



First Day of Fairness

Charlie Crist's First Day as Governor

Charlie understands that in order for Florida's economy to succeed over the long term, we have to make it fairer for the middle class.

Immediately after Governor Crist's inauguration on January 6, 2015, he will walk into the Historic Old Capitol and issue a series of executive orders designed to restore good government, expand opportunity so that every Floridian has a fair shot at success, and make it easier for small businesses to succeed and create jobs. This "First Day of Fairness" will include:

- **An Executive Order addressing Open Government.**

In 2006, Charlie Crist's first official act was to make the Governor's office the most open in Florida history by creating an office dedicated solely to promoting transparency in government. Despite signing an executive order that claimed to "continue to assure full and expeditious compliance with Florida's open government and public records laws,"¹ Rick Scott has done exactly the opposite since his election.

Lloyd Dunkelberger of the Herald-Tribune noted that "Scott's public records policy, while technically adhering to state law, contrasts sharply to that of former Gov. Charlie Crist and other current state executives, who have provided records more promptly and have imposed fewer fees."²

Dunkelberger also pointed out that "Under Scott's rules, it cost more to provide access to 1,100 emails from the governor's communications director than reporters paid for 24,000 pages of emails from another controversial public official, former Gov. Sarah Palin of Alaska."³

Earlier this year, Rick Scott announced that the media and the public must now ask a state employee personally for records of any state business records conducted via private email accounts.⁴ According to the First Amendment Foundation, the policy change effectively cripples the state's public records laws.⁵ In addition, Scott's self-heralded "Sunburst" system, which was designed to give the public access to the emails of top staffers in the Governor's office, has hardly been updated in over a year. Melissa Sellers moved over from the Governor's office to become Scott's campaign

"Already a stark difference is apparent between Gov. Rick Scott's approach to Florida's Sunshine Laws and that of his predecessor, Gov. Charlie Crist, who enthusiastically endorsed open meetings and public records laws."

[Tampa Bay Times editorial, 3/13/11]

manager in January 2014, but more than six months later the “Sunburst” site still listed her as a state employee.^{6,7}

Charlie Crist believes taxpayers have a right to know what is happening in their government without having to jump through hoops or pay exorbitantly for public records. That is why on the day of his inauguration, Charlie’s very first official action will be to reverse Rick Scott’s policies and restore transparency and openness to the Office of the Governor and the state agencies that report to him. This executive order will state that: (1) Official business, whether through private emails or texts, will be deemed public records, and will be retained as required by law. The days of the Governor’s office and his executive agencies conducting business out of the sunshine, through political appointees’ personal email accounts, are over. (2) Agencies will be directed to produce public records at the lowest cost possible and will only charge for labor in excess of two hours, and (3) the Governor’s Office of Open Government will be directed to advocate on behalf of the public in exercising its right to full and expeditious access to public records. It will not work to obstruct or hinder the public’s access.

- **An Executive Order to support Florida businesses and Florida employees.** Charlie believes that contracts funded by our own tax dollars should go to Florida companies and Florida residents.

On his first day in office, Governor Crist will issue an executive order instructing his executive agencies to improve their contractor selection processes, so that state projects go to Florida businesses to the extent allowed by law. He’ll also ensure that those contractors make every attempt to hire Floridians for the work they perform for the state. For the agencies under his purview, Gov. Crist will require contract provisions, consistent with legislation he signed as Governor, that (1) require state contractors to hire Florida workers whenever possible, and (2) require reporting on nonresident hiring.

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- **An Executive Order addressing Equal Pay for Women.** Charlie believes that equal pay for women is not just an issue of fairness – it is an essential part of ensuring economic security for Florida’s families and growing our state’s economy.

Unfortunately, in many cases women continue to earn much less than men for the same work. In Florida, women on average are paid 83 cents for every dollar paid to men.⁸ Over the course of a year, a typical woman working full-time in Florida receives \$7,128 less on average than a male counterpart.⁹

On average, women in Florida are paid \$7,128 less per year than men for the same type of work.

Rick Scott won’t say whether he supports equal pay for women, but Charlie has been very clear in stating that he’ll do everything he can to eliminate the wage gap between women and men.

