

Gov. DeSantis (00:00):

Progress and, and, and bouncing back. And we're really excited, uh, to be here at, at Pelican Alley Restaurant. I know Renee and Tommy are here with us. Where are they at? Uh, so, and they're, they're back open. You had a situation where you had a, a category four, almost category five storm, come through this area Wednesday afternoon, Wednesday evening. Uh, they had power on, uh, back two days ago, and now they're open for business. How many other places in this country would that happen?

Gov. DeSantis (00:33):

So I'm joined here with our, uh, Florida Division of Emergency Management Director, Kevin Guthrie. Um, he's not been sleeping very much and you know, he's just got more work to do. So that's just gonna way the way it's gonna be. Uh, DEP Secretary Sean Hamilton, Dane Eagle Department of Economic Opportunity is also here with us. And he's been really working hard to help people bounce back, uh, businesses and individuals. And we're utilizing all the tools at our disposal to be able to do it. We have had, since the storm went through, uh, about 2,500 rescue missions, particularly on some of these really hard hit barrier islands, but also some of the places more inland that had massive, massive rainfall and massive flooding. And you've seen that, uh, of course in Southern Sarasota County. But it really goes all through the state in the heartland and then kind of the I4 part, really, really historic amount of water.

Gov. DeSantis (01:31):

And we're still seeing some of that in other parts of the, in those parts of the state as well, with rivers cresting and whatnot. So it's required a major, major effort and we've had more urban search and rescue teams in Florida since the storm than at any time in our country's history since nine 11. So this was a huge effort. Coast Guard urban search and rescue teams, local law enforcement, state law enforcement, like Florida Fish and Wildlife being on the boats and all the stuff they've done, we really, really appreciated it. There have been over 90,000 structures that have been checked, mostly in the very, very hard hit areas, searching for survivors. Because of the preplanning on this hurricane with 42,000 utility workers stationed in the state of Florida prior to landfall, which has never been done at that scale. Uh, we've been able to now, uh, restore, uh, all but 1.86% of the state of Florida has power.

Gov. DeSantis (02:38):

Sarasota's down 8% in Sarasota are without, but they've FPLs been making a lot of progress in the southern part of the state, or a southern part of the county, so I think you're gonna see more there. So basically as of 12 o'clock, it was about 200,000 people out of a massive state, uh, basically a week. I mean, the storm left Florida Thursday evening of last week. And so here we are here and I can tell you people that have been in Florida for a long time, I mean, there have been other hurricanes where people were without for weeks and weeks, even if you didn't have damage to your house, if you just happen to be in the wrong spot. So we're getting to the point now where there is, uh, more to be done. Of course, in Lee County in particular, FPL I think is almost totally restored in Lee County.

Gov. DeSantis (03:25):

Some of the areas they have, like Fort Myers Beach is gonna require a rebuild and it's gonna require maybe the homes to have, uh, uh, something happen because they may not be able to take power. So they've gotten most of what they can get done, almost all what they get done. The electric cooperative in Lee County, we've, um, we brought in, I told Kevin, I said, We got all these great linemen in the state.

They're finishing all these other areas, Don't send them back to Texas or Alabama. Send them to Southwest Florida. So they've been coming down, they're helping now get it done.

Gov. DeSantis ([03:59](#)):

And so you've, you've seen, because you know, we've had parts like in Lee County, you had Cape Coral, Dane Eagles from there, I mean you had tens of thousands of households without power. I mean maybe 70-80,000 at the height. And I went down there the other day, we announced that there's a thousand additional electrical co-op workers that are, that are surging in. And then Duke, uh, electric, they're putting in like 3000 to help this, uh, Lee County electrical co-op. So there's more linemen now in those parts of Lee County than probably anywhere per capita in the country right now. And that's important cuz we want to get everyone up. So hopefully we'll see more progress there. You do have parts of the state, uh, Sanibel, Pine Island to a lesser extent, but still significant. And then Fort Myers Beach where you had a really significant, uh, uh, downing of, of power lines.

