

Dear Friends,

This week I am pleased with the work of Senators Durrell Peaden and Don Gaetz, and the Florida Senate in passing legislation which will allow state government to negotiate with health insurers to develop affordable health insurance coverage for uninsured Floridians – at no cost to our taxpayers.

This plan will help hard-working Floridians who are self-employed or working for small businesses that cannot afford to provide health insurance for their employees. Members of groups like the Florida Association of Realtors and the Florida Retail Federation, along with countless other independent businesses will benefit from the plan heading to the Florida House for their consideration.



The bill contains no individual or employer mandates. Employers would not be required to participate in order for their employees to benefit.



Under the plan, private health insurers have indicated a willingness to provide benefit packages for \$150 a month or less. Policyholders would also be able to carry dependents until the age of 30.

The entrepreneurial spirit of Florida is what makes this such a great state. Small business owners and individuals should not be penalized for their hard work. They deserve the right to affordable health care and this plan passed by the Senate this week will help make health care coverage a reality for them and their employees.

Thank you very much and may God continue to bless the great State of Florida.

Charlie Crist

Photo Captions

Top right: Members of the National Federation of Independent Business, Florida Retail Federation, Florida Association of Realtors, Florida Association of Counties and Associated Industries of Florida join Governor Crist at a press conference, where they show their support for the Senate Bill 2534 and its benefits to self-employed and small business workers.

Bottom left: Governor Crist (left) visits Tallahassee Memorial Hospital where he discusses how the medical field will benefit from the health insurance legislation passed by the Senate.