



WHERE WE STAND

A GUIDE TO THE FLORIDA CHAMBER'S 2009 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES



FLORIDA
CHAMBER
of Commerce

Florida's Business Advocate

www.floridachamber.com



Lead the World in Workforce Talent

ISSUE: If Florida companies are to compete and win in a worldwide economy, they need well-educated and well-trained workers. Florida employers face challenges in finding qualified employees with necessary skills.

BACKGROUND: Education does not end upon graduation, and workers of all ages who receive ongoing training will be productive and successful. To stay competitive, Florida must maintain support and funding for workforce training, retention and support. Florida must invest in targeted workforce and career education programs. Our ability to train and prepare our workforce for the needs of businesses is essential for growth and diversification of our economy.

The Florida Chamber believes that the best foundation for a competitive economy starts with an education and training system that gives workers the skills they need for the jobs of the 21st Century.

The Florida Chamber will focus on three key areas for workforce solutions:

- » the quality of the public education system and school readiness;
- » job skills for high school graduates entering the workforce; and
- » continuing workforce development.

High-skill, high-paying jobs create a better economic base for Florida. Several industry sectors need targeted training services, including:

- » information technology;
- » manufacturing;
- » aviation/aerospace;
- » defense; and
- » financial and life sciences, including biotechnology and healthcare.

Workforce and career education are important for sustained economic growth and diversity. Florida already has many successful programs geared toward workforce education, such as Career and Professional Academies modeled after the Okaloosa County CHOICE Academies, Ready to Work, the Employ Florida Banner Centers and the Centers of Excellence, and continued funding for these and similar programs is necessary for our success.

In addition, educating Florida businesses and employees about the opportunities created by workforce education is critical to the effectiveness of these programs. Continuing to fund the workforce and career education programs is necessary for Florida businesses to have a well-trained workforce in order for Florida to thrive and remain competitive.

SOLUTION: The Florida Chamber supports retraining and expanding opportunities for Florida's workforce and tailoring career education programs to the needs of Florida employers.

TAKE ACTION: Join the Florida Chamber's Talent Leadership Action Council to help Florida lead the world in workforce readiness. Call Tim Giuliani at 850.521.1265 or e-mail info@flchamber.com with "Join Talent Leadership Action Council" in the subject line.



Representative Will Weatherford works to ensure higher education supports Florida's economic development goals.



Senator Ken Pruitt is a champion for higher education in Florida and is advocating additional improvements this year.

THIS SOLUTION SUPPORTED BY:

- » Florida Retail Federation
- » Enterprise Florida
- » AND SUPPORTED BY OTHERS