion. The General Revenue portion is \$30.8 billion. The General Revenue funds available for the FY 2017-2018 budget year increased \$1.3 billion from the previous fiscal year, a 4.3 percent increase. Florida's total reserves are \$5 billion. This increase is a continued indication that Florida's economy is strong.

Budget Savings

The Fighting for Florida's Future budget recommends \$1.1 billion in savings and a decrease of 266 positions as a result of state agencies' continued efforts to become more efficient and save tax dollars.

In order to achieve even greater efficiency and reduce the burden of government on taxpayers, Governor Scott is proposing a three-tiered bonus pay system to incentivize state workers at every executive, cabinet and judicial agency. Under Governor Scott's performance bonus proposal, state employees can earn up to an extra \$1,500, if each tier is met, ensuring that Florida remains efficient for the future:

- **Tier 1:** \$500 if the agency meets its performance measures;
- **Tier 2:** \$500 if the employee is rated a minimum of "Satisfactory";
- **Tier 3:** \$500 only to be awarded if budget savings are realized (amount determined by agency head based on realized savings).

Contract and Lease Renegotiations

Savings resulting from contract and lease renegotiations have generated a statewide savings of \$51.9 million since Fiscal Year 2012-2013. This includes savings in the Fighting for Florida's Future budget of \$1.3 million. Savings will continue to grow as additional contracts are identified and renegotiated to provide the best return on investment for Florida families.

Reduction in Debt Service

Because Florida continues to pay off debt, Florida taxpayers are saving money. The Fighting for Florida's Future budget realizes a savings of \$52.4 million due to reduced debt service obligations and State Board of Administration fees associated with the issuance of bonds for public schools, Florida colleges, state universities, and state facilities.

Florida has paid down \$4.1 billion in outstanding bond debt, as well as the \$3.5 billion loan for the unemployment compensation program, resulting in an almost 25 percent reduction in outstanding debt since Governor Scott took office. Florida has significantly less debt per capita than New York, Illinois and California. In fact, California and Illinois have more than double the debt per capita of Florida and New York has nearly triple the debt per capita. Over the last five fiscal years, refinancing activity has generated gross debt service savings of approximately \$2.1 billion. Refunding transactions executed over the last five years total nearly \$10.4 billion –

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lowering the interest rate on about 43 percent of Florida's total outstanding debt. With historically low interest rates and Florida's AAA credit ratings, Florida has saved an additional \$247.7 million in gross debt service thus far in fiscal year 2016-17. The state has maintained its AAA credit ratings and most recently in 2016, the Turnpike system was upgraded by all three ratings agencies.

State Employee Health Coverage Savings

The Fighting for Florida's Future budget saves taxpayers \$21.8 million by proposing that all employees pay equally for health insurance coverage - \$50 per month for individual coverage and \$180 per month for family coverage. This reduces employer contribution for health insurance coverage for employees in Senior Management Service and Selected Exempt Service systems. Governor Scott has proposed this plan every year since taking office.

Dependent Eligibility Verification Services

The Fighting for Florida's Future budget recommends \$1.2 million for one-time auditing services and continuous quality control services to determine dependent eligibility in the state employee health insurance program. This audit is estimated to save taxpayers more than \$45 million per year by reducing waste, fraud and abuse in the state health plan.

Efficient Management of State Vehicles

The Fighting for Florida's Future budget recommends more than \$450,000 for the new, single Fleet Management system that will make Florida's state government fleet management one of the most efficient in the nation. Florida owns nearly 25,000 vehicles, one of the largest public sector fleets in the nation, and is currently managed through six separate systems. The new system will streamline distribution of real-time information to all agency fleet users, customers and management. The system will more than pay for itself within the first year after implementation through increased efficiency, and saves Florida's taxpayers millions in years to come.

Formulary Management

The Fighting for Florida's Future budget implements a new model for managing Florida's employee prescription drug program. This model will save the state approximately \$51.2 million annually and has been successfully implemented in eight other states across the country.

Motorist Modernization Project

The Fighting for Florida's Future budget recommends \$9.9 million to continue the Motorist Modernization Phase I Project that will replace the Motorist Services credentialing system for driver license and identification card issuance. This investment will serve customers better by offering additional online services and instantaneous updates to motorist information and driver license data. These improvements will mean shorter transaction times for customers and improved overall quality of the Florida motorist data.

Additionally, the Fighting for Florida's Future budget recommends \$4.1 million for the first year of the Motorist Modernization Phase II Project that will update the existing Florida Real Time

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Vehicle Information System (FRVIS). When completed, Phases I and II will operate seamlessly to reduce costs and provide significantly greater operational efficiencies for consumers.

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Fighting for Florida's Future Students

Governor Scott understands that today's students are tomorrow's workforce and is committed to fighting for the future of education in Florida to give teachers and students at every grade level the necessary tools for success. That is why the Fighting for Florida's Future budget invests historic amounts of funding in K-12, state colleges and universities to ensure every student has the opportunity to succeed in the Sunshine State.

Historic Areas of Funding	Funding Amount
K-12 Public Schools – Total Funding	\$20.99 billion
K-12 Public Schools – State Funding	\$11.55 billion
K-12 Public Schools – Per-Student Funding	\$7,421
Florida College System – Total Funding	\$2.05 billion
Florida College System – State Operating Funding	\$1.25 billion
State University System – Total Funding	\$4.84 billion
State University System – State Operating Funding	\$2.36 billion

Florida's teachers and students have made outstanding achievements over the last year as evidenced by the following rankings:

K-12 Public Schools

- Florida ranks first in digital learning, according to Digital Learning Now's Digital Learning Report Card.
- The National Council on Teacher Quality has three times ranked Florida's teacher quality policies best in the nation.
- Florida is 2nd in the nation in Advanced Placement (AP) exam participation for the 2015 graduating class and 3rd in the nation for their performance.
- Florida's graduation rates are at a 13-year high – increasing 21.5 percentage points since 2003-2004.
- Florida ranks 11th in the nation for K-12 achievement according to the Quality Counts report.
- According to The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP):
 - Florida's 4th grade students outperform the nation in both reading and math.
 - Florida's 4th grade Hispanic students led the nation in reading.
 - Florida's 4th grade Hispanic students' average score ranked second among the 50 states.
 - In 4th grade reading and mathematics, Florida's students' with disabilities average score ranked second among the 50 states.
 - Florida's economically disadvantaged students led the nation in 4th grade reading.

