



March 31, 2010

The Honorable Jeff Atwater
The Florida Senate
409 Capitol
404 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1100

Dear Senate President Atwater:

The Greater Tampa Chamber of Commerce fully supports the continued funding of our state's higher education institutions in conjunction with the Board of Governor's "New Florida" initiative with an emphasis on the University of South Florida, one of the top research universities in the state and a large economic engine in our community.

The Greater Tampa Chamber of Commerce understands the need to create a balanced budget and believes that continued funding, without drastic cuts, has an important impact to the business community by preparing our students for our area's 21st Century workforce needs. We also understand that creating a highly skilled workforce will have an immeasurable impact on the business community and enhance our community's standing and ability to remain globally competitive in the ever expanding global marketplace.

We all share the same core beliefs about our future and the importance of higher education funding. For this reason, the Greater Tampa Chamber of Commerce will continue to pledge its support for the funding that our state's higher education institutions so desperately need, especially in these times of economic uncertainty.

We sincerely hope that you will make this a priority during this legislative session. Thank you for all that you do for the communities across the state of Florida.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chuck Sykes".

Chuck Sykes, Chair
(*Sykes Enterprises, Inc.*)

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bob Rohrlack, Jr.".

Robert J. Rohrlack, Jr., CEcD
President and CEO

CC: State Senator Alexander, State Senator Lynn, Hillsborough County Legislative Delegation