For Immediate Release:
Wednesday, January 30, 2013

Contact:
Senate: Katie Betta
(850) 487-5210
Betta.Katherine@FLSenate.gov

House of Representatives: Ryan Duffy
(850) 717-5618
Ryan.Duffy@MyFloridaHouse.gov

Senate President Don Gaetz and House Speaker Will Weatherford Announce "Work Plan Florida" for 2013 Legislative Session

Tallahassee, FL - Senate President Don Gaetz (R-Niceville) and House Speaker Will Weatherford (R-Wesley Chapel) today announced a joint legislative agenda, "Work Plan Florida," which includes priorities for the 2013 Legislative Session. The agenda includes bold steps to tackle ethics and campaign finance reform, fiscally responsible changes to Florida's public sector pension plans, innovations in Florida's higher education system and a review of Florida election laws.

"As Florida continues to make job creation a priority, we must also ensure our laws are promoting ethical leadership among our elected officials, transparency in our elections and competitiveness and innovation in our public university system," said Weatherford. "I'm pleased to be joining President Gaetz in this historic partnership, which is putting the interests of Floridians over the specific interests of each chamber."

"I'm proud to join Speaker Weatherford to discuss our shared commitment to rebuilding trust and confidence in public officials through ethics and campaign finance reform, improving the fiscal accountability and transparency of public sector pension plans, and tying job creation to the realities of the economy through investments in education," said President Gaetz. "We have a solid framework of agreement on issues of key importance, and I look forward to collaboration with the Speaker as we work each of these issues through the legislative process during the coming months."

The 5-point "Work Plan Florida" includes:

- ***Ethics Reform.*** Holding elected officials to a higher standard by addressing a number of reported ethical concerns, including strengthening abstention and disclosure requirements for conflicts of interest and making the process surrounding financial disclosure more transparent and accountable.

- ***Campaign Finance Reform:*** Increasing accountability in Florida's election system by ensuring more dollars are spent to directly influence elections, and increasing transparency through more frequent campaign finance reporting.

- ***Higher Education Reform:*** Initiating high quality, affordable options that will keep our higher education system responsive to the realities of a post-recession digital economy through an expansion of online higher education and continued incentive support for college and university programs that produce high-skill, high-wage, and high-demand occupations.

- ***Pension Reform:*** Ensuring long-term fiscal predictability for Florida taxpayers and retirees. Increasing transparency by standardizing accounting standards and recording requirements across local public sector plans.

- ***Elections Review:*** Comprehensively reviewing Florida's election law to provide local election supervisors the flexibility needed to reduce wait times and ensure accurate and timely counting and reporting.

For more information regarding "Work Plan Florida," please visit the Florida Senate and the Florida House of Representatives online.

# # #