



For Immediate Release

Contact: media@eog.myflorida.com

June 2, 2014

(850) 717-9282

Governor Scott: It's Your Money Tax Cut Budget Supports Florida Seniors, Low-Income Families, and Those with Special Needs

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. – Governor Rick Scott today highlighted investments in the It's Your Money Tax Cut Budget that supports Florida seniors, low-income families, and those with special needs.

Governor Scott said, "The It's Your Money Tax Cut Budget invests in critical programs and priorities important for the safety and well-being of Florida seniors. It is crucial we continue to support and enhance the safety nets our seniors deserve."

The It's Your Money Tax Cut Budget supports Governor Scott's commitment to helping Florida's elderly community, low-income residents, and those with special needs:

- **Long Term Care Waiver:** The It's Your Money Tax Cut Budget provides an additional \$12.6 million for home and community-based services for approximately 950 individuals at risk of nursing home placement who are eligible for Medicaid. These services help elderly individuals remain in their homes and community settings so they may age and remain independent for as long as they desire in the least restrictive environment possible.
- **Community Care for the Elderly (CCE):** The It's Your Money Tax Cut Budget provides an additional \$5 million for the Community Care for the Elderly program to help approximately 750 individuals who are at the highest risk of being placed in a nursing home. The CCE program provides community-based services organized in a continuum of care to help functionally impaired older people live in the least restrictive, most cost-effective environment suitable to their needs.
- **Alzheimer's Disease Initiative (ADI):** The It's Your Money Tax Cut Budget provides an additional \$4 million in Alzheimer's caregiver respite services for approximately 400 individuals. The ADI provides caregiver respite services and support to meet the changing needs of individuals and families affected by Alzheimer's disease and similar memory disorders.

- **Alzheimer’s Research:** The It’s Your Money Tax Cut Budget provides \$3 million and establishes the new Ed and Ethel Moore Alzheimer’s research program to competitively award peer review grants to promising Alzheimer’s disease related research projects.
- **Statewide Public Guardianship:** The It’s Your Money Tax Cut Budget provides an additional \$3 million to make Florida the first state in the nation to offer public guardianship services on statewide basis. Florida’s Public Guardianship Program provides guardians to protect and exercise the legal rights of indigent, vulnerable seniors who need assistance in making medical, residential, and other decisions.
- **Personal Needs Allowance:** This Budget supports an increase in the personal needs allowance from \$35 to \$105 per month for Social Security and Medicaid eligible nursing home residents.
- **Senior Hot Meals Programs:** This Budget invests an additional \$2.3 million for meal programs for seniors. These meals are delivered to low income, frail elders. Nutrition education and nutrition counseling services are also provided to improve the overall nutritional health and reduce risk of malnutrition.

The It’s Your Money Tax Budget reflects the Governor’s continued support of families through the revitalization of commercial areas serving low-income residents and/or those with special needs and rebuilding distressed neighborhoods in order to stimulate economic growth and development.

- **Affordable Housing:** The Budget invests \$167.7 million in affordable housing programs. It includes \$57.7 million to fund construction or rehabilitation of rental units focused on elderly persons and persons who are homeless or with developmental disabilities. The budget also provides \$10 million to fund a competitive grant program for housing developments designed, constructed, and targeted for persons with developmental disabilities, and \$100 million for the State Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP) program with a minimum of 20 percent to serve those with special needs.
- **Small Community Development Grants:** Provides \$30 million in Small Community Development Grants to fund a series of programs focusing on low and moderate income persons, improving housing, and supporting infrastructure improvements that lead to job growth.
- **Weatherization Grants:** Provides \$18 million in Weatherization Grants to assist low-income families to permanently reduce their energy bills and make their homes more energy efficient.

Secretary Charles T. Corley, Department of Elder Affairs said, “With the FY 2014-2015 “It’s Your Money Tax Cut” Budget signing, Governor Scott has made clear his priorities to meet the needs of Florida’s elders. Through his Enriching Seniors Initiative,

the Governor has increased funding by more than \$40 million to reduce waitlists for our frailest elders in need of services; expand programs that protect impoverished elders needing guardianship; provide nutritious, hot meals to seniors across the state; and assist individuals and families affected by Alzheimer's disease and related dementias. I applaud Governor Scott for his commitment to serving Florida's seniors and thank him for his continued support of our Department. I am thrilled with the enormous good that this additional funding will do for our 4.7 million elders."

Steve Auger, Executive Director, for Florida Housing Finance Corporation (Florida Housing) said, "We are appreciative of the funding that was approved to support the construction and rehabilitation of affordable housing in our state. The SAIL and SHIP program funding will foster overall affordable homeownership and rental housing opportunities for Florida's working families, while also targeting special needs populations, such as the elderly, homeless persons and those with disabling conditions or developmental disabilities. Providing safe and decent affordable housing opportunities to citizens in our state is the right thing to do and important to Florida's continued economic growth and development."

José R. Fox, President and CEO, United Home Care said, "We are very pleased with the Governor's increases for this program that enables providers to serve the frailest population in need of care through SMMC. Thousands of seniors will benefit from this substantial funding increase."

LuMarie Polivka, President, Florida Council on Aging said, "With his budget increase and commitment to this program, it is evident that Governor Scott understands the benefits of CCE for frail elders and that providing these services will delay or prevent nursing home placement or the more costly need for Medicaid services."

Bill Aycrigg, President & CEO, CARES (Community Aging & Retirement Services, Inc.) said, "With this increase in funding for CCE, Governor Scott has made a strong step forward for frail elders in the state of Florida, enabling them to maintain their independence and stay at home."

