

Dear Friends,



This week we kicked off the 2008 Legislative Session, by delivering the State of the State Address in the evening, at a time of day when every Floridian could join us to explore the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead.

Because of the leadership of Senate President Ken Pruitt and House Speaker Marco Rubio – and the tireless work of all of our state leaders – I can report to you that the state of our state is indeed strong. By keeping your taxes low, creating jobs, and fueling an economy that ranks ahead of the economies of most nations on the planet, we set a model at which others can marvel.

At a time when we face economic challenges, my legislative package sets clear priorities and outlines a comprehensive plan for moving Florida forward. It strengthens the pillars that our state must have to be great, the pillars that must be in place for us to be strong: Healthy Families, World Class Schools, Safe Neighborhoods, a Vibrant Economy and Sustainable Natural Resources. These pillars must be our priorities.



Florida's families and businesses are facing the challenges of sky rocketing gas prices, the threat of home foreclosure and a softening housing market. These challenging times require us to continue listening to the people. They're our boss. We will always listen to them. Their hearts will lead us.

Thank you very much and God bless Florida.

Governor Crist Announces Task Force on Autism Spectrum Disorders



This week I announced the creation of the Task Force on Autism Spectrum Disorders by Executive Order 08-36. This task force will work to bring together experts in the field of autism spectrum disorders to create a collective resource that will empower parents, teachers and communities, and establish a support system. I am committed to giving our children the best possible means for success, and I understand the toll this disorder can take on a family. I feel strongly that this task force will work to improve the lives of all Floridians who are affected by autism.

Charlie Crist

Photo Captions

Top Left: Governor Crist enters the House of Representatives Chambers to give his 2008 State of the State Address.

Middle Right: Governor Crist holds up the “all-in-one” case management device that will help Florida caseworkers better protect children in the state's care. Governor Crist's recommended budget includes \$9.8 million to purchase the devices.

Bottom Left: Governor Crist signs Executive Order 08-36 to create the Task Force on Autism Spectrum Disorders. Joining the Governor are (from left) Jane Johnson, director of the Agency for Persons with Disabilities; Holly Benson, secretary of the Agency for Health Care Administration; and Representative Lorraine Ausley.