



Florida House of Representatives

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House Republicans rush to cut schools and seniors

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. – Attempts by Florida House Democrats to avoid drastic budget cuts to public schools and seniors are being rejected this week by House Republicans who refuse to consider other options for resolving Florida's \$2.3 billion budget shortfall.

House Democratic Leader Franklin Sands (D-Weston) and Democratic Leader Pro Tempore Geraldine Thompson (D-Orlando) are urging Floridians to call and write House Republicans to voice concerns about the cuts.

Democrats are seeking a broad discussion of budget options during this special session of the Legislature. But Republican leaders are refusing to allow even a debate on alternatives, such as a proposed increase in a cigarette user fee and the closing of a tax loophole concerning certain real estate transactions.

House Republicans are eager to cut and run from Tallahassee. This week, Republicans have voted against public debate and have instead proposed to:

- Slash K-12 public school spending by nearly half-billion dollars;
- Reduce nursing home payments by \$73.5 million; and
- Cut higher education spending by \$120 million.

“These Republican budget cuts will impact every Floridian, working families, and our youngest and most vulnerable citizens,” said Leader Sands. “The effect of these cuts will be felt for years to come.”

“Despite their rhetoric about having an open dialogue, the majority party members aren’t allowing budget options on the table,” said Leader Pro Tempore Thompson. “House Republicans are proposing harmful cuts to education, health care, transportation and environmental programs. Why are they so afraid to allow the Legislature to debate better budget fixes?”

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