Robert Beck, Advocate for Florida Seniors, said, "I applaud Governor Scott for his leadership and vision today for signing a \$5 million increase for the Community Care for the Elderly Program that will help frail, low-income seniors who do not qualify for Medicaid, to receive critical services including home-delivered meals, personal care, transportation, and other assistance so they may remain at home safely and with dignity and avoid or delay the need for more costly nursing home care."

State Surgeon General and Secretary of Health Dr. John Armstrong said, "This new investment in Alzheimer's research will accelerate progress to find a cure for this disease. By approving funding for innovative, peer-reviewed research projects, Governor Rick Scott and the Florida Legislature are demonstrating extraordinary leadership and foresight on behalf of Floridians living with Alzheimer's and their families."

Dr. Todd Golde, Director of the Center for Translational Research in Neurodegenerative Disease at UF-College of Medicine said, “As a member of Florida’s Purple Ribbon Task Force that developed recommendations for Florida’s plan on Alzheimer’s disease, this new funding initiative championed by Representative Hudson and approved by Governor Rick Scott is welcome news. Florida is an epicenter of the burgeoning Alzheimer’s epidemic with an economic cost to the state estimated at ~\$20 billion per year. However, in the recent past the State has not invested substantial funds to support research efforts to reduce the burden of this disease. This new funding will help investigators throughout the State of Florida conduct innovative Alzheimer’s research. At the University of Florida and specifically within our Center, we have world-class Alzheimer’s disease research and we anticipate that our scientist will successfully compete for some of this funding that will be awarded on a competitive peer-reviewed basis.”

Dr. Neill R. Graff-Radford, Associate Director, Mayo Clinic Alzheimer's Disease Research Center said, “The investment of \$3 million in the state budget is a strong commitment from Governor Scott and the legislature to make a real difference for Floridians whose families are affected by Alzheimer’s. In the research community there is much attention now being given to using biomarkers to determine if a person is at risk of Alzheimer's disease and then developing new therapies that might delay or even prevent the disease.”

Frank L. Morsani, Board Member, USF Health Byrd Alzheimer's Institute said, “It is symbolic of the improving Florida economy that the legislature has re-instituted funding for Alzheimer's research after a 5 year hiatus. Alzheimer's medical costs exceed those of every other disease and nowhere is this more evident than in Florida, where we have twice the number of cases per capita than the rest of the US. A number of breakthroughs in Alzheimer's research occurred in Florida. Funding Alzheimer's research is an investment that will save us from the growing astronomical costs of this disease on Florida's families and the state's economy. Governor Rick Scott has demonstrated a keen awareness of the importance of Alzheimer’s Research with this investment.”

Kay Redington, CEO, Alzheimer's Association, Central and North Florida Chapter said, “With approximately 450,000 Floridians affected by Alzheimer’s, there is a need to have focused research on the disease and this new funding approved by Governor Rick Scott does just that. Our citizens deserve the best in research efforts to develop better treatments and eventually a cure for Alzheimer’s. Having the second highest incidence rate of the disease in the country, Florida will set an excellent model for the nation through the peer-reviewed competitive grant program established by this strategic funding approved by Governor Rick Scott and the members of the Florida Legislature.”

Christine Lecher Powers, Chair, Alzheimer’s Disease Advisory Committee & Director of Adult Day Services for CARES (Community Aging and Retirement Services, Inc.) said, “Governor Scott has recognized the critical need for respite

services for the selfless caregivers of individuals with Alzheimer's disease. I commend him for his continued support of our efforts."

Ronald Davis, Caregiver Representative on Florida's Purple Ribbon Task Force said, "Respite care is the most significant service to a caregiver supporting a loved one at home. I commend Governor Scott for this funding increase which will have a significant effect on caregivers in Florida."

Melinda Coulter, Chairperson, Foundation for Indigent Guardianship, Inc. said, "On behalf of the Foundation, we are pleased to support Governor Scott in his efforts to fund public guardianship programs across Florida. These programs serve our most vulnerable citizens in every county in Florida, and we have been able to expand utilizing non-recurring funds. Governor Scott's budget increase will support the continued expansion of these critical statewide services."

Scott Greenberg, President, Florida State Guardianship Association said, "The Statewide Public Guardianship Office, through their programs, meets a critical need for the vulnerable citizens of our state who are in need of a guardian. I commend the Governor for his commitment to fulfilling these needs."

Nick Barton, Executive Director, AGED Trust, Inc. said, "Through this funding, it is clear that Governor Scott recognizes Florida's tremendous need for public guardianship programs. This significant increase will allow us to help elders who have nowhere else to turn. I am so pleased that AGED Trust Inc. can continue to partner with the public guardianship program to accomplish their great mission."

Karen Campbell, Executive Director, Office of the Public Guardian, Inc. said, "This is the first time that comprehensive statewide public guardianship has been achieved in every county in the state. The Governor's funding will enable programs such as ours to serve the senior and disabled populations who have no family, limited financial means, and are unable to hire a private guardian. Our network has worked tirelessly to raise awareness of this critical issue, and I am thrilled that Governor Scott continues to support us as we serve those most in need."

Max Rothman, President and CEO, Alliance for Aging, Inc. said, "Miami-Dade County has the highest number of elders in Florida. I applaud the Governor for providing this significant budget increase to meet their health and nutrition needs through the hot meals program, and appreciate his support as this population continues to grow in South Florida."

###