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Florida College System

- WalletHub ranked the Division of Florida Colleges as the fourth best community college system in the country.
- Broward College and Indian River State College were named as finalists for the 2017 Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence.
- Miami Dade College awarded more associate degrees to minority and Hispanic students than any other college in the nation according to Community College Week 2016 Top 100.
- Florida is the number one producer of certificates and associate degrees in the Southeast Region.
- According to Community College Week 2016 Top 100:
 - Fourteen Florida College System institutions ranked in the top 100 colleges nationwide for the total number of associate degrees awarded.
 - Eleven Florida College System institutions placed in the top 100 colleges nationwide for the number of associate degrees awarded to minority students.
 - Eleven Florida College System institutions are among the top 100 colleges in the nation for the number of associate degrees awarded to African American students.
 - Eight Florida College System institutions ranked in the top 100 colleges nationwide for the number of associate degrees awarded to Hispanic students.

State University System

- The State University System of Florida produces more degrees in business and health professions at both the bachelor's and graduate levels than any other discipline.
- STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) degree production increased more than non-STEM degree production during the past four years for both baccalaureate degrees and graduate degrees.
- Florida's preeminent universities are leading the way:
 - U.S. News & World Report ranked the University of Florida as the 14th top public school in the nation for 2016.
 - U.S. News & World Report ranked Florida State University (FSU) 38th among all public national universities. FSU had the greatest gain of all of the Top 50 public universities.

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Investing in Early Learning for Florida's Future

Governor Scott knows that success starts early and believes in doing everything possible to prepare a child for their education, which begins with a solid foundation of early learning programs. The Fighting for Florida's Future budget invests in initiatives that are focused on results and ensure effective early learning providers and increased access for more children. Governor Scott recommends \$1.1 billion in funding for early child education and care. This is a more than \$36 million increase over current year funding. The budget highlights for Early Learning include:

Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten (VPK)

The Fighting for Florida's Future budget recommends an additional \$11.3 million for a total of \$406.5 million for Florida's VPK program, a quality free education initiative, which serves more than 150,000 four and five-year olds. VPK prepares each child for kindergarten by building a strong foundation for school and focusing on early literacy skills.

School Readiness

The Fighting for Florida's Future budget includes an increase of \$25 million in federal funding to allow access to more than 4,600 additional children into School Readiness programs.

The Fighting for Florida's Future budget maintains funds in Fiscal Year 2017-2018 for the following early learning initiatives:

- T.E.A.C.H. – \$10 million for early childhood teacher scholarships.
- Performance Funding – \$15.5 million to award child care providers and instructors for improving School Readiness program outcomes.
- Help Me Grow – \$2.5 million to connect children and families with information, resources, and developmental services to enhance health, behavior, and learning in the development of young children.
- Lastinger Center Teacher Training – \$3 million for a statewide professional learning system for Florida's early learning workforce.
- Home Instruction Program for Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY) – \$3.9 million to deliver high quality School Readiness curriculum directly to parents so they may strengthen the cognitive and early literacy skills of at-risk children.

Performance Funding

Governor Scott is a steadfast proponent of performance funding at all levels of education to ensure students are getting the best results and are prepared for future careers. The Fighting for Florida's Future budget maintains \$15.5 million in performance funding for child care providers and instructors who demonstrate successes in school readiness, professional development and access to high-need populations.

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Investing Record Funding in K-12 Public Education

To build upon the strong foundation students receive through Florida's early learning programs, Governor Scott makes key investments in K-12 teachers and students in the Fighting for Florida's Future budget. The Governor prioritizes initiatives that help make sure students are college and career ready upon graduating from high school. While these investments will help all students in Florida's K-12 system today, Governor Scott is prioritizing funding to help ensure Florida's future students have access to a great education system.

Historic Funding for the Florida Educational Finance Program (FEFP)

Florida is a great melting pot where more than 200 languages are spoken and Florida's public education system delivers a quality education to a population of 2.8 million students from diverse backgrounds. With increasing graduation rates and policies that rank among the best in the nation, the Fighting for Florida's Future budget invests nearly \$21 billion in state and local funding for Florida's K-12 public schools which equates to \$7,421 per student. This is the highest total funding, state funding and per-student funding for K-12 in Florida's history.

Governor Scott has made record investments in state funding for K-12 for the past five years and this historic high of \$20.9 billion in total funding is an increase of \$815.2 million in state and local funds over Fiscal Year 2016-2017.

The increase of \$815.2 million in total funds includes:

- \$203.1 million to fund new student growth of 28,193 FTE;
- \$4.6 million, for a total of \$57.4 million, in funding for the Sparsity Supplement, which provides funding to assist rural districts with sparse student populations (24,000 or fewer FTE students);
- \$10 million, for a total of \$74.5 million, in funding for school safety initiatives that promote a safe learning environment;
- \$54.1 million for the Florida Retirement System; and
- \$543.4 million for various education initiatives included in the FEFP, such as transportation, reading allocation, and instructional materials.

Governor Scott is focused on ensuring that Florida's children receive a quality education in K-12 public schools. Since Governor Scott took office, state funding for Florida's K-12 public schools has increased by \$2.8 billion or 32.6 percent, from a total amount of \$8.7 billion in Fiscal Year 2011-2012 to \$11.6 billion in the 2017-2018 Fighting for Florida's Future budget. During this same time period, the local contribution to the FEFP has risen at a slower pace, increasing by \$1.6 billion or 19.9 percent.

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Fighting for Florida's Future



Supporting Florida's Teachers

Governor Scott recognizes the positive impact highly trained principals and teachers have on today's students and generations of students to come. Therefore, as part of the state's investment this year, Governor Scott proposes a total of \$8.5 million in funding for initiatives focused on professional development. Initiatives include:

- \$7 million to support principal training;
- \$849,450 for approximately 600 math teachers to participate in a four-day training session during the summer;
- \$500,000 to provide a year-long, job-embedded, research-based program to principals, principal supervisors, and education leaders to improve student instruction; and
- \$100,000 for the Teacher LEAD Network program which provides district Teacher of the Year winners the opportunity to participate in professional development designed to improve leadership skills needed to support improved teaching.