Gov. DeSantis ([04:55](#)):

I, I got to, I was on Sanibel in person yesterday and you'd have concrete utility poles just snapped in half all over the street. So that's gonna require, uh, a lot more effort. So what we did with Pine Island is the, the bridge that was going from the mainland to Pine Island was washed out, uh, by the storm, one of the, the, the road there. So they were talking about evacuating everyone off the island, all this stuff. And that was not gonna fly. The folks didn't want it. They wanted to be in their homes. And so they asked me for support that if we could get the bridge back. And so we said we would do it. We did an emergency contract and we did it in three days. So now it's open and they're doing it more.

Gov. DeSantis ([05:42](#)):

So now you're able, you saw the public's trucks going across, the Publix is open there, fresh stuff again, just like normal. Now you're gonna see more power crews be able to just go in there. We have taken via Chinook helicopter utility workers onto Sanibel and they are, they are looking, but I mean that is gonna require a massive effort. So Kevin Guthrie and I are talking about what, what would they need to get all the equipment that they need to get that power back on Sanibel. We may do something temporarily that's using generators in the meantime, but you're probably gonna need almost like a, an amphibious amphibious landing craft, like the Marines use to load up like dozens of utility trucks, bring it to the shore and then let them go do their thing. So we're working on ways to do that. We may be asking the federal government for help with that, but my view is we are doing, just like we did with Pine Island, I've authorized repairs to the Sanibel Causeway.

Gov. DeSantis ([06:41](#)):

So you have it, it was severed in three places and there's no way to get to the island without having the causeway. So I don't wanna have to have it out for a year by doing a new bridge or something. So we're gonna do something like we did with Pine Island. It's gonna take a little bit longer cuz it's a more significant effort. But in the meantime, we want people working on the island right now, debris removal, electrical, and continue working up until that, that the temporary repairs are done. I don't wanna do nothing for three weeks or however long it's gonna take a and then say, Okay, now you can start going. So we're working on ways to get more people there right now, but they're already there and, and it's, um, it's something that, that, that's good to see you. Some of the damage when you're, when you're on the ground is more extensive than if you just fly over in a helicopter.

Gov. DeSantis (07:28):

You see, uh, massive debris, particularly on Sanibel. There's a lot of vegetation there and, and I mean the power lines are just everywhere, so, so it's gonna take a lot of TLC, but my view is, is we gotta tap all hands on deck. We gotta get all these communities moving forward. You can't, if you just let it toil, then that's how they end up maybe never coming back. So I think there is a sense of urgency on it and we're working across the board with all those, We had problems in Lee County with the water. They, uh, they weren't getting water going into to the homes. And so I told Kevin, I said, We gotta, we gotta help out here. So they got one of the best engineering firms in the country, be people from MIT down there. Uh, they've restored the water so everybody has water now and for the county and they're working on getting that water pressure up.

Gov. DeSantis (08:15):

Uh, they're gonna be doing that. So we should be in really good shape there. And you know, to have power and water, you can fix kind of your home a lot easier if you have those two things. If you don't have that, it makes it more difficult and especially the water because it's just basic hygiene. So we're happy to see that moving ahead of schedule. We also are happy because of the swift power restoration. FDOT has cleared 5,000 miles of roadway. We've been able to basically bring businesses back at a, at a record level. Uh, I remember I was in Cape Coral the Friday after the storm had left Wednesday night. Friday morning, Publix was open in Cape Coral. I go down to Fort Myers

Gov. DeSantis (09:02):

And we're actually at the point because all the stores bounce back so quickly. We set up these PODs, points of distribution where you could drive in, they'll give you water, give you food, tarp, whatever you whatever the supplies, and people appreciated that. But we're now in a situation, cuz all this has come back quick that counties like Sarasota say, No, no, no, we don't need the pods. You know, take that to people that may need it. So we, they, they Sarasota asked us to, to close. We have all the pods in Sarasota closed now. Uh, yes sir. I believe so. Yeah. So, so that's, and it's fine. I mean, you know, with the counties they know what they need, so that's a good sign. I mean, you think about it, normally in these disasters, it takes a week to even get the pod set up.

Gov. DeSantis (09:42):

We had it set up, you know, 18,-36 hours after it left the state. And, and that's, so now we're in such a county saying, Hey, thanks, we got what we need. But the stores being open, I think it's been huge. And so here at Pelican Alley, you know, they're back and they're ready to go. And I know a lot of people are excited to be able to go, They're gonna host a concert, uh, on the stage back here for the first time since Ian hit. And that's gonna help provide a great sense of normalcy to the community. People want to be out and about and, and get back to their daily lives. And so they're able to do it and we appreciate them hosting this and, and, and others that are doing other stuff. I mean, I know that Collier County, they have, they're back in school today, uh, with their Collier County schools.

