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Work Plan Florida Road Journal: South Florida

Hialeah, FL–Senate President Don Gaetz (R-Niceville) and House Speaker Will Weatherford (R-Wesley Chapel) today visited communities in Broward and Miami-Dade Counties as part of the third leg of their Work Plan Florida Road Trip to highlight accomplishments from the 2013 Legislative Session.

On Friday, Senate President Gaetz and Speaker Weatherford made stops in Ft. Lauderdale, Miami and Hialeah.

Breakfast with Business Leaders in Broward County: The Speaker and Senate President joined the Greater Ft. Lauderdale Area Chamber of Commerce for a breakfast to discuss economic issues and legislation impacting the local and regional economy.

President Gaetz and Speaker Weatherford were joined by Senate Minority Leader, Senator Chris Smith (D-Ft. Lauderdale), Senator Maria Lorts Sachs (D-Delray Beach), Senator Eleanor Sobel (D-Hollywood) and Dan Lindblade, President & CEO of the Greater Fort Lauderdale Chamber of Commerce.

Visit to Summit Aerospace, Inc.: The President and the Speaker next visited Summit Aerospace, Inc. a company that maintains, repairs and overhauls power generation components in both commercial and military aircrafts. The minority-owned business was founded in 2001 and has become a best-of-class, international operation for aircraft component repair needs across more than 100 civil and military aircraft platforms.

Summit received funding through Florida's New Markets Renewal Program. In 2013, the Legislature increased the amount of private capital available for investment in this program by $38 million.

Speaker Weatherford and President Gaetz were joined by Representatives Manny Diaz (R-Hialeah), Eddie Gonzalez (R-Hialeah), Jose Oliva (R-Miami) and Janet Nunez (R-Miami) during their visit to Summit.

Lunch at local McDonalds for Senator Garcia's District Workday: For lunch, the President and Speaker visited State Senator Rene Garcia (R-Hialeah), who was working a shift at a community McDonalds as part of his district workday. Senator Garcia periodically holds districts

workday events where he works alongside constituents at a variety of businesses and a mix of occupations. The Speaker and President were joined for lunch by Representatives Diaz, Gonzalez and Nunez.

Visit to Goodlet Park Senior Center: President Gaetz and Speaker Weatherford later joined Representatives Diaz, Gonzalez and Nunez as well as Representative Jose Oliva (R-Miami) for a visit to Goodlet Park Senior Center in Hialeah. Congregate meals are provided at the senior center through recurring funds totaling more than $200,000 available through the Older Americans Act Title IIIC-1 and the Local Services Program (LSP).

Tour of Miami Children's Hospital: For their last stop, the Speaker and Senate President visited Miami Children's Hospital to meet with Dr. Narendra Kini and to tour parts of the hospital, including a unit to treat patients during and after hurricanes. This session, the Legislature authorized Miami Children's Hospital to build a 10-bed maternity wing, which will be used to deliver babies with severe illnesses.

The Agency for Health Care Administration licenses all hospital types in Florida. Hospitals with a class II specialty license must be designated as either a women's hospital or a children's hospital. To offer services to women and children, a hospital must be licensed as a class I general acute care hospital. Currently, a licensed children's hospital wanting to offer services outside of its previously defined patient base would be required to obtain a Certificate of Need to establish a new hospital or apply to change its classification to a class I general acute care hospital. Currently, three hospitals in Florida qualify as specialty-licensed children's hospitals, but only one, Miami Children's Hospital is located in a county with a population of 1,750,000 or more.

The Speaker and President were joined by former Senate President, Senator Gwen Margolis (D-Miami), Representatives Diaz and Gonzalez as well as Representatives Frank Artiles (R-Miami) and Erik Fresen (R-Miami) for the tour.

For a full recap of President Gaetz and Speaker Weatherford's Work Plan Florida Tour, or to learn more about House and Senate's joint Work Plan Florida Agenda, please visit http://www.flsenate.gov/topics/WorkPlanFlorida/tour, or http://www.myfloridahouse.gov/contentViewer.aspx?Category=WebSite&File=work_plan_florida.htm.

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