Teacher of the Year Program

The Fighting for Florida's Future budget recommends \$770,000 for monetary awards to Florida's highest performing teachers through the Teacher of the Year Program. Under Governor Scott's recommendation and combined with private funds from Macy's, the award amounts will be a minimum of \$10,000 for district participants, a minimum of \$15,000 for finalists, and a minimum of \$20,000 for the Teacher of the Year.

Cutting Fees for Teachers

The Fighting for Florida's Future Budget recommends \$15 million to pay for initial teacher certification and renewal certification fees. This investment will save each of Florida's aspiring teachers approximately \$555 on their initial certification and each of Florida's employed public school teachers \$75 for their certification renewal.

Teacher Recruitment and Retention

Governor Scott knows that recruiting and retaining great teachers makes Florida's education system better for students today and for generations to come. The Fighting for Florida's Future budget recommends \$43 million for the following teacher recruitment and retention initiatives:

- \$10 million for a one time hiring bonus for Florida's teachers testing in the top 10 percent of the Subject Area Examination in the subject they are teaching in the 2017-2018 school year;
- \$5 million to increase the diversity of the teachers in critical shortage and high need areas;
- \$5.9 million to recruit Bright Futures Scholars that major in Education and commit to four years of teaching following graduation in the rural district from which they graduated high school;
- \$16 million for districts to implement targeted recruitment and retention initiatives that meet the districts' needs; and
- \$6.1 million to reward great teachers in low performing schools.

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Fighting for Florida's Future



Virtual Education

Governor Scott is a strong supporter of school choice. The Fighting for Florida's Future budget proposes expanding eligibility for students to participate in virtual education at Florida's K-12 public schools, and includes \$5.9 million in funding to cover newly eligible students. Current law mandates that students have to attend a public school the year before participating in a virtual education program at a Florida public school, unless they meet certain exceptions. This expansion eliminates that requirement for students in grades two through five who wish to participate in the part-time instruction at the Florida Virtual School. The expansion also applies to students in grades K-12 who wish to participate in a full-time or part-time program at school district virtual instruction programs.

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Fighting for Florida's Future



Investing Historic Funding in Higher Education

Since taking office, Governor Scott has challenged Florida's higher education institutions to become more affordable and prepare students for jobs. A few of his challenges include:

Challenge	Challenge Criteria	Result
Ready, Set, Work State College Challenge	Challenged Florida's 28 state colleges to graduate 100 percent of their full-time students to attend a four-year university or get a job that leads to a great career.	All 28 state colleges accepted Governor Scott's challenge and increased the three-year graduation rate from 48 percent to 51 percent.
Ready, Set, Work State University Challenge	Challenged Florida's 12 state universities to get 100 percent of their graduates (not going on to graduate school) full-time employment within a year for those receiving each university's two most popular degrees.	All 12 state universities accepted Governor Scott's challenge and have implemented strategies such as increased advising and mentorship opportunities to place students with jobs.
Ready, Set, Work Technical College Challenge	Challenged Florida's 48 Technical Colleges and Centers to issue a guarantee to businesses that their workers are ready to work on the very first day on the job, or they will be retrained at no cost to the business or the student.	All 48 Technical Colleges and Centers accepted the challenge and are working to meet community workforce needs.
Finish in Four, Save More Challenge	Challenged Florida's state colleges and universities to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove all fees for online classes; • Inform incoming freshmen of the amount of money they will save if they graduate in four years; • Urge the Legislature to expand Bright Futures to cover summer classes; • Ensure students get credit for college and AP courses taken during high school; and • Make it easier for students to get class credit for internships in their fields. 	All of Florida's state colleges and universities accepted Governor Scott's challenge and are examining ways their institutions can make college more affordable. Several state universities have created programs designed to keep students on track to graduate in four years.
\$10,000 STEM Degree Challenge	Governor Rick Scott challenged Florida's 28 state colleges to offer a bachelor's degree in a STEM field at a cost of \$10,000.	All 28 state colleges accepted the Governor's challenge. Nearly all institutions that offer bachelor's degrees now offer a \$10,000 degree.

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Fighting for Florida's Future



Governor Scott knows that ensuring Florida has a strong higher education system is the best way to make Florida a global destination for jobs and make certain highly educated and skilled workers are ready for a great job upon graduation. The Fighting for Florida's Future budget includes historic funding for higher education including record state operating funding for Florida's higher education system of more than \$1.2 billion for Florida colleges, and more than \$2.3 billion for Florida universities.

Performance Funding

Governor Scott has been a champion for performance-based incentives throughout his administration. The past four years have demonstrated the positive impact performance-based funding has had on Florida's 12 state universities. Eighty-seven new advisors have been hired to focus on student retention and graduation, seven career service centers have been revamped to focus on student advising and establishing partnerships with local businesses, and 408 additional faculty have been hired in high-wage, high-need areas.

To ensure all of Florida's higher education institutions are focused on the same goals, the Fighting for Florida's Future budget includes performance funding at career technical centers, Florida colleges and state universities:

- Career Technical Centers
 - Maintains \$4.5 million for students earning industry certifications in high-skill, high-demand areas at career technical centers.

- Florida College System
 - A record \$100 million in performance funding for the 28 Florida Colleges in the third year of performance funding.
 - The recommended budget also maintains \$10 million for students earning industry certifications in high-skill, high-demand areas at Florida colleges.

- State University System
 - The Fighting for Florida's Future budget includes a record \$600 million in performance funding for state universities to continue the trend of getting students into great jobs with less debt.

Fighting to Keep Florida's Higher Education Affordable

Governor Scott continues to fight to keep education affordable for Florida's students today and for years to come. Skyrocketing tuition rates make it difficult for families to plan for higher education and contribute to students leaving college with a stifling amount of debt. That is why there are NO tuition increases in the Fighting for Florida's Future budget. While Governor Scott has fought to make higher education more affordable by holding the line on undergraduate tuition, he realizes that there is much more that can be done to help students today and in the future. The Governor is proposing to freeze all fees at state colleges and universities, and freeze state college tuition so students aren't burdened with increasing costs.

The Fighting for Florida's Future budget recommends the following to keep higher education affordable for Florida students:

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- A sales tax exemption for students purchasing required textbooks and instructional materials that will save students \$48 million next year. A student taking five courses per semester will save a minimum of \$60 per year.
- \$34.7 million to expand the Bright Futures Scholarship program into the summer terms. Allowing this scholarship funding to be used for summer terms means students can graduate in less time, which equates to less student debt.
- \$12.9 million for the Bright Futures Florida Academic Scholar program to give students a 10 percent increase in the per credit hour award amount.