Gov. DeSantis (10:28):

They're gonna do football Friday night and all that, and that, that's fantastic. I know we're working with Charlotte and Lee to make sure they're back in Sarasota. We, we need to get the kids back in school, You know, if there's damage to a school and you need another classroom or two, we have the ability to do temporary, uh, temporary pods where they can go in. And so you can keep kids in school because there were very few schools that were totally destroyed. There were some in Lee County, most of it, maybe

there's a roof here or there. We can repair that. But in the meantime, let's get the kids back. So Kevin is working, Manny Diaz, Department of Education all working to make sure that folks are able to get their kids back. And I tell you, talking with some of the families, displaced the kids, they really want their kids back in school.

Gov. DeSantis ([11:12](#)):

I mean, they're in a shelter, the kids are there all day. Getting them back in school is like a huge thing for the parents too, particularly those that have been the hardest hit. So we're working hard. We'll provide whatever support we need, but we, we, we understand that that's something that's very, very significant. We were, uh, very pleased to see the outpouring of support that we've had from private organizations. So I was just in Charlotte County, there's a group called Team Rubicon. They're a disaster relief organization, and they utilize, uh, their workforce as basically veterans and they descend on areas in the aftermath of natural disasters like this. So they had, we had a Vietnam veteran whose home had a lot of debris, had some problems with the electrical hookup. So we had an electrician there helping out with the power team Rubicon, clearing all this debris, and this guy's back on his feet.

Gov. DeSantis ([12:06](#)):

And so they're doing that in communities, uh, all throughout southwest Florida. So I want to thank them and all the other groups who are working so hard, Uh, I've met people from almost every state. I mean, it's amazing to see being like a rural county like Hardee County. And I'll see firefighters from Oregon in Hardee County and the heartland of Florida. And you think that's incredible. So many people from other counties have come, other states have come to help and it's made a really big difference. Uh, we opened, uh, within six days, which we think is a record for a storm of this magnitude, a disaster recovery center in Fort Myers. And that will have FEMA assistance, business assistance through Florida's programs. And then Jimmy Patronis, the CFO for Florida, has all the insurance carriers there. So, you know, I think most of these claims in this part of the state, uh, are gonna be flood claims, not necessarily wind claims, but they have the private carriers that are mostly the wind insurance, but also national flood insurance program for those flood claims.

Gov. DeSantis ([13:11](#)):

And so we are preparing to open, uh, two more, uh, tomorrow morning - one in Sarasota County, and that's gonna be at Suncoast Technical College in Northport. We're also gonna open up another one in Fort Myers at the Fort Myers DMS building on Victoria Avenue. Uh, there will also be one in Charlotte coming up this week as well. So these are, you don't the thing, you don't have to go to these, you can do this online. You can file claims with fema, with your insurance, with flood, all that stuff. But if you have questions, there's gonna be the people there that are gonna be able to help. And we appreciate everyone that's doing that, and we hope that those will, will go very quickly. We have Elon Musk provided 375 internet devices for the satellite.

Gov. DeSantis ([14:03](#)):

And so what I've asked, because we had those at all, the pods as people would come in to get food, water, whatever they needed, they could also contact friends and family via that, that, that starlink internet as the pods close because the lack of demand, we wanna make sure those systems are going out. So the extent that there's still problems, some places have problems with the cable internet. Some people have more of the telecom that maybe a little spotty, I think it's gotten a lot better. But we have those and, and we want to deploy those so that they're being able to be used as best that they can. Uh,

the first lady, uh, she was really taking the lead on our FloridaDisasterfund.org. So if you go to Florida disaster fund.org, you can make a donation or you can text disaster to 20222. And since she launched this the end of last week, it's raised over \$37 million for the victims of the storm.

