



Florida House of Representatives
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**FLORIDA HOUSE DEMOCRATS SUPPORT
UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION TAX RELIEF**
Bipartisan-backed Measure Seeks To Recharge Florida's Economy

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. -- With job creation and retention for Floridians at the top of their agenda for 2010, Florida House Democratic Caucus members today voted unanimously in support of House Bill 7033, a measure that aims to recharge Florida's economy by giving businesses immediate relief from unemployment compensation tax increases.

On a 117-0 vote, the Florida House of Representatives approved the bill, the first measure to be heard during the 2010 legislative session. It now proceeds to the Florida Senate. During House floor debate on HB7033, Florida House Democratic Caucus members offered these and other remarks:

Rep. Keith Fitzgerald (D-Sarasota): "There are small businesses all over the state suffering. Many are on the verge of bankruptcy and others would like to add to their payroll but can't because of unemployment compensation tax increases... We're all together on this. We will have many contentious issues over the rest of the session. This is one where we're together."

Rep. Ron Saunders (D-Key West): "I think it is very appropriate that this is the first bill. It is a good example of how, with bipartisan cooperation, we can get

things done. This is not going to fix the problem. This delays the fix. But unless we continue to act in a bipartisan, cooperative manner, we're going to have lots of problems, not just this year, but down the road."

Rep. Geraldine Thompson (D-Orlando), *House Democratic Leader Pro Tempore*: "It is clear that we have all been listening very closely to our friends in the business community. I rise in support of this legislation, which will give immediate relief to our businesses facing increases in unemployment compensation taxes. At same time, I rise to urge this body to modernize our unemployment compensation system so that victims of domestic violence who can't work can be covered and individuals who move to be closer to their spouses work can be covered...While I think this legislation is a good step in the right direction, I also urge us to consider modernization of our system."

Rep. Maria Sachs (D-Delray Beach): "Floridians are looking for jobs. We have a 12-percent unemployment rate, and it's 12.4 percent in home area of Palm Beach County. We are singing the same song when it comes to this bill. I'm very excited that this is our first bill."

Rep. Joe Gibbons (D-Hallandale Beach): "This bill brings immediate relief to small businesses, the economic engine of our country. This is a first step, and I hope, not the last step to help small businesses."

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