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Investing in Education Infrastructure

The Fighting for Florida's Future budget recognizes that in order to ensure Florida's current and future students succeed, students and teachers need safe and efficient facilities that foster a creative learning environment. Maintaining current education facilities is prioritized over new construction in Florida's postsecondary institutions since institutions should first create efficiencies by managing campus utilization rates. Governor Scott continues to be a champion for schools that have urgent construction needs but lack the ability to provide sufficient local resources to fund these needs.

Maintenance

- \$75 million for public school maintenance.
- \$75 million for charter school maintenance.
- \$5.8 million for lab school maintenance.
- \$2.2 million for Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind maintenance.
- \$35.9 million for Florida College System maintenance.
- \$53.9 million for State University System maintenance.

Construction

- \$16 million for Special Facility Construction projects. This funding is for critical infrastructure needs in Hamilton and Taylor counties.
- \$7.9 million for renovation and construction of A.D. Henderson University School and FAU High. Funds require a dollar for dollar match from Florida Atlantic University, the lab school's affiliated state university.
- \$3.2 million for Public Broadcasting projects.
- \$20.5 million to complete Florida College System construction projects. Funding requires a dollar for dollar match.
- \$41 million to complete State University System construction projects. Funding requires a dollar for dollar match.
- \$45 million in budget authority to the State University System to spend collected student fees on a list of student-approved facility projects.

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Fighting for Florida's Future



Fighting to Protect Florida's Environment for Future Generations

For decades, people from across the world have come to Florida because the state has more than 1,300 miles of coastline, award winning state parks and world-class beaches. Since taking office, Governor Scott has made historic strides to protect Florida's lands and ensure that the future of the state's pristine environment is beautiful for generations to come. Governor Scott has invested record funding in the Everglades and in Florida's springs, while also supporting the state's vital produce and agricultural industries. Today, Florida has the most comprehensive nutrient pollution limits, operates one of the highest achieving park systems and produces the highest amounts of oranges and grapefruit by cash-receipts in the nation.

The Fighting for Florida's Future budget invests more than \$3.9 billion to protect agricultural and natural resources and ensure Florida has a pristine environment for future generations to enjoy.

Preparing Florida's Communities and Environment for Major Storm Events

Hurricanes Matthew and Hermine caused significant damage to Florida, especially to the state's world-class beaches. Florida's beaches are not only an economic driver for coastal communities, but also provide critical storm protection and habitat for wildlife. The Fighting for Florida's Future budget invests \$61.2 million to fulfill the state's share of needed restoration based on the latest hurricane damage assessment. On January 27th, Governor Scott used his emergency executive authority under Executive Orders [16-230](#) and [17-16](#) and allocated nearly \$15.8 million in state funds for emergency beach restoration projects in response to the damage caused by Hurricane Matthew in St. Johns, Flagler, Volusia and Brevard Counties. This funding immediately addressed critically eroded beaches where an imminent threat to beachfront structures, such as roadways, homes and businesses, was identified. Projects include repairing and reconstructing sand dunes. Together, these investments total \$77 million and fulfill the total responsibility of the state to respond to hurricane damage to Florida's beaches. This funding is in addition to \$50 million for statewide beach and dune restoration, beach re-nourishment and other coastal restoration projects. This is the highest amount of funding for Florida's beaches since Governor Scott took office.

Following Hurricanes Matthew and Hermine, it is clear that investments are needed for wastewater treatment facilities to ensure local governments are prepared to handle major storms. The Fighting for Florida's Future budget invests \$22 million to start a new Wastewater Treatment Facility Storm Preparedness grant program. This program will offer up to a 75 percent state matching grant with local communities to help local wastewater treatment facilities prepare for future storm events and prevent sanitary sewer overflows like those Floridians experienced during the two hurricanes in 2016. These systems are run by local governments, not the state. The amount of grant assistance will be dependent on the size of the facility, with smaller facilities being eligible for a higher level of matching assistance.

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Improving Water Quality in Florida

Under Governor Scott's leadership, Florida established the most comprehensive nutrient pollution standards in the nation and became the first state to adopt complete nutrient standards protecting all lakes, rivers, streams, springs and estuaries. This outstanding achievement has undoubtedly worked to protect water quality in Florida for generations of Floridians – but more must be done. Governor Scott expects Florida to have the best water quality programs in the nation and the Fighting for Florida's Future budget makes critical investments of more than \$360 million in the programs outlined below to safeguard the iconic waterways that are so important to the future of Florida.

The Indian River Lagoon and Caloosahatchee Cleanup Initiative

The Fighting for Florida's Future budget invests \$60 million for Governor Scott's Indian River Lagoon and Caloosahatchee Cleanup Initiative which is a long-term solution to improving water quality in this area. Governor Scott's recommendation marks the first time the State of Florida is proposing significant funds to offset homeowner costs associated with septic to sewer conversions. The initiative includes \$40 million in new funding for a 50/50 state matching grant program with local communities affected by algal blooms the region experienced in 2016. This voluntary program will provide funding to encourage residents to move from septic tanks to sewer systems in order to curb pollution that is currently entering these water bodies. This proposal will also support local communities to help build wastewater systems to meet the increased demand for wastewater services. The initiative also includes \$20 million in new funding that will be used for muck dredging and other capital improvement projects needed to improve water quality and reduce sources of pollution in these waterways.

Protecting Florida's Estuaries, Lake Okeechobee and the Everglades

Florida's fish and wildlife, residents and visitors were all severely impacted by the algal blooms last year which resulted from frequent discharges from Lake Okeechobee due to the needed maintenance and repair to the federally operated Herbert Hoover Dike. Last year, Governor Scott fulfilled his promise to establish a dedicated source of funding for the Everglades. This includes the \$32 million in recurring state funding that had previously been established as a part of the Governor's \$880 million Everglades water quality plan.

It is clear that even more must be done to complete critical water quality projects. That is why the Fighting for Florida's Future budget recommends \$225 million for Everglades restoration which includes \$140 million to complete the state's portion of funding for the C-44 reservoir and keep the C-43 reservoir on schedule, together will ultimately provide 75 billion gallons of water storage to protect estuaries. The budget also includes an additional \$20 million for the C-51 reservoir, which once complete will provide more than 24 billion gallons of water storage, in addition to providing a needed water supply source for South Florida. On top of this funding, the budget includes \$4 million for targeted land acquisition necessary to construct the C-23/C-24 project which will provide an additional 30 billion gallons of water storage once complete.

