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Florida House of Representatives**

# THE MAYFIELD MINUTE

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Florida's Old and New Capitols

**T**he 2012 Legislative Session began last week and we are already working hard on the issues facing our state. In this issue of the Mayfield Minute, I provide an update on the budget from Speaker Cannon. In next week's issue, I will provide an update on the redistricting process.

I always enjoy hearing from my local constituents and if you are in Tallahassee, please stop by my office for a visit. I encourage you to stay engaged in this process and please let me know your thoughts on important issues.

If you are having problems with a State Agency or need assistance with an issue please contact my district office at 772-778-5077; or you can also call toll free at 866-957-7289.

## STAN MAYFIELD BIOREFINERY PLANT DEDICATION



It was an honor for me and my family to be at the Stan Mayfield Biorefinery Plant dedication January 9th in Perry Florida. Agricultural leaders and officials from the University of Florida, UF's Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, Buckeye Technologies Inc. and state government were on hand for the event. The facility will be operated as a UF/IFAS satellite laboratory researching the use of inedible plant material to produce fuel ethanol.

*UF/IFAS photo by Tyler L. Jon*

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A MESSAGE FROM SPEAKER CANNON



Once again, the Legislature will be called upon to respond to the challenge of a budget shortfall exceeding \$1 billion for FY 2012-13. Although this will not be easy, we have a proven track record of responsible budgeting, and our state's fiscal situation is improved from recent years. Economic conditions are stabilizing; last week, the Revenue Estimating Conference issued an essentially unchanged General Revenue estimate from its fall forecast. In developing allocations, we have carefully analyzed the funding of each program area. We have endeavored to prioritize the most essential functions of state government.

I want to specifically draw your attention to public school funding. Enrollment in our public schools has increased while local school revenues have sharply decreased. These two factors alone create a shortfall of nearly half a billion dollars. Our analysis and prioritization with respect to K-12 education funding mirror those of Governor Scott. We have funded K-12 with an allocation exceeding \$1 billion in new state funding to the Florida Education Finance Program.

The House allocations reflect the following strategies and principles:

1. The House budget will prioritize the delivery of services to people (education, health care, and public safety) over the purchase of things (transportation, general government, and the environment).
2. The House budget will prioritize critical needs and develop realistic, achievable options to balance our budget.
3. The House budget will not raise taxes or fees. In order to foster economic recovery, the House includes an allocation to the Finance & Tax Committee for tax relief.
4. The House budget will prioritize K-12 education. This area will receive the greatest percentage of the General Revenue allocation as well as the greatest increase in funding.
5. The House budget will not adopt strategies to control Medicaid spending that result in cost shifts toward the other aspects of our state-funded health care infrastructure.
6. The House budget will not revise adult sentencing policies, change inmate release schedules, or take any action that jeopardizes the long-term safety of the public to save money in the current fiscal year.
7. The House budget will provide sufficient reserves to weather fiscal forecast fluctuations and preserve our bond ratings.