

**GOVERNOR BUSH AND LT. GOVERNOR JENNINGS ANNOUNCE NEW
FUNDING RECOMMENDATIONS**

FOR HURRICANE PREPAREDNESS, RESPONSE AND RECOVERY

Governor Jeb Bush and Lt. Governor Toni Jennings today outlined a \$565 million budget recommendation of state and federal funding for emergency management. Establishing a “Culture of Preparedness” for hurricanes is a top priority for Governor Bush. These new efforts will significantly enhance Florida’s ability to prepare for hurricanes, respond quickly in the aftermath of a storm, recover from the damage and impacts to the economy, and mitigate future threats to public safety and infrastructure. (See full release)

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FUNDING RECOMMENDATIONS FOR HURRICANE PREPAREDNESS,
RESPONSE AND RECOVERY**

TALLAHASSEE – Governor Jeb Bush and Lt. Governor Toni Jennings today outlined a \$565 million budget recommendation of state and federal funding for emergency management at the Tiger Bay Club of Central Florida, Inc. The Governor was joined by Emergency Management Director Craig Fugate, Tiger Bay Club of Central Florida, Inc. President Fred Leonhardt, business leaders, club members and members of the community. Establishing a “Culture of Preparedness” for hurricanes is a top priority for Governor Bush. These new efforts will significantly enhance Florida’s ability to prepare for hurricanes, respond quickly in the aftermath of a storm, recover from the damage and impacts to the economy, and mitigate future threats to public safety and infrastructure.

“Hurricanes are a fact of life in Florida and every Floridian needs to have a plan for hurricane season,” said Governor Bush. “Our ability to respond and recover from a hurricane is critical to our economy and quality of life. A strong response and quick recovery sends a message to businesses and tourists that Florida remains the best option for both investments and vacations – keeping our growing economy strong.”

Governor Bush and Lt. Governor Jennings’ recommendations are:

Hurricane Preparedness

- \$5.3 million to raise public awareness about the need to plan appropriately for emergencies. The Division of Emergency Management will be

charged with implementing a public education and information campaign to help instill a “Culture of Preparedness” in Florida.

- \$42 million to provide for a 2006 sales tax holiday on hurricane preparedness supplies. Governor Bush is recommending that the Florida Legislature authorize an annual sales tax holiday coinciding with National Hurricane Preparedness Week each May. Last year, Floridians saved more than \$10 million on essential preparedness items.
- \$50 million to harden existing homes through retrofitting. Priority will be given to low income homeowners living in wind borne debris areas.
- Over the next several years, more than \$300 million in federal funding will be invested to minimize damage from future disasters. Counties and cities throughout Florida create mitigation projects based on local priorities.

“Governor Bush’s commitment to preparedness is a model for the nation,” said Florida Division of Emergency Management Director Craig Fugate. “A successful response starts well before a storm makes landfall – with families, communities and counties planning and preparing for a potential emergency.”

Hurricane Response

- \$30 million to install, by the start of the 2007 Hurricane Season, permanent generators to serve our special needs shelter population.
- \$16.7 million to create safe public shelter for an additional 100,000 people and fund a pilot program for regional sheltering projects.
- \$69.8 million to construct and expand county Emergency Operations Centers to ensure they can survive a hurricane/.
- \$29 million for new technology to improve our understanding of the effects of storm surge. These new models will serve as a scientific basis for updated regional evacuation plans.
- \$6.5 million to improve Florida’s logistics system, ensuring we provide essential commodities to disaster victims as quickly and efficiently as possible.
- \$2 million to expand the University of Miami Medical Training and Simulation Laboratory to enhance training for first responders to emergency disasters and terrorist attacks.

“Thousands of us have seen the devastating impact of hurricanes first hand. We remain committed to supporting Floridians as they recover from these storms,” said Lt. Governor Jennings. “Our budget recommendations will provide assistance to Floridians as they rebuild their communities and prepare for the storm seasons ahead.”

Hurricane Recovery

Programs will address affordable housing needs created by the destructive 2004 and 2005 Hurricane Seasons. These efforts will build on the strategies developed by Governor Bush's Hurricane Housing Workgroup. Led by Lt. Governor Jennings, the Workgroup was convened last year to assess affordable housing in Florida and make recommendations regarding future mitigation and recovery measures. In addition to \$243 million for the Florida Housing Finance Corporation for state and local affordable housing programs, a 26 percent increase from the current fiscal year funding, Governor Bush is also recommending:

- \$177 million for a Rental Recovery Loan Program that leverages available federal resources and private capital to build and rehabilitate affordable rental housing.
- \$98 million for a locally-administered Hurricane Housing Recovery Program that will accommodate the unique housing needs of Florida's communities affected by the storms.
- \$25 million for farmworker housing and housing for frail elders, persons with disabilities and homeless families.
- \$2 million to repair and rehabilitate homes in communities severely impacted by the 2004 and 2005 hurricanes.
- \$12 million to expand Florida reBuilds and train an additional 6,000 individuals bringing the total to 10,000 individuals. In December, Lt. Governor Jennings launched the Florida reBuilds program, a workforce initiative to recruit and train construction workers to meet growing demands related to hurricane recovery and the State's housing boom.

Four hurricanes made landfall in Florida in 2004 – Hurricanes Charley, Frances, Ivan and Jeanne. The 2005 Hurricane Season brought more destruction with the landfalls of four more hurricanes – Dennis, Katrina, Rita and Wilma. Recovery efforts from these eight hurricanes are ongoing in communities throughout Florida. The National Hurricane Center has predicted a continued period of heightened tropical activity, reinforcing the need for Floridians to properly prepare for each hurricane season.

For more information, please visit www.myflorida.com.

For information on creating a Family Disaster Preparedness Plan, please visit www.floridadisaster.org.