In fact, on his first day as Governor, Charlie will instruct agencies to adopt new procedures that seek to eliminate wage discrimination within companies that do business with Florida’s state government. To do this, he will sign an executive order that: (1) requires state contractors working with his executive agencies to certify they

will not retaliate against employees who share salary information with each other, and (2) directs his executive agencies to establish new procedures requiring its contractors to report wage data – including information on gender and race – to the agencies within the Governor’s purview.

- **An Executive Order establishing a Minimum Wage for State Contractors.** Charlie believes that Florida’s workers deserve a fair wage for their hard work, and he is not alone. A recent poll showed that 73% of Floridians agree that we should raise the minimum wage.¹⁰

While Rick Scott says the thought of raising the minimum wage makes him “cringe”,¹¹ Charlie knows that raising the pay of low-wage workers improves their productivity, their morale, and the quality of their work, while at the same time reducing turnover and supervisory costs. In addition, the increase in low-wage workers’ incomes will provide a boost to Florida’s economy.¹²

Shortly after his inauguration ceremony has concluded, Governor Crist will issue an executive order to establish a minimum wage of \$10.10 for contractors working with the state agencies that report to him.

- **An Executive Order affirming Equal Opportunity and prohibiting discrimination in Florida’s state government.** Governor Crist believes that no Floridian should have to endure discrimination or harassment at work or when applying for a job. Federal laws protect Floridians against discrimination on the basis of race, gender, age, religion and other categories, but there are no such protections for members of the LGBT community.

A recent national study found that one-third of LGBT employees have been harassed or have faced discrimination in the workplace.¹³ Although 73% of Floridians believe that LGBT people should be treated fairly at work, many are surprised to learn there are no laws – from either the federal government or the State of Florida – that explicitly protect LGBT employees from unfair workplace discrimination.¹⁴ Not surprisingly, Rick Scott has not taken a position on proposals before the Florida Legislature to protect LGBT employees, nor has he lifted a finger to help pass these bipartisan proposals.

Nearly 90% of Fortune 500 companies already include protections for sexual orientation in their workplace policies.¹⁵ In fact, many of these same companies are pushing Florida to enact these protections. It is time for Florida’s government to do what is right.

During his first day in office, Governor Crist will add protections for LGBT workers by signing an executive order that will prohibit any form of discrimination within his state agencies or their contractors on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity. The order will also reaffirm protections against discrimination based on race, sex, color, national origin, military service or affiliation, religion, age, disability, or pregnancy. He will order the Department of Management Services and all agencies under his purview

“When I hear a politician say that we have to raise the minimum wage so working families can make ends meet, I cringe...”
Gov. Rick Scott, as reported by the *Tampa Bay Times*, 1/8/2014

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to adhere to the order and to update all management, contracting and hiring practices for his executive agencies.

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- ¹ Executive Order 11-03, http://www.flgov.com/wp-content/uploads/orders/2011/11-03-ethics_9-26.pdf.
 - ² <http://politics.heraldtribune.com/2011/06/30/scott-relationship-with-media-includes-costs-delays-for-records/>
 - ³ <http://www.theledger.com/article/20110630/NEWS/110639955?p=1&tc=pg>
 - ⁴ <http://news.wgcu.org/post/governor-changes-public-record-policy>
 - ⁵ <http://news.wgcu.org/post/governor-changes-public-record-policy>
 - ⁶ <http://www.tampabay.com/blogs/the-buzz-florida-politics/scott-names-sellers-thrasher-leaders-of-campaign-team/2161462>
 - ⁷ <http://www.scribd.com/doc/235322327/Sunburst-Screenshot>
 - ⁸ <http://www.nationalpartnership.org/research-library/workplace-fairness/fair-pay/florida-women-and-the-wage-gap.pdf>
 - ⁹ <http://www.nationalpartnership.org/research-library/workplace-fairness/fair-pay/florida-women-and-the-wage-gap.pdf>
 - ¹⁰ http://articles.orlandosentinel.com/2014-01-30/business/os-minimum-wage-poll-florida-20140130_1_minimum-wage-florida-voters-florida-poll
 - ¹¹ <http://www.tampabay.com/blogs/the-buzz-florida-politics/democrats-push-for-increase-of-floridas-minimum-wage/2160194>
 - ¹² <http://www.epi.org/publication/raising-federal-minimum-wage-to-1010/>
 - ¹³ <http://www.eqfl.org/maap>
 - ¹⁴ <http://www.eqfl.org/maap>
 - ¹⁵ <http://www.hrc.org/resources/entry/employment-non-discrimination-act>