



REPUBLICAN LEADERS: INCENTIVES KEY TO JOB GROWTH

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For too many Florida employers, working families and small businesses, this has been a very tough year. In November, unemployment rose to 11.5 percent -- a figure representing 1,056,000 jobless Floridians, according to the state's Agency for Workforce Innovation. That is the highest jobless rate since May 1975.

This news lends urgency to our mission as legislators to help restart robust economic growth in our state. Creating jobs will be job No. 1 for the Legislature in the 2010 session, and we must take smart and aggressive steps to provide new incentives for job creation in Florida and remove government obstacles to growth.

That is why, last week, we announced our intention to conduct a statewide-focused Florida Jobs Summit, scheduled for Jan. 14-15 in Orlando, to help develop an effective plan to grow our economy and to make Florida more attractive to new investment that will spur the creation of good-paying jobs. This commitment includes a focus on developing a meaningful state strategy for action in three key areas.

First, we must identify and remove barriers to development of new jobs. Today, industries such as energy, manufacturing, construction and land development are hobbled by intrusive regulations that slow growth. Whether by reducing these regulations, by abolishing barriers to investment or by cutting taxes, Florida has many options for promoting growth and generating jobs. We must act on these options.

Second, we must develop appropriate financial and tax incentives to lure new jobs to Florida. For companies that are considering expansion or relocation, we need to make sure that Florida is one of the most attractive states to do business.

Third, we must enable existing employers to create new jobs and retain existing jobs. It is a central conservative insight that incentives matter, and we must ensure that our state's tax and regulatory incentives are structured in a way that rewards work and job creation.

Getting our state's economy growing again and generating jobs will require cooperation by Floridians of all political persuasions, and if we work in a spirit of nonpartisan cooperation, we can reach consensus on an economic agenda that makes job creation Florida's No. 1 priority for 2010.

MIKE HARIDOPOLOS

DEAN CANNON

Editor's note: Sen. Mike Haridopolos, R-Melbourne, is president-designate of the Florida Senate. Rep. Dean Cannon, R-Winter Park, is speaker-designate of the Florida House of Representatives.

Caption: Cannon

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