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## Statewide job summit slated for Orlando

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Florida legislators will host a job summit in Orlando next month to help build policy direction for economic growth during the 2010 session.

Senate President Mike Haridopolos and Speaker of the House Dean Cannon announced Tuesday the statewide Florida Jobs Summit in Orlando Jan. 14 to 15.

The summit is to help the Florida Legislature determine ways to boost investment, economic growth and job creation during the 2010 session.

“Almost every Floridian knows a friend or a family member who has lost a job or is otherwise suffering as a result of this crippling recession,” Haridopolos said. “Creating jobs will be job No. 1 for the Florida Legislature in the 2010 session, and this Jobs Summit is about coming together around an effective plan to grow our economy and make Florida more attractive to new investment that will spur the creation of new, good-paying jobs.”

The summit announcement comes on the heels of the state reaching an unemployment rate of 11.5 percent in November, the highest in 34 years, according to the state’s Agency for Workforce Innovation.

Orlando’s unemployment rate was 11.8 percent in November, up 0.3 percentage points from October and 4.4 percentage points more than in November 2008, according to the Florida Agency for Workforce. The rate ranged from a low of 11.7 percent in Orange County to 13.3 percent in Osceola County.

Representatives from the business community, government, education and labor sectors will discuss restoring the state’s economy at the summit at the **Rosen Shingle Creek Hotel**.

“This tough national economy lends profound urgency to our mission as legislators to help restart robust economic growth in our state,” Cannon said. “As Florida’s leaders, we must take smart and aggressive steps to provide new incentives for job creation in Florida and remove government obstacles to growth.”

The summit will focus on key areas:

- Identifying and removing barriers to new jobs development.
- Developing appropriate financial and tax incentives to lure new jobs to Florida.
- Enabling existing employers to create new jobs and retain existing jobs.

Gov. Charlie Crist also intends to make policy recommendations, according to the announcement. Members of Florida's Cabinet were also invited.

Groups such as the **Associated Industries of Florida**, the **Florida Chamber of Commerce**, the **Florida Retail Federation**, the **National Federation of Independent Business**, the **AFL-CIO** and the **Florida Education Association** are reported to have expressed an interest in attending.

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