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Protecting Florida's Springs with Record Funding

Just as with Everglades funding, the Governor fulfilled his promise to establish a dedicated funding source to protect the future of Florida's springs. Florida contains more first-magnitude springs than anywhere else in the nation. In addition to being critical habitat for numerous species, these natural jewels bring families, visitors and jobs to Florida. Recognizing the value of this resource, the Fighting for Florida's Future budget includes a record \$65 million in state funding for springs restoration. Working with local partners, Governor Scott has already invested a historic \$267.8 million in Florida's springs over the last four years.

Protecting the Florida Keys

Governor Scott fulfilled his promise to help the Florida Keys complete the repair of their wastewater treatment facilities to ensure that south Florida's reefs and waters were protected for the local communities and fish and wildlife that depend on these resources. There is still more work to be done to ensure that these natural treasures in the Florida Keys are preserved for future generations. The Fighting for Florida's Future budget includes \$10 million for additional water quality improvement projects, such as stormwater or canal restoration to protect water resources in the Florida Keys. In addition, the budget provides \$5 million for land acquisition in the Florida Keys.

Providing a Sustainable Water Supply

The Fighting for Florida's Future budget ensures that Florida continues to be a leader in addressing the future water needs of business, growth, and the environment. The Fighting for Florida's Future budget proposes \$100 million for water supply focused on critical needs by working with water management districts, local communities and established regional water supply partnerships. These funds will help ensure the sustainable growth of Florida's economy and environment, and also assist economically challenged communities to maintain a long-term water supply.

Investing in Florida's Parks and Natural Lands

Under the Governor's leadership in 2014, Florida's State Park System won its third National Gold Medal for Excellence in Park and Recreation Management, the first of any state to do so. The Governor is committed to continuing improvements and wise investments in Florida's parks, greenways, wildlife management areas, beaches and other natural lands to ensure current and future generations can enjoy these beautiful areas.

The Fighting for Florida's Future budget invests more than \$50 million in new funding into state parks, the most since Governor Scott took office. This includes \$44 million for park repairs and enhancements across the state - \$10 million of which will be focused on those improvements that bring the greatest return on investment to state parks by enhancing park users' experiences. Also included is \$6 million to manage the land, protect the natural resources and improve access to state parks.

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Preserving Florida's Natural Lands

Governor Scott understands that maintaining Florida's natural beauty means preserving natural lands for future generations to enjoy. The Fighting for Florida's Future budget includes more than \$178 million for land acquisition and management statewide. This includes \$55.7 million for targeted land acquisition to create more recreational opportunities and preserve Florida's natural lands, including \$30.2 million to purchase lands for Everglades restoration projects and \$5 million to purchase land within the Florida Keys. In addition to new land acquisitions, the Fighting for Florida's Future budget provides more than \$122 million for statewide land management to ensure the stewardship of lands currently owned by the state.

Protecting Florida's Agriculture

Florida ranks highest in the nation in value of production for tomatoes, watermelons, grapefruit and oranges. Florida accounts for 59 percent of total U.S. citrus production and Florida agriculture supports two million jobs and contributes more than \$120 billion annually to the state's economy. Florida has 47,500 commercial farms, occupying a total of 9.50 million acres. In order to ensure Florida's citrus industry continues to lead the nation for generations to come, the Fighting for Florida's Future budget dedicates \$1.7 billion for agriculture. This includes \$8 million in funding for short-term research projects on how to stop the spread of citrus greening and \$7.6 million in funding to help protect the economic well-being of the citrus industry.

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Fighting for Florida's Future



Fighting for a Healthier Future

Governor Scott's Fighting for Florida's Future budget implements important initiatives to improve transparency and protect patients at Florida hospitals. The Fighting for Florida's Future budget also bolsters community-based care including mental health services, supports Floridians with developmental disabilities, cares for Florida's seniors and strengthens Florida's defense against infectious diseases like Zika. Governor Scott knows that raising a successful family begins with ensuring good health and the Fighting for Florida's Future budget makes important investments that will keep Florida families healthy for years to come.

Hospitals

Last year, Governor Scott fought to make hospitals more transparent so that patients had access to data to help protect against unfair pricing at Florida hospitals. Florida's hospitals continue to have record profits and the Governor is committed to fighting price gouging and unfair costs for Floridians needing important medical care. This year, the Fighting for Florida's Future budget continues in that mission and saves \$298 million in hospital costs, which are responsible for the largest increases in Medicaid program expenditures. This is accomplished by eliminating existing arbitrary and inconsistent supplemental payments for hospitals that provide less charity compared to the for-profit hospital industry. Public hospitals, not-for-profit hospitals, and for-profit hospitals are all at an all-time low in how much charity care they are providing relative to their record profits.

The Fighting for Florida's Future budget also saves an additional \$581 million by allowing Medicaid managed care plans to reimburse hospitals at more efficient rates compared to the traditional Medicaid program. Hospital services are the only services in Medicaid managed care medical assistance where plans are statutorily prohibited from paying more efficient rates.

Additionally, the Fighting for Florida's Future budget saves \$50 million by slowing hospital inflation and eliminating an automatic increase in Medicaid hospital rates.

Finally, the Fighting for Florida's Future budget recommends transitioning hospital outpatient payments from an inflationary cost-based system to an ambulatory patient grouping (APG) prospective payment system to reward a high-quality and efficient delivery of care. APGs are similar in concept to diagnosis related groups (DRGs) for hospital inpatient services.

More Than \$1 Billion in Mental Health and Substance Abuse Funding

Governor Scott understands the importance of addressing the needs of those with mental illness and better aligning services to serve this unique population in their communities. The Fighting for Florida's Future budget continues to invest more than \$1 billion for individuals with behavioral health needs in Florida. The recommended budget increases mental health and substance abuse funding by \$25 million over current year funding levels.

