



Reply to:

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Councils:

**Appropriations Council
Rules & Calendar Council
Government Accountability Act**

Committees:

Legislative Budget Commission

**Florida House of Representatives
Ron Saunders
State Representative, District 120**

MEMORANDUM

To: Larry Cretul, Speaker

From: Ron Saunders, Representative, District 120

Date: December 2, 2009

Re: Special Session Attendance

My legislative district has over 6,000 black constituents. Therefore, I am today joining the Florida Legislative Black Caucus and will be attending the National Black Caucus of State Legislators annual conference on December 3 and 4 in Fort Lauderdale to learn more about important issues affecting my constituents.

Your memorandum to members dated December 1, 2009, states: "Members of that organization who are involved in that meeting will be excused from Session on Thursday and Friday upon request." Since I will be a member of "that organization" who will be "involved in that meeting", I formally request an excused absence from the Special Session activities scheduled for Thursday, December 3, and Friday, December 4, 2009.

I would like to point out that despite its significant fiscal impact the proposed legislation (PCB EDCA 09B-01) was not referred to the Appropriations Council on which I serve. The bill is also not scheduled to be heard on Thursday or Friday this week in any substantive committees or councils on which I am a member. I do not plan on sponsoring any amendments. Therefore, my presence in floor sessions planned for Thursday and Friday will be unnecessary. I will be fully prepared to speak on legislation during the scheduled Monday session.

My absence on December 3 and 4 will save taxpayers unnecessary expense incurred if I attended. In light of the state's current \$2.6 billion budget deficit, perhaps you should encourage other members whose committees are not meeting to seek excused absences and save taxpayers even more money.

Although I am requesting an excused absence, I join many other House members in urging you to delay the start of Special Session until Monday, December 7. I believe that it is unfair to force members to choose between attending a session that could be delayed until Monday or attending an important long-scheduled national meeting.

In any event, my request for an excused absence is in accordance with the explicit items of your memorandum. I therefore expect to receive confirmation of an excuse from you by 3:00 p.m. today pursuant to the memorandum.

I appreciate your expressed willingness to grant excused absences, ask you to consider delaying the start of Special Session, and look forward to seeing you in Tallahassee on Monday.