



*Florida House of Representatives*  
Democratic Office

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*Democratic Leader*

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**FLORIDA HOUSE DEMOCRATIC CAUCUS MEMBERS  
URGE REPUBLICAN LEADERS TO  
STEP OUT OF THE SHADOWS  
And Hold Budget Talks In The Sunshine**

**TALLAHASSEE, Fla.** – Florida House Democratic Caucus members are angered by Florida House and Senate Republican legislative leaders’ failure to convene open, transparent and timely negotiations over a new state spending plan.

Before meeting even once in public, Republican leaders today allowed crucial state budget talks to collapse. The Republican leaders’ stalemate and inability to convene a public meeting are creating the possibility of a costly special legislative session and are racking up taxpayer costs and additional unnecessary expenses.

**House Democratic Leader Franklin Sands (D-Weston)** offered the following remarks:

“It is shameful to see the current Republican legislative leadership waste taxpayer dollars this way. Maybe they should pay for the additional costs to taxpayers on their Republican Party of Florida credit cards.”

**Representative Ron Saunders (D-Key West)**, the Democratic ranking member

on the House Full Appropriations Council, said:

“When Democrats controlled the Legislature, we could at least schedule and organize a budget meeting.”

**Representative Kelly Skidmore (D-Boca Raton)**, the Democratic ranking member on the House Health Care Appropriations Committee, said: “Writing a new state budget in the sunshine and with input from key stakeholders is a priority for Democrats, but for our Republican colleagues -- not so much.”

**Representative Keith Fitzgerald (D-Sarasota)**, the House Democratic Caucus policy chair, said: “It is disappointing that legislative leaders are not meeting their frequent promise of holding all budget talks in the open. Are they going to continue to meet in secret?”

**Representative Perry Thurston (D-Plantation)**, the Democratic ranking member on the House Finance & Tax Council, stated: “There shouldn’t be secret budget meetings after a grand jury called on Florida legislators to conduct state budget talks more openly and out of the shadows.”

**Representative Betty Reed (D-Tampa)**, the Democratic ranking member on the House Economic Development Committee, said: “Republican leaders’ inability to govern is on full display this weekend. The citizens of Florida deserve better.”

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