Florida has experienced unprecedented back-to-back hurricane seasons. In 2005, Hurricanes Dennis, Katrina, Rita and Wilma hit Florida. In 2004, Hurricanes Charley, Frances, Ivan and Jeanne slammed into our state. Hurricanes are a fact of life in Florida. Florida will continue experiencing hurricanes like we have been for the past couple of years. For the long-term vitality of our state, hurricane preparedness, response and recovery needs to be as high a priority as any other public policy area.

For fiscal year 2006-2007, Governor Jeb Bush is recommending an investment of $565 million of state and federal funding for three priority areas:

- Instilling a culture of preparedness: $97.3 million
- Strengthening our ability to respond to disasters: $154 million
- Continuing our road to recovery: $314 million
INSTILLING A CULTURE OF PREPAREDNESS: $97.3 MILLION

$5.3 million  Public Education Campaign
Governor Bush’s proposal will create a public education plan to raise public awareness about the need to plan for emergencies. Everyone who lives and works in Florida has a responsibility to prepare - individuals, families, businesses both big and small.

$42 million  Annual Hurricane Tax Holidays
Governor Bush recommends an annual tax holiday for hurricane preparedness supplies. The holiday would occur during the final twelve days of May each year during Hurricane Preparedness Week. Eligible items include:
- Portable self-powered light source selling for $20 or less,
- Portable self-powered radio, two-way radio, or weatherband radio selling for $50 or less,
- Tarpaulin or other flexible waterproof sheeting selling for $50 or less,
- Ground anchor system or tie-down kit selling for $50 or less,
- Gas or diesel fuel tank selling for $25 or less,
- AA-cell, C-cell, D-cell, 6-volt, or 9-volt batteries, excluding automobile and boat batteries, selling for $30 or less,
- Nonelectric food storage cooler selling for $30 or less,
- Self-contained first-aid kit selling for $30 or less,
- Portable generator used to provide light or communications or preserve food selling for $1,000 or less (an increase from the $750 limit in 2005)

New items this year:
- AAA-cell batteries selling for $30 or less, cell phone battery selling for $60 or less and cell phone charger selling for $40 or less,
- Building materials, consisting of plywood and hardware used to secure plywood to a structure, selling for $300 or less. Building supplies are not exempt for purchase by commercial enterprises.

$50 million  Housing Retrofit Program
Governor Bush recommends creating a competitive grant program to increase protection of at least 10,000 homes by installing shutters, reinforcing roofs and hardening the home to protect against the destructive impacts of hurricanes. Priority for funds will be given to low income homeowners in wind borne debris zones. Grants are capped at $10,000 per home. The Division of Emergency Management will administer the program through grants to local governments or not-for-profit entities who will grant funds for individual retrofit projects on homes that qualify for the program. Funds for this program will come from federal hazard mitigation dollars. Florida’s significant investment in addressing affordable housing related to hurricane recovery will serve as global match for this program.
Making a Great Emergency Response Even Better: $154 Million

$30 million  Emergency Power for Special Needs Shelters
While having the power go out is an inconvenience for many of us, it is a matter of life and death for the frail, elderly and critically ill. Keeping the power on throughout the storm will – literally – save lives. Based on surveys after the 2004 hurricane season, the Division of Emergency Management and the Department of Health determined the need to accommodate at least 20,000 frail, elder and sick people in special needs shelters throughout the state. Special needs shelters have to meet the minimum criteria by the Red Cross for survivability and have emergency power systems that can support air-conditioning for their clients. Governor Bush recommends $30 million to permanently install generators at every designated special needs shelter in the state.

$16.7 million  General Population Shelters
Providing safe, sanitary and accessible shelters for Floridians is critical to protecting the public during a hurricane. During the past seven years, existing public structures have been retrofitted to provide emergency shelter for more than 764,000 people. Governor Bush recommends $12 million to add capacity for 100,000 more people by the hurricane season of 2007. By this hurricane season, Florida will be able to shelter 816,000 people statewide – more than seven times the capacity available prior to 1999. Governor Bush also recommends $4.7 million for a pilot project to encourage communities to establish regional shelters.

