

Principles for Prosperity

A Road Map for the Future of Florida



As Floridians come together (figuratively) to begin the long but necessary process of restarting what had become one of the single most successful economic engines in the United States, it is our hope that we remember the principles and strategies that made Sunshine State a leader in job creation, employment, and prosperity.

We applaud Governor DeSantis, the Cabinet, and the Legislature for the efforts they have undertaken over the past 60 days to address both the health and economic impacts of what truly defines a “black swan” event. While expecting perfection would be beyond unrealistic, their actions have helped make the overall toll of the pandemic less than it might otherwise had been.

There is much to accomplish in getting us back, and Governor DeSantis has taken the first step in establishing the Reopen Florida Task Force to begin the journey. As the task force commences, we would like to offer the following principles to help guide discussions and frame decision-making for the best possible future for our great state.

I Empower free markets and private enterprise

While the circumstances are certainly unique, the fundamentals of our economy are no different than they were prior to the pandemic. We generate prosperity through the power of free markets, free enterprise, and capitalism. Whether healthcare, education, or tourism, our economic recovery will be stronger and faster through empowering free markets and private enterprise.

II Embrace deregulation wherever practical

We have seen the terrible effects of overregulation brought to bear in the pandemic. Shortages of equipment are a direct byproduct of overbearing and onerous regulations that stifled production. Florida has come a long way in eliminating unnecessary regulations. A question should be constantly asked – if a regulation or rule has been waived in a time of crisis, was it truly necessary in the first place?

III Protect Floridians’ rights – both civil and property

Looking across the U.S., there are examples aplenty of heavy-handed edicts from state and local officials that serve no purpose other than curtailing civil liberties or infringing on the private property rights of citizens. As we begin to examine both the tasks ahead as well as what we learn from the past, we should ensure that any future responses balance the health and societal needs with the inalienable rights established by our Founders and enshrined in our governing documents.

IV Unleash and enable the power of innovation

Innovation has aided us in the pandemic response. Social media, technology equipment, Internet video conferencing, virtual learning, viral campaigns to keep small business afloat, and other innovative efforts have made social distancing more bearable than it otherwise might have been. Recognize that these advances come about not at the directive of government, but through the power of entrepreneurs and in many cases via public-private-partnerships. Foster innovation. Challenge preconceived beliefs about education, business, and the role of industries in the state. Let it radically alter the course of our economy. We will reap the rewards.

V Respect the proper roles of the Executive, Legislative, and Judiciary in all efforts

The founders developed a system of checks and balances that outlined our inherent rights and determined what decisions each branch of government is responsible for. The wisdom of the founders has largely been replicated in each state, and Florida should seek to ensure that we continue to respect and build up the proper roles of the executive, the legislature, and our courts in setting agendas, articulating policy, and interpreting laws and the constitution.