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Enhancing Behavioral Health Services in Florida's Communities

The Fighting for Florida's Future budget invests more than \$18.7 million in additional funding to better coordinate and enhance mental health and substance abuse services in Florida's communities for those in greatest need. Governor Scott signed Executive Order 15-175 in July 2015, which directed the Department of Children and Families to develop and implement best management practices based on pilot programs in Broward, Pinellas and Alachua Counties. This funding will fill the gaps in services identified by the work performed pursuant to the executive order.

Additional community behavioral health funding includes:

- \$12.6 million in Community Behavioral Health Services, which include:
 - \$1.5 million for services for high-risk youth, families and adults in Pinellas County
 - \$750,000 for housing services for severely mentally ill individuals who lack stable housing in Alachua County
 - \$500,000 for individuals with behavioral health conditions to provide transitional housing, job training and behavioral health clinical services in Broward County
 - \$1.68 million to provide housing solutions statewide for individuals with behavioral health conditions
 - \$1.6 million to enhance care coordination statewide for individuals with behavioral health conditions
 - \$6.6 million for community forensic multi-disciplinary teams and housing support for non-violent offenders with behavioral health conditions
- \$3 million to add four additional Community Action Treatment Teams for Children
- \$1.8 million to add four additional Family Intensive Treatment Teams
- \$1.25 million to add an additional FACT Team (Forensic Assertive Community Treatment Team in Broward County).

Governor Scott also continues to invest in Florida's state-run mental health facilities with more than \$222 million in total funding. This includes a \$6.3 million increase to provide 90 new staff for the care and treatment of those in the greatest need who reside in these facilities.

Nursing Homes

The Fighting for Florida's Future budget transitions the current inflationary cost based system to a prospective payment method, which provides equitable payments for similar services while rewarding efficient delivery of care.

Graduate Medical Education

In 2013, Governor Scott started the statewide Graduate Medical Education program and the Fighting for Florida's Future budget includes a total of \$197.3 million for Graduate Medical Education. This program has already created more than 1,000 additional slots and 18 new teaching hospitals around the state to ensure great doctors stay in Florida.

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Fighting for Florida's Future



Supported Employment for Floridians with Behavioral Health Needs and Persons with Disabilities

Governor Scott knows that the most important step toward independent living is getting a good job. That is why the Fighting for Florida's Future budget provides \$3 million to the Department of Children and Families to provide employment services to more than 5,000 individuals with serious mental illness. This is the first time that employment services including job training and coaching, employment assistance and transportation to and from their place of work will be supported by state funding at the Department of Children and Families. The Fighting for Florida's Future budget also includes \$3.3 million in new funding to the Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD) to provide employment services to more than 2,500 individuals with developmental disabilities who are ready to work.

Eliminating the APD Critical Needs Waiting list

The Fighting for Florida's Future budget provides more than \$7.4 million to place approximately 680 additional Floridians into the waiver program. This is the fourth consecutive year that Governor Scott has provided funding to enroll all individuals with critical needs to help them live, learn and work in their communities.

Record Funding for Community-Based Care

The Fighting for Florida's Future budget recommends a record \$632 million to provide core services to children who depend on Florida's child welfare system. Governor Scott knows that caring for Florida's children is essential to ensuring a bright future for Florida and that every dollar must have a maximum return on investment. This is accomplished by beginning the process of using the established Social Services Estimating Conference. This conference will determine the needed levels of funding for core services provided by Community-Based Care organizations (CBCs) and improve the transparency, accountability and effectiveness of taxpayer money supporting the state's child welfare system.

Caring for Seniors

The Fighting for Florida's Future budget invests \$4.7 million in new funding to serve more of the frailest individuals on the Home Care for the Elderly program waiting list. This funding provides services to an additional 1,300 seniors. These individuals receive assistance with medical supplies, home health services, medications, wheelchairs and home accessibility modifications, and other services to help maintain them in their home. The Fighting for Florida's Future budget includes \$3 million in new funding to enroll 249 individuals onto the Alzheimer's Diseases Initiative Program and another \$ 4 million in new funding to serve an additional 497 individuals in the Community Care for the Elderly Program.

Dental Sealants

The Fighting for Florida's Future budget includes more than \$1.2 million in new funding to expand County Health Department School Based Sealant Program statewide. This program helps ensure low-income children have access to quality dental care. Every \$1 invested in preventative dental sealants saves \$1.88 in costs related to treating decaying teeth.

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Fighting for Florida's Future



Investing in Epidemiologists

The Fighting for Florida's Future Budget provides \$1.9 Million for an additional 21 Epidemiologists in Florida's County Health Departments to protect Floridians and visitors from emerging threats related to disease outbreaks like Zika. State Epidemiologists serve as one of the first lines of defense in protecting individuals from mosquito borne and other illnesses.

Governor Scott knows that Florida must be in the best possible position to receive funding that improves public health. That is why the Fighting for Florida's Future budget establishes a new recurring source of \$2.2 million of funding to enhance Florida's competitiveness for more than \$5 billion in funding from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) that is directed toward infectious diseases research. This recommendation will also enhance the State's preparedness in responding to future outbreaks like Zika.

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Fighting for Florida's Future



Fighting to Keep Florida's Future Generations Safe

The Fighting for Florida's Future budget makes important investments to support Florida's dedicated law enforcement officers. Thanks to the hard work of Florida's law enforcement officers, the state's crime rate is at a 45-year low and the number of juvenile arrests is the lowest it's been in more than 40 years. But, more investments are needed to keep Florida's future generations safe.

Just last year, Florida came under attack when a terrorist, inspired by ISIS and filled with hate, stormed into Pulse Nightclub and killed 49 innocent people. Floridians will never forget this tragic loss of innocent life and Governor Scott is absolutely committed to doing everything possible to support public safety and ensure that Florida's law enforcement officers have the resources they need to curb senseless violence and crime in the Sunshine State.

Governor Scott also recognizes that evidence-based diversion and re-entry programs help to reduce recidivism. His emphasis on such programs has helped to reduce Florida's recidivism rate to 25.2 percent which means fewer offenders are committing new crimes and returning to prison. This reduction in recidivism translates into fewer crime victims, safer neighborhoods and helped to reduce Florida's inmate population, which has decreased by more than 4,000 over the Governor's term. This has saved taxpayers more than \$73 million.

Pay Raises for Sworn State Law Enforcement Officers

Florida has nearly 4,800 sworn state law enforcement officers who work around the clock to protect Florida's communities and make sure Florida is the safest place to live and raise a family. The Fighting for Florida's Future budget seeks to reward these officers by providing \$14.6 million to award a five percent pay raise. These sworn state law enforcement officers serve in 13 state agencies including the Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Florida Department of Law Enforcement, Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Florida Department of Financial Services and State Attorney offices.