Gov. DeSantis ([15:04](#)):

And, and they'll be more on the way. And so that's the type of money that can go, it could go to a group like Team Rubicon to help them expand operations, to help people fix their homes. You know, the thing about the storm and where it hit is it hit, uh, areas that have, uh, a lot of elderly residents. And so, and I've met, I've met a lot of the, the folks. So you're somebody that maybe 85 years old, you may not be able to do the same home repairs that you used to be able to do when you were younger. So you have folks that can come and help out in that regard. So that, that's something that I think is good and that's gonna be used across the, the affected areas to help people who kind of fall through the cracks for some of the FEMA relief or some of the other things the state has, and to make sure that people are getting back on their feet.

Gov. DeSantis ([15:51](#)):

And you know, the one thing that I've seen over the last week is an incredible amount of resilience from people seen, people that have lost their, their whole homes and lived through the storm when they had the storm surge was up to their chest in their own house. And the only thing they can say is, Thanks everybody else for everything everyone else is doing. There was no, Oh, whoa was me. It was, we really appreciate that we have great first responders, that we have folks that, that had, uh, a lot of support for them, uh, in this difficult situation. And I think the attitude is by and large, you know, sometimes in life you get knocked down and that's not really what counts. What counts is are you gonna get back up? Are you gonna get back up and shoulder on? And the people are doing that.

Gov. DeSantis ([16:36](#)):

So just know we're, we're here. We understand how these, how these things go. When I became governor was right on the heels of Hurricane Michael that had hit Northwest Florida. And these things fade from the headlines very quickly. The cameras leave very quickly. They're there. Obviously there's some media that only goes there because they try to use that for an agenda and we know who they are. But the end of the day is, but the end of the day is, is there's gonna be other things that are gonna happen. There's gonna be things. And what I told the folks in northwest Florida when I became governor is, I understand this is a very still very real, even months after it happened, and there's gonna be a lot of TLC that's gonna need to go in to getting the communities back on their feet. So we've done, I've been there so many times throughout my four years as governor and we're continuing to do things to help them rebuild.

Gov. DeSantis ([17:28](#)):

And you know what, they, they've rebuilt very well. I think they've bounced back, uh, in a really strong way. People have wanted to be in northwest Florida more than they've ever wanted to be. So the pathway, I think is very, very clear. And especially you're talking about some of the areas that got hit are some of the, the number one areas that people have wanted to move to over the last few years. So there's a reason for that. And I think people by and large have the view that, uh, that they're just gonna dig in and, and we're gonna get this right. So there's gonna be a lot we're gonna do over months and even over years with, with some of the stuff that we're doing, but that's just what you have to do. So, so we're in it for the long haul. We understand the, that the need for that and the needs are not gonna be

the same in every community, but, but there are gonna be needs, uh, across the state. So I'm happy to have had, uh, a lot of people working really hard, not just over the past week, but lead the week leading into this. And to be honest, these are things that you have to practice going into a hurricane season. And so we take pride in that in Florida to have strong disaster response. And I think you've seen that with what, uh, Kevin Guthrie and his team have done. So Kevin, why don't you come up and give an update.

Dir. Guthrie ([18:46](#)):

Thank you, governor, and thank you to the two secretaries beside me. Uh, they are, uh, they've been here with me the entire time, including the time leading into this particular disaster. So thank you Dane, and thank you, Sean, for your, your, uh, coordination, cooperation and help. More than 4,900 mission requests have been put into the state division emergency management, about 4,000 of those have been completed and the rest are being processed and, uh, completed as quickly as we possibly can. I can I continue to be amazed by the coordination and collaboration between not only our state partners and local partners, but also private partners. Everyone is, is the governor has said everybody, it's all hands on deck. I mean, even just recently at the, with this Vietnam veteran, you know, we called at two hours notice, uh, a group, a power design group outta Tampa and said, Hey, we got a Vietnam veteran that needs help.

Dir. Guthrie ([19:39](#)):

Can you help? They dropped everything they were doing and rushed right to the scene and started, uh, installing an electrical panel and a generator. So again, my thanks to Bobby Bryan and the, uh, and the power design group, uh, for their help. Early this morning with that Vietnam veteran, nearly 36 million bottles of water distributed statewide, more than 9.5 million MREs distributed statewide, more than 187,000 bags of ice, more than 500 generators are currently deployed around the state, working with our contract with, uh, our contractor and the US Army Corps on infrastructure assessments of water treatment plans and wastewater. As the governor has already said, I am ecstatic to say I put a benchmark out there, I said 50% in 72 hours, five days, 75% and seven days, a hundred percent water restoration, Lee County. No, that's, so that's not the good point here. The good point is in 48 hours, they had a hundred percent of their system receiving some type of water.

