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**"AMENDMENT 4" LIKELY TO COST 267,247 FLORIDA JOBS, MAJOR ECONOMIC STUDY SAYS**

*Florida Business and Labor leaders come together to oppose amendment; officially launch "No on 4" campaign*

(Tallahassee, FL - January 26, 2010) Florida business, civic and labor leaders gathered in Tallahassee on Tuesday to hear the report of a top Florida economist showing that Amendment 4 - a proposed change to the state constitution - would lead to heavy job loss and higher costs for Floridians.

"The losses of Florida jobs under the 'Most Likely Scenario' are very high," reported Tony Villamil, economist for *Washington Economics Group*, the organization that conducted the study. "Amendment 4's passage will have potentially devastating consequences to Florida's economy at a time when the economic situation at both the state and national levels is uncertain and at a time when attracting new businesses to Florida is essential for the future recovery and prosperity of the state and its residents."

The study considers a "Modest" and a "Most Likely" economic impact scenario. The study does not predict a "Worst Case" scenario. According to the study:

**Under both scenarios, Florida's economic dynamism is lost. This would permanently impact the economic growth potential for Florida, causing a steady decline in the standard of living of all Florida residents. Further, permanently impacting employment and growth within major industries and job-generating activities.**

"If you like the recession, you'll love Amendment 4," said Mark Wilson, President of the Florida Chamber of Commerce. "This amendment will cost jobs, hurt taxpayers and make it more expensive to live in Florida."

In an unprecedented show of unity, labor and business leaders agreed to jointly oppose Amendment 4.

"It's not too often that a union leader and a business leader agree on something," said Frank Ortis, President of the Florida State Council of Machinists and Aerospace Workers. "But we can all see how much Amendment 4 would hurt Florida's working families. And we are working together to defeat it."

Ortis and Wilson serve together on the board of *Citizens for Lower Taxes and a Stronger Economy, Inc.*, the group formed to defeat Amendment 4. That organization is chaired by former South Bay Mayor and National League of Cities President Clarence Anthony.

"No single item on the 2010 ballot has the potential to weaken Florida's economy and hurt Florida's taxpayers more than Amendment 4," said Anthony. "If passed, this amendment will trap Florida's communities in gridlock."

The economic study indicates that Amendment 4 will also have a major impact on Florida taxpayers. According to the study:

**Additionally, Florida's tax revenues would sharply slow as a result of Amendment 4's passage as fewer commercial and residential properties will be developed due to the increased costs and uncertainty associated with each comprehensive land-use plan referendum. This would force local and state governments to either raise taxes or cut services. Public schools, public safety and local health care services would suffer from both the direct impact of Amendment 4 (delay construction until the next election) and the indirect impact of fewer tax revenues from which to fund needed operations and capital investments.**

If Amendment 4 is adopted, Florida would become the guinea pig for a measure that has never been adopted in any other state in the country. However, the small Florida town of St. Pete Beach adopted a local version of Amendment 4 in 2006. Since then, the town has seen fewer jobs, higher tax rates and endless litigation at taxpayer expense.

"Our experiment in Amendment 4 has turned St. Pete Beach into a battleground for special interests," said Ward Friszolowski, the former Mayor of St. Pete Beach. "And at a time of economic hardship, it has caused extraordinary damage to our economy."

"I ask the voters of Florida to learn more about St. Pete Beach-- and to learn from our mistakes," said Friszolowski. "Amendment 4 supporters promise that they'll give you a 'say on growth.' Don't believe it. Don't let them do to Florida what they already did to my hometown."

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