

**TO: INTERESTED MEDIA**

**DATE: January 21, 2010**

**STATEMENT FROM HOUSE DEMOCRATIC LEADER FRANKLIN SANDS**

In response to a January 21 letter from Rep. David Rivera, Council Chair, Full Appropriations Council on Education & Economic Development:

“It is plainly evident from Chairman David Rivera’s partisan-tinged remarks today that the Republican leadership wants to play politics instead of accepting our well-intentioned offer to address Florida’s budget crisis in a thoughtful manner.

“It is both disappointing and ironic that today’s inflammatory remarks come from the same leadership team that last year raised nearly \$3 billion in taxes and fees on the middle class, raided numerous state trust funds, and made substantial budget decisions in secret.

“Florida House Democratic Caucus members remain committed to working cooperatively and transparently with our Republican counterparts to develop a fiscally responsible state budget.

“Tax relief for small businesses and the middle class that will stimulate the economy and grow jobs for Floridians remain our top priority. What Council Chair Rivera apparently fails to recognize is that not every tax is created equally. Some tax increases and tax cuts can and do stimulate the economy, while others increase the burden on small businesses and middle class. That’s why it is essential to look at finances and expenditures simultaneously when crafting a responsible state budget.

“I reiterate the sincere desire of the Florida House Democratic Caucus to work with Speaker Cretul and our colleagues in the Republican Party in a meaningful manner in addressing Florida’s economic crisis.”

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