



**RICK SCOTT**  
GOVERNOR

February 27, 2013

The Honorable Barack H. Obama  
President of the United States  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, Northwest  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Obama:

I am writing today on behalf of Florida's more than 19 million citizens to strongly urge you to lead America in averting the fiscal crisis that will result from Sequestration's forced budget cuts, set to go into effect Friday, March 1, 2013. As the chief executive of this country, it is imperative that your administration do the hard work necessary to make targeted spending cuts that create efficiencies while continuing to protect critical services.

If your administration *fails to do its job* to responsibly manage the budget, thousands of Floridians will *lose their jobs* under sequestration. There is no doubt that budget cuts must be made at the national level, just as we do here at the state level. But, it is the responsibility of the administration to administer spending reductions responsibly. Instead of cutting with a scalpel, your sequestration process is a meat cleaver.

To be clear, Florida is one of America's most defense centric states. We host three unified combatant commands, 20 major Air Force and Navy installations, and very large segments of the nation's defense industry which annually contributes over \$73.4 billion and more than 754,000 defense industry jobs to our economy.

The impacts on Florida's military installations and defense industries will be severe under sequestration. Our immediate concerns include dramatic reductions to our National Guard, which threatens our ability to respond to wildfires this spring and hurricanes this summer.

**Northwest Florida** (Panhandle region) - the military directly and indirectly represents about 35% of the region's economic activity.

The Honorable Barack Obama  
February 27, 2013  
Page Two

- Reduce aviation maintenance, diminishing the Naval Aviation pilot training programs.
- Reduce civilian workforce for the Navy and the Air Force by 20% furloughs.
- Cancel the 2013 Navy Blue Angel air shows.

**Northeast** (Jacksonville area) – a region which is 17% economically dependent upon the military and the defense industry and the home of a significant US Navy presence.

- Cancel aircraft maintenance for this year, reducing the quantity of aircraft available for operations.
- Result in the failure to transfer three ships (USS New York, USS Iwo Jima and USS Fort McHenry) of an Amphibious Ready Group.

**Central Florida** (Orlando, Tampa) – the host to US Central Command and US Special Operations Command at MacDill Air Force Base.

- NASA: Nearly \$900 million in cuts, including funds to help private companies build capsules to send astronauts to the International Space Station.
- Cancel the Commercial Crew Program, would almost certainly mean layoffs at companies like Boeing, Lockheed Martin, and Sierra Nevada.

**South Florida** – Home of the US Southern Command and a key Naval Air Station.

- Reduce Navy in-flight training by 44%.

It is imperative that your administration lead the country to a position of economic strength by reducing spending and borrowing, and paying down debt. We have done that here in Florida. Over the last two years we have cut taxes, right-sized our budget and paid down state debt for two years in a row. Our state has now added around 200,000 private sector jobs, and our unemployment rate is almost down to the national average. Because we made the hard choices our economy is growing again and our budget this year reflects the first time we have not faced a shortfall in six years.

The Honorable Barack Obama  
February 27, 2013  
Page Three

I encourage you to replace the impending and disastrous defense cuts with reductions in targeted areas to make government more efficient. Now is the time for leadership.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Rick Scott", with a large, stylized initial "R" and a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Rick Scott  
Governor