Dir. Guthrie ([20:42](#)):

They continue to work on that issue. The next issue for both myself and the secretary, uh, Hamilton, is wastewater good water going in. We gotta work on the wastewater coming out. So we have hundreds of flood pumps, uh, deployed on lift stations, trying to help make sure that the water that goes in that turns into dark water coming out we can take care of. So, uh, really again, wanna appreciate, uh, I appreciate Sean's, uh, help on that. Getting that done. 11 fuel depots for first responders, two fuel depots in Arcadia, Dunbar, uh, with 1.4 million gallons of fuel dispense more than 240,000 IA registrations to date with over 70 million, um, passed out. How do you apply for that individual assistance? You might ask, Let me tell you, first of all, homeowners and renters with insurance, you have insurance, you're still encouraged to apply and let us know what your, uh, unmet needs are.

Dir. Guthrie ([21:36](#)):

Go to the Disaster Recovery Center, is the first way to do that. Go to a mobile registration intake center. Another way to do that, if you don't, if you have internet, then just go simply to disasterassistance.gov, disasterassistance.gov. You can download the FEMA app. If you have no internet, but you have, uh, a cell phone or I'm sorry, a phone, then call +1 800-621-3362. Again, that's +1 800-621-3362. Do not give up

on that. There are a lot of long wait times there, but continue to call. Do not give up, uh, the DRCs. You know, I think one of the things that we need to point out for the DRCs is if you lost your license, you lost your, um, your birth certificate, a record of death, something along those lines. You're a veteran, you're elder, uh, you're a part of the disabled community, the elder affairs community, We have state agencies there on site to help you with programs.

Dir. Guthrie ([22:32](#)):

That's a really good use of that DRC and our multi-agency resource centers that are there. FEMA again has, excuse me, over 278,000 people registered as of right now. I'll start to wind down by talking about, um, in Charlotte, Sarasota, Lee, and Collier Counties, again, those are the Gulf Coast communities that are impacted from Sarasota all the way down to Collier. The, uh, US Army Corps's Blue Roof has been turned on for you. If you need some type of assistance with your roof, you could call the following number +1 888-766-3258. That's 888-766-3258, and have, or make application to the US Army Corps to have a contractor come to your house and install that roof for free. For free. If somebody comes to your house and they say, I'm here with the US Army Corps to install a roof on your house, I need \$500. I need anything more than one penny, you tell 'em to pack sand, turn around and leave. Okay? It is free. Do not fall into that. Lastly, um, I just want to, again, I appreciate the governor, I appreciate his leadership. Um, he has been with us the entire time, uh, you know, given us direction, telling us what his intent is. We've been executing on that, that intent. And I really, really appreciate all of his leadership as we've, uh, continued to respond to this disaster. Thank you,

Sec. Hamilton ([24:15](#)):

Thank you, governor. Um, and just to echo a couple things from Director Guthrie, there's a, there's a simple leadership formula, right? The right leader at the right time doing your greatest need. You mess any one of those up, that's a different conversation, right? So thank you governor for your leadership. Also would like to thank Director Guthrie, he's redefined what it means to quote unquote lean forward, and now when I'm, whenever I'm asked that how fast I want something, there's normal, there's fast, and there's Guthrie. And so whenever somebody, that's the word I'm using, so thank you, sir, for your leadership.

Sec. Hamilton ([24:55](#)):

And I know I speak on behalf of all of the secretaries and the other agencies and the many public servants that are not here today, that we stand beside you and we will be here. We, this is our community as well, and you are our family. And we will not stop until we know we are made whole. So, again, you can count on us being here, shoulder to shoulder. Um, Kevin mentioned the coordination across state, federal, and local, um, agencies. It has been phenomenal. And I, it's, uh, again, the resources you're hearing about, it's because of this leadership, but it's also because of the spirit and coordination that we are seeing across the board. I would like to share a few details about what we're doing and what's going on. You hear about power, right? Power is important, but I have to believe a close second is water.