$29 million  Evacuation Plans
Last year, the extent of the flooding caused by Hurricane Dennis caught many people in the Panhandle by surprise. Waters rose as far east as St. Marks in Wakulla County and further inland than many communities expected. To better prepare for the impacts of storms and increase protection for our citizens, Governor Bush proposes an investment of $29 million in new technology and tools to improve our understanding of storm surge and update our emergency plans based on the findings. Under the proposal, $20.7 million will be invested in Light Detection and Ranging or LiDAR, which uses pulses of laser light striking the surfaces of the earth and measuring the time of pulse return to collect information on the terrain. LiDAR technology offers the opportunity to identify steep slopes, shadowed areas, and inaccessible areas such as, large mud flats and ocean jetties. $8.3 million will be invested in updating regional evacuation plans, incorporating current transportation networks, and behavioral and vulnerability studies. In addition, 13 SLOSH (Sea, Lake and Overland Surges from Hurricanes) basins will be analyzed using computerized modeling to estimate storm surge heights and winds resulting from historical, hypothetical, or predicted hurricanes by taking into account pressure, size, forward speed, track and winds, and incorporating the LiDAR data into the analysis. The information
will allow emergency managers to more accurately define the areas – and more importantly identify the people – that are prone to flooding and coastal surge.

$6.5 million  **Logistical Planning and Operations**
Developing the ability to move essential relief goods and services to the areas that need it is critical for sudden emergencies or catastrophic events that destroy or disrupt the local infrastructure for long periods of time. Our state logistics team is meeting with large companies to identify opportunities to improve our system. A $6.5 million investment in our logistics system and technology will ensure we can provide relief supplies quickly and efficiently to people who really need them.

$69.8 million  **County Emergency Operations Centers**
Hurricanes in 2004 and 2005 destroyed two county emergency operations centers in Charlotte and Indian River Counties and severely damaged five others in Brevard, DeSoto, Lee, Palm Beach and Orange Counties. According to a recent assessment, 22 county emergency operations centers may not survive a major hurricane. To ensure the safety of our first responders, Governor Bush proposes an investment of almost $70 million, including $50 million General Revenue, to build, expand and enhance county emergency operations centers. Together, with a local match, this will ensure all county EOCs comply with the national standards for structural survivability and can withstand at least a Category 3 storm.

The Division of Emergency Management will evaluate projects and recommend funding levels based on the following factors: population, hurricane evacuation clearance time, an assessment of the structural survivability of the facility against known hazards, national standards for workspace requirements, and a local match obligation.

$2 million  **Medical Response Capabilities**
The University of Miami Center for Research in Medical Education is designated by the Department of Health as the lead statewide center to carry out catastrophic incident response and anti terrorist training. Governor Bush proposes $2 million to expand the University of Miami’s training center for first responders, such as hospital personnel, emergency medical services employees, and law enforcement officers, to respond to catastrophic disasters and terrorist attacks.
CONTINUING OUR ROAD TO RECOVERY: $314 MILLION

$302 million Affordable Housing
Last year, Florida invested $250 million to alleviate the shortage of affordable housing exacerbated by the hurricanes and $100.9 million in federal Community Development Block Grants for housing, infrastructure and economic development. In addition to the $243 million in traditional housing programs proposed this year, Governor Bush is recommending an investment of $302 million to provide affordable housing in communities impacted by hurricanes. In all, this will provide 10,000 rental units and replace, repair or provide down payment assistance for 38,000 homes.
- $176.6 million for the Rental Recovery Loan Program to leverage federal funds and private capital to build, rebuild and repair rental housing.
- $98 million for the Hurricane Housing Recovery Program to meet the unique housing needs, with an emphasis on home ownership, in areas recovering from a disaster.
- $25 million for farmworker housing and housing for frail elders, people with disabilities and homeless families.
- $2 million to repair and rehabilitate homes in communities severely impacted by the 2004 and 2005 hurricanes.
- $400,000 for training and technical assistance to assist local governments and non-profit organizations use housing funds quickly and effectively.

$12 million Workforce Training
Our growth and our recovery from the hurricanes have fueled the demand for skilled craftsmen – electricians, plumbers, roofers, masons, carpenters, specialists in heating and air conditioning systems. According to a survey of 50,000 employers conducted last summer, Florida had nearly 14,000 vacancies in construction fields – more than 8 percent of the total job vacancies. These jobs average $14.79 per hour – more than twice the new minimum wage. In December, Lt. Governor Toni Jennings unveiled Florida reBuilds, a workforce initiative to recruit and train construction workers to meet the growing demand. The initiative is providing up to $10 million this fiscal year for short-term, entry-level training for up to 4,000 individuals statewide and advanced training to up to 1,000 existing workers. Governor Bush proposes an additional investment of $12 million to expand the program and train an additional 6,000 individuals next year and up to 10,000 total.