Strengthening Counterterrorism Operations

The Fighting for Florida's Future budget also provides \$5.8 million to the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) to hire 46 new employees dedicated to counterterrorism. This will better enable Florida to work hand-in-hand with local, state and federal intelligence agencies to establish a planned, deliberate and comprehensive effort in support of domestic security.

Enhancing Florida's Crime Laboratories and Databases

Governor Scott continues to support the state's crime laboratories. Last year, the Governor recommended \$5.4 million for state crime labs to fund lab equipment, DNA database upgrades, crime scene vehicles, and a competitive pay adjustment for crime laboratory analysts that helped retain skilled and experienced personnel. The Fighting for Florida's Future budget provides FDLE an additional \$1.1 million and five positions for the state's crime laboratories which will allow the agency to more quickly process sexual assault kits.

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FDLE is responsible for maintaining Florida's sex offender database, which is used daily by the public and Florida's law enforcement officers to register and track offenders. The current database is more than 20 years old and lacks many features needed by law enforcement to better protect Florida's communities. The Fighting for Florida's Future budget provides \$1.9 million to FDLE, which will allow the agency to begin upgrading this database. The Fighting for Florida's Future budget also provides more than \$16 million to construct a new Operations Center in FDLE's Pensacola Region. This funding not only invests in Florida's crime laboratories, but also enhances FDLE's ability to assist local law enforcement with their investigative and forensic needs.

Supporting Local Law Enforcement

Governor Scott wants to ensure local communities have the resources they need to respond to emerging crime trends. The Fighting for Florida's Future budget provides \$4 million to the Florida Violent Crime and Drug Control Council, which provides financial assistance to local law enforcement agencies. Of these funds, \$2 million is provided for financial assistance to local law enforcement to conduct investigations related to heroin abuse.

Department of Corrections Reforms

Last year, more than \$65 million was invested in the Department of Corrections (FDC). This funding was used to ensure Florida prisons were safely staffed, vehicles were safe to operate, and that the state's facilities were better maintained. Governor Scott's Fighting for Florida's Future budget continues to support the reformation of Florida's prison system and recommends nearly \$127 million over the Department of Corrections' current budget, an increase of more than five percent.

Pay Raises for Correctional and Correctional Probation Officers

The Fighting for Florida's Future budget invests more than \$38 million to increase the salaries of the majority of Florida's correctional and correctional probation officers. The Fighting for Florida's Future budget also provides \$9 million to add 209 positions that will increase correctional officer staffing levels at facilities statewide. These critical investments will not only allow FDC to better recruit officers, but will ensure that the Department has an experienced workforce.

Improving Correctional Officer Recruitment

The Fighting for Florida's Future budget also provides nearly \$5 million for FDC to offer a one-time \$1,000 hiring bonus to Correctional Officers hired at institutions that have a sustained vacancy rate over ten percent. This will help address the department's vacancy, staffing and hiring challenges and improve inmate and officer safety as well as reduce costly overtime.

Enhancing FDC Mental Health Units

The Fighting for Florida's Future budget invests \$16 million to add 104 positions to better serve inmates with severe mental illness. These funds, which will be used to create a Residential Mental Health Unit (RMHU) at the Wakulla Correctional Institution, will ensure that inmates with mental health issues are provided prompt and effective treatment in a rehabilitative environment.

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Additionally, \$2.5 million is provided to increase a Correctional Officer's base pay when the officer is serving in a mental health unit. The pay increase will only apply to Correctional Officers who have obtained the Correctional Behavioral Health (CBH) Certification, which will enhance the officers' skill sets in dealing with a difficult inmate population and improve the safety of staff and inmate interactions.

Expanding Workforce Education Programs

The Fighting for Florida's Future budget also provides \$3 million for FDC to expand and operate new workforce education programs. Inmates that are employed after release are far less likely to recidivate, which increases public safety and lowers taxpayer costs. This investment will provide inmates with the skills that are necessary to obtain a job upon release.

Ensuring Safe Facilities and Vehicles

The Fighting for Florida's Future budget recommends \$35 million to make critical repairs and renovations to correctional institutions. This investment in Florida's infrastructure not only enhances the safety and security of Florida's officers and inmates, but will also result in long-term energy and maintenance savings. The budget also provides \$4.2 million to provide FDC with safe and reliable vehicles used to transport inmates in Florida's communities.

Reducing Juvenile Delinquency

Governor Scott is committed to continuing the dramatic reforms made at the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) which have culminated in the lowest juvenile arrest rate in more than 40 years.

The Fighting for Florida's Future Budget gives DJJ the resources it needs to continue to reduce juvenile delinquency. The budget provides \$5.2 million to add an additional 60 beds in DJJ's residential facilities, which will ensure youth committed to these facilities are promptly placed and receiving services. The Fighting for Florida's Future budget also provides \$5.3 million to allow DJJ to improve staffing and evidence-based services in its residential facilities. These funds will serve to further reduce juvenile arrests.

Expanding Prevention and Workforce Education Programs for Youth

Governor Scott understands that effective prevention and workforce education services strengthen families and turn around the lives of troubled youth. In recognition of these benefits, the Fighting for Florida's Future budget invests \$4.7 million to expand prevention programs, and \$2.6 million to provide additional workforce education programs throughout the state.

The Fighting for Florida's Future budget also provides \$10.2 million to maintain and repair juvenile facilities statewide. This increases the safety of the youth in DJJ's custody, and also protects Florida's investment in its infrastructure.

At Risk Youth Programs and Prevention Services

Governor Scott knows that investing in services for at-risk youth provides a positive return on investment by preventing future crime and deterring children from entering the juvenile justice system. The Fighting for Florida's Future budget recommends more than \$8 million to

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continue to expand evidence-based prevention and treatment programs for at-risk youth. These programs are part of the reason Florida has seen the lowest juvenile arrest rate in more than 40 years. The budget includes funding for the following programs:

- **About Face Program** – Maintaining \$1.25 million in funding to provide summer and after-school life preparation programs;
- **Forward March Program** – Maintaining \$750,000 in funding to provide job readiness services at selected Florida armories for Work and Gain Economic Self-Sufficiency recipients and other qualifying young adults; and
- **Youth Challenge Program** – More than \$5.6 million which includes an increase of more than \$765,000 to support additional academic and technical course offerings and equipment for 16-18 year-olds who withdraw or are removed from school.
- **Contracted Prevention Funding for DJJ** – An additional \$4.7 million for DJJ to contract with evidence-based prevention programs that will serve at-risk youth and prevent them from engaging in delinquency.