Sec. Hamilton ([25:39](#)):

You know, that is a very close second. So the effort to restore drinking water resources is nothing short or phenomenal. There's, there was a question asked, and there, candidly, there was a lot of concerns that we've not, we're not talking days, we're talking weeks and months just to see water going through the pipe to here what, what Kevin's talking about on the restoration. That speaks to the efforts of a

couple different people. And I just wanted to call attention to them because they're, they're working in the shadows, They're working at night, they're not sleeping. And those are some of the same folks that suffered some of the same impacts. And so your utility workers who are part of your community should be acknowledging when you see them, please thank them again.

Sec. Hamilton ([26:23](#)):

So with that in mind, if you think about the utility workers, so there is another, there's another set and, and the governor will probably appeal me for bringing this term up. There's a set of navy seals in the utility world that are out there working in the shadows to make this happen. These are your neighbors in your other counties who will call on you at their need. And so there is no way you're gonna stop them from being here to support you as well. We have mutual aid agencies like Floor Warren and others from Mississippi and Alabama who are fighting to get here to support and be a part of this restoration. And just by the numbers, 15 counties have lended support just in this area alone. They've sent their utility workers, they sent them with everything they need except a bed and the bed's on them, right?

Sec. Hamilton ([27:06](#)):

They're sending these guys with bachelor and cuts to get the job done. They're bringing the supplies, they're bringing the gas, they're bringing the fuel, they're bringing everything it needs to try to get these systems back online as fast as possible, because candidly, when you're out water, it's not, we're not talking about weeks or whatever - days matter. And so again, I want to acknowledge the hundred plus folks who are in the area right now providing that support and all the great work they're doing. So as a result of these efforts, you heard Kevin, Lee, Charlotte, and Sarasota Counties, majority of their customers have been supplied drinking water. And again, that is amazing when you think about the nature of this storm and what's been going on. So what the department's role will continue to work to make sure that we provide all of the resources to help them sample, to help them test so we can get rid of that boil water notice, right?

Sec. Hamilton ([27:53](#)):

And then you can take full advantage of the resources. So we've got mobile labs placed strategically. We got staff ready to do runs, whatever it takes. Our agency stands by ready to assist to make sure we can recover as quick as possible. And then the debris side of this, you heard the governor talk about it, you heard Kevin talk about it. The debris from this storm will be historic in nature, just like the storm. And we're providing the assistance with your counties and your local governments to make sure they've got the resources, the technical assistance to make sure we can get that stuff out of the neighborhood safe efficiently, as effective as possible so that recovery can start. So again, that is a concerted effort, effort. Now, when you think about the nature of this storm and being coastal communities, the vessel damage and the vessel destruction will also be unparallel. And so again, we're providing the resources, the technical guidance to make sure that that recovery keeps on par with all of the other recoveries you've had thus far. And then just in closing, we stand here. There's a lot of long term stuff, right? We're gonna be monitoring water quality to make sure our natural re resources are accounted for. We're gonna do everything we can to make sure that big picture is also accounted for in this recovery. And again, governor, thank you for your leadership and thank you for everything you're doing for our state.

Sec. Eagle ([29:09](#)):

Well, thank y'all for gathering today. Uh, I really want to thank the governor for his leadership and, and of course Kevin Guthrie and, uh, secretary, uh, Harrison and everybody for just coming together. This

has been an unprecedented event. I'm from southwest Florida, Cape Coral specifically family there. I've got a sister in Sarasota. So I felt this with all of you, but I have so much faith and hope in knowing that the response behind this has been monumental. And it's not gonna end. You're not gonna be forgotten. As the governor said, the cameras may leave, but we're gonna be here helping. Um, my job at DEO, uh, under the governor's leadership is to work, work on economic recovery. We do that at any given day on Blue Sky days. And thanks to the governor's leadership and Freedom First Principles, we have had a economy that has outperformed the nation in every measure.

Sec. Eagle ([29:51](#)):

Unemployment rate is 2.7% compared to 3.7% at the federal level. We're not immune to inflation and supply chain issues that seem to be coming down from the federal government, but we've been getting ahead of it. We've been hedging against it. And because of that, we're able to, with withstand disasters like this, we might have a setback, but we are going to bounce back and we've got some tools to help you do so, thanks to the governor. We put out some emergency, uh, bridge loans, uh, and that is zero, uh, percent interest short term loans to help businesses get back on their feet. Now, I know there's businesses like this that may have had a lapse in income. There's businesses on Fort Myers Beach that no longer exist, and we wanna stand by them and make sure that they can get back up and running, uh, sometime in the short term, some in the long term.

