

For Immediate Release

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President Gardiner Responds to Governor Scott Vetoing Key Funding for Vulnerable Floridians

Tallahassee—Florida Senate President Andy Gardiner (R-Orlando) today released the following statement regarding Governor Rick Scott vetoing key funding for Florida’s most vulnerable families.

“While Governor Scott will undoubtedly spend the next several weeks traveling the state touting his record number of vetoes as win for Florida’s families, there are many families across Florida who have seen their dreams shattered by his decisions today.

“Families who had hoped their children born with unique abilities would have the opportunity to attend a post-secondary program, receive specialized job training and take part in the college experience, will see that dream postponed another year.

“The Governor refused to support the Senate’s efforts to help the working poor in our state purchase private health insurance, yet vetoed nearly \$10 million in funding for free and charitable clinics, again depriving these families of the chance for proactive primary care and pushing more and more Floridians without health insurance towards hospital emergency rooms when they are at their sickest and most vulnerable. He also vetoed funding for primary care residency programs and faculty to train physicians who work in rural and underserved areas.

“Nurses, pediatric physicians, and those serving the developmentally disabled in intermediate care facilities will not see the modest rate increase authorized by the Legislature. Members of the Florida State Fire Service, who put their lives on the line every day to protect our forests, will not see a \$2,000 pay increase. With one line of the Governor’s veto pen, these dedicated public servants, many of whom would qualify for Medicaid, will continue to earn approximately \$24,000 per year.

“The Governor also vetoed critical funding for the implementation of Amendment 1, including money appropriated to improve the water quality of our springs, acquire conservation land, and preserve historic sites.

“While I respect the Governor’s authority to veto various lines within our budget, his clear disregard for the public policy merits of many legislative initiatives underscores that today’s veto list is more about politics than sound fiscal policy. It is unfortunate that the messaging strategy needed to achieve the Governor’s political agenda comes at the expense of the most vulnerable people in our state.”

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