

February 21, 2017



The Honorable Carlos Trujillo
Chairman
House Appropriations Committee
418 The Capitol
402 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1300

Dear Chairman Trujillo:

On behalf of the 1300 members of the Greater Tampa Chamber of Commerce, I encourage you to vote against HB 7005 and instead work to find viable opportunities that create high-skilled, high-wage jobs that make a significant capital investment for our state. In today's highly competitive market, the states and cities that maintain funding to attract business and fund travel promotion programs have benefited greatly from the investment. If this bill passes, Florida will fall behind surrounding states whom we compete against every day to attract new businesses and tourist dollars.

While we understand that there have been issues with both Enterprise Florida and Visit Florida and that the current model of operation is not an acceptable use of state funding, a complete elimination of both programs will not fix the problems that have occurred. A thoughtful plan to continue to provide opportunities and jobs should be in place including providing acceptable funding prior to any vote of elimination of Enterprise Florida and Visit Florida.

A yes vote today does not continue the conversation; it stops the conversation completely. The vote could potentially threaten the jobs of countless Floridians who look for new career opportunities and for those whose livelihood depends on Florida's successful tourism industry. These are the people who will be impacted the most, not those who work in Tallahassee.

Florida has long enjoyed the distinction of being a top destination to live, work and play, and it is important that our elected leaders continue to work to make sure that the state remains strong. We encourage the Florida House and the Florida Senate to work together to come up with an acceptable solution that will continue to attract new businesses and maintain and grow the vibrant tourism industry that makes Florida great.

I respectfully request that the House Appropriations Committee vote against HB 7005 and vote for the future of Florida.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bob Rohrlack". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Bob Rohrlack, CCE
President, & CEO

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