Sec. Eagle ([30:30](#)):

But there's other things we can do to help. So please go to Floridadisaster.biz Florida disaster.biz to learn more about those bridge loans. And if you can't get to the internet, we've got the Disaster Recovery Centers one's in Lee County. Now we're gonna have one in Sarasota County. As the governor mentioned, Charlotte County, County, Collier County. We're gonna be on the ground helping, um, disaster unemployment assistance that has been stood up. Again, thanks to the governor. We've cut the red tape. You don't have to do the, uh, work search registration. There's work available. So please search, but you don't have to register that because we know you're in a, in a time of, uh, of, of, uh, hard sake. So we've cut some of that red tape. Uh, but there is work available disaster. Unemployment assistance is temporary. Please use that if you need it, but let us help you find a job.

Sec. Eagle ([31:09](#)):

Career source is standing by. There are a lot of opportunities. Kevin and I were talking. There are gonna be a lot of vendors on the ground for the foreseeable future, helping with cleanup efforts, helping to do certain things to help communities get back on their feet, and they need people to help. So let us connect you with them. We can do so at these Disaster Recovery Centers. You can do so by contacting DEA and CareerSource. And also if you wanna self-report, we encourage people to do so. Uh, we have a business damage assessment survey. So far we've had about 2000 businesses report about 300 million in damage, that's significant. And it's probably more than that, but that's what we self reported so far. Please let us know so we can dig in deeper and see what we can do to help. Because we're not going anywhere. We know that you need our assistance. Government can't do everything for you. We know that, uh, we need you to take the first step, but we're gonna be standing by you and making sure that you get back on your feet. And that's thanks to the governor's quick leadership. So thanks for the opportunity.

Gov. DeSantis ([32:02](#)):

I'm also, uh, glad that effective Saturday we instituted our gas tax holiday in the state of Florida. And so we now basically, you don't pay the state portion. So 25 cents off every gallon. And if you look at our prices, if you look at the prices in Florida, since that's gone into effect and been internalized in the market, we now have the fifth lowest gas prices in the country right now.

Gov. DeSantis ([32:32](#)):

And I actually saw it in different places I was driving, I don't know where, so I don't want to like send a crowd, but I mean, I actually actually saw it at \$2.99. I have not seen gas under \$3 in a long time. Certainly I don't think since January 20th of a year and a half ago. So that's just, uh, that's just the nature of it. So we're glad that that was in effect. We think that that will help people save money over the course of, of this holiday. And of course, we're gonna do a lot more. We have a lot of other tax relief that's been in effect as well. We know tax on diapers and, and baby items for the new fam for the young families, which is really, really good. I've also have a proposal for next year. We wanna make all of the baby items, including cribs and strollers have no, no sales tax permanently. That's what we're looking to do.

Gov. DeSantis ([33:26](#)):

We're also gonna do, we think for a year, no sales tax on any household item under \$25. So you think about the things you buy that'll really add up over the course of a year. We're also doing, and not every place has the same amount of toll roads throughout the state, but for commuters that can hit 'em. So we're gonna do, we're gonna slash the tolls by 50% and, uh, that'll save people potentially hundreds of dollars, some in like South Florida, probably thousand dollars, 1500 a year with how much those tolls are. So just all thinking about ways that we can help lessen the burden. When you're in a period of really sustained, uh, runaway inflation, you want to be able to help people with, uh, with those burdens. And so we've done that and I think the gas tax is a good thing. And, you know, you see what OPEC is doing.

Gov. DeSantis ([34:11](#)):

Unfortunately, I think that this is likely to go up between now and the end of the year and in the next year. I mean, that's just what I would bet. I hope that's not the case, but I think that there's a lot of ominous signs on the horizon with that. Okay, well, we're, uh, we're happy we're in the fight. We'll be back to Southern Sarasota in particular, and we're gonna continue to work with our residents, uh, to get everybody back on their feet and let's charge ahead. But the, the but the spirit has been fantastic and I think the way people have worked together has really been exemplary. So just as governor of the state, I just want to thank Floridians for how they've responded. God bless you all. Thank you. Thank you. Thanks. Thanks guys.