



# FLORIDA RESTAURANT & LODGING ASSOCIATION

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May 11, 2010

The Honorable Charlie Crist  
Office of Governor Charlie Crist  
State of Florida  
The Capitol  
400 S. Monroe St.  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0001

Subject: 'FLORIDA IS OPEN FOR BUSINESS' – A MARKETING CAMPAIGN

Dear Governor Crist:

Florida's foodservice and lodging business is crashing as a result of the BP Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill. Our hoteliers and restaurateurs all along Florida's coast (particularly in Florida's Panhandle) are suffering massive cancellations, and the phones have stopped ringing. Restaurant seats are empty. Our members are concerned about the very survival of their businesses.

It is imperative that word quickly spread in every possible way that Florida Is Open for Business. FRLA is working towards a marketing plan to initiate economic recovery to Florida's foodservice and lodging industry that will include electronic, television, radio, outdoor advertising and print media. For this to be possible, however, we need the help of the State of Florida. We are requesting funds to help our members from a trust fund paid by our members. The Hotels & Restaurants Trust Fund is funded entirely via the licensing fees of all foodservice and lodging licensees and currently has a surplus of \$12 million.

FRLA requests \$3 million for each of the 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 fiscal years to fund this marketing plan. FRLA will work with its members and media partners to match every dollar from the Trust Fund. An investment of \$3 million would provide at least \$6 million in documented value to the industry. Over the next 15 months this would create a marketing outreach worth \$12 million for the \$6 million investment from the Trust Fund. FRLA would require that any reimbursements received from BP go back to the Trust Fund.

Please approve this urgent and time-sensitive request for funding so that we can begin to immediately execute this positive marketing plan to provide aid to Florida's hospitality industry. In these already challenging economic times, and now with an internationally publicized oil spill in the Gulf on top of it, Florida's hospitality industry is at great risk. We must work together to ensure the economic survival of Florida's hotels, restaurants and their more than 947,000 employees in their time of need.

Sincerely,

Carol B. Dover, FMP  
President-CEO

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