Protecting Florida's Vulnerable Populations

The Fighting for Florida's Future budget provides an additional \$1.5 million to the Department of Legal Affairs to provide services to human trafficking victims. Over the past two years, the Governor has invested more than \$8 million to fight human trafficking, and to ensure survivors have the services they need.

Additional Security

The Fighting for Florida's Future budget recommends \$10.1 million for additional security at state facilities. These funds will provide for a security assessment on state buildings, updated security infrastructure and security personnel to provide a safe environment for employees as well as visitors at state facilities.

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Fighting for Veterans Future in Florida

As a proud Navy veteran, Governor Scott is committed to making Florida the most military and veteran-friendly state in the nation. The Governor believes that those who so bravely serve the United States should be offered resources and support to ensure they are successful and able to provide for their families. The Fighting for Florida's Future budget recommends \$102 million in total funding to support active military, veterans and their families.

Supporting Military and their Families – The Fighting for Florida's Future budget recommends \$24 million for Florida's military presence and families, which funds the state's support of military research and development. This includes the following:

- \$2 million for the Florida Defense Support Task Force;
- \$3.2 million for the Defense Infrastructure Program;
- \$3 million for military base protection, including additional security measures for National Guard armories;
- \$6 million for National Guard armories;
- \$3.4 million for armory maintenance;
- \$750,000 to support Florida National Guardsmen seeking higher education degrees; and
- \$5.8 million to support scholarships for children and spouses of deceased or disabled veterans.

Connecting Veterans with the Benefits They Deserve

The Fighting for Florida's Future budget recommends \$768,000 to add 10 additional Veterans' Claims Examiners at the Florida Department of Veterans Affairs. Veterans' Claims Examiners are counselors who are responsible for connecting Florida veterans with the federal Veterans Affairs benefits they are entitled to after so bravely serving the United States. Last year, Florida's 74 Veterans' Claims Examiners secured \$269 million in total federal compensation for Florida veterans and their families.

Expanding Crisis Support Services for Veterans Statewide

The Fighting for Florida's Future budget builds on Florida's success as the most military and veteran friendly state in the nation by providing more than \$350,000 to expand the Crisis Center Support Line for Veterans beyond the Tampa region. This new, statewide dedicated telephone line (1-844-MYFLVET) will help veterans in need who are facing delays at the federal level by connecting them with local call centers where they can receive referrals to community health services and other community resources. This includes employment, financial, legal, transportation, housing, and other assistance. More than 4,300 veterans in all 67 Florida counties will benefit - an almost fivefold increase over the program's current capacity. Governor Scott also recommended this funding in his 2016-17 Florida First budget.

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Building Homes for Heroes

The Fighting for Florida's Future budget recommends \$1 million for Building Homes for Heroes to build and modify homes for veterans who were severely injured while serving in Iraq and Afghanistan. Building Homes for Heroes supports neighborhood economic advancement and positively impacts construction growth within 32 communities across Florida. Last year, Building Homes for Heroes built or modified 19 project homes which had a projected value exceeding \$4 million.

The Florida Defense Support Task Force

The Fighting for Florida's Future budget recommends \$2 million for the Florida Defense Support Task Force. The task force is charged with representing the state's military interests and for strengthening state support for military families and veterans with an emphasis on education, healthcare, employment and family programs.

Veterans Treatment Courts

Governor Scott recognizes that Veterans Treatment Courts provide a valuable service in diverting veterans with mental health and substance abuse treatment needs from the criminal justice system. Governor Scott has supported the expansion of these courts throughout the state. The Fighting for Florida's Future budget reflects the Governor's support of Veterans Treatment Courts and recommends \$1.4 million to continue funding these courts throughout Florida.

Jobs for Florida's Veterans

Governor Scott is focused on ensuring Florida remains the most military-friendly state in the nation and that veterans in Florida have every opportunity to succeed by getting a great job upon returning home. That is why the Fighting for Florida's Future budget recommends \$2.5 million to support veterans looking to obtain employment, start their own businesses and make Florida their home. This funding includes:

- \$1 million to assist Florida businesses in training and hiring veterans;
- \$500,000 to support universities offering veteran entrepreneur training to create or sustain veteran-owned businesses; and
- \$1 million so that Florida is for Veterans can market Florida worldwide as the most veteran friendly state in the nation.

Supporting Florida's Veterans in Their Communities

The Fighting for Florida's Future budget recommends \$3.4 million to continue supporting the daily operations of Florida's six state-run veterans' nursing homes and one assisted living facility. These facilities provide essential services and care to veterans throughout Florida.

The Fighting for Florida's Future budget also recommends \$20 million for the construction of the Ardie R. Copas State Veterans' Nursing Home in Port St. Lucie using the original traditional nursing home model.

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Ensuring Florida's Communities are Strong for the Future

Disaster Preparedness Response, Recovery and Mitigation

Since 2011, Governor Scott has overseen the investment of more than \$1 billion to ensure Florida is a leader in disaster preparedness and recovery. The Fighting for Florida's Future budget invests \$355.6 million in financial assistance to state and local governments for emergency public awareness, outreach programs, and disaster mitigation programs.

Affordable Housing

Since 2011, Florida has invested more than \$1 billion to make Florida's affordable housing among the best in the nation. The Fighting for Florida's Future budget recommends \$120.8 million for affordable housing including \$90.8 million for the State Apartment Incentive Loan (SAIL) program and \$30 million for the State Housing Initiative (SHIP) program. SAIL provides low interest loans to developers who build or rehabilitate affordable housing projects. The Fighting for Florida's Future budget provides special consideration to properties that target demographics such as the elderly and those with special needs. SHIP funding will be focused on providing first-time home buyer down payment assistance for very low to low and moderate income families.

Small Community Development Block Grants

The Fighting for Florida's Future budget recommends \$36.5 million in small community development block grant programs focusing on low and moderate income persons, improving housing and supporting infrastructure improvements.