



Mailing Address: P.O. Box 1459, Tallahassee, Florida 32302-1459

Phone: (850) 224-3907 • Fax: (850) 681-2075 • www.fhca.org

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Ed Towey (850) 224-6242

Florida Voters: Don't You Dare Cut Nursing Home Funding!

– Floridians of all political stripes say state broke its promise to nursing home patients and want nursing home funding to be adequate, no matter what –

Tallahassee – A Public Opinion Strategies statewide opinion survey shows Florida voters strongly believe funding for nursing home care should not be cut because it will most impact the frail, elderly patients in them who have nowhere else to go. Voters strongly believe legislators must find the necessary funding even if cuts need to be made elsewhere.

“People realize that nursing home care for our parents and grandparents isn’t just another budget line item that gets cut if times get tough,” FHCA Vice Chair Deborah Franklin said. “They recognize that a promise the legislature made to our frail elderly should be kept.”

Key Findings

- ***Florida voters don't believe that it's "fair" to cut state funding for nursing homes while being required to meet previously mandated staffing requirements.*** Fully 56% of Florida voters say that it's *not* fair to ask nursing homes to meet the current mandates. Voters across the ideological spectrum – conservatives, moderates and liberals – all agree that this is not fair to nursing homes.
- ***Two-thirds of voters believe the state has broken its promise to nursing homes in the state.*** Fully 68% of Florida voters believe “the state of Florida has broken its promise to nursing homes in the state by not providing the funding that was committed in 2001.”
- ***Voters believe it's the nursing home patients who will suffer.*** The vast majority (85%) agrees “those who will suffer from these state budget cuts are not the nursing homes, but the patients in these nursing homes.” Only 11% believe “nursing home owners” will be most impacted by the funding cuts.
- ***Even though money is tight in the state, Florida voters believe the state cannot let seniors down.*** Florida voters overwhelmingly (86%) agree that “Money is tight in Florida, but we cannot let our seniors down. The Governor and state legislature need to make sure that nursing homes receive the necessary funding to maintain the level of care they provide.” Most Florida voters (61%) also agree that “even though the legislature is facing difficult choices, they should maintain funding for Florida's nursing homes, even if they have to cut elsewhere.”

(More)

Street Address: 307 West Park Avenue, Tallahassee, Florida 32301-1427

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• ***Voters across party lines agree that the state “has a responsibility” to provide necessary funding for nursing homes.*** Seventy-six percent of Florida voters agree “the state has a responsibility to ensure that it finds the necessary funding to maintain the level of care provided to the residents of nursing homes.” Among Democrats, Republicans and Independents, the sentiment is shared by 85, 67 and 75 percent, respectively.

“Florida voters readily realize it’s the elderly who will be most harmed,” Franklin said. “They want legislators to keep their promise and give the nursing homes the funding necessary to serve their patients.”

The POS survey was commissioned by “Our Florida Promise” (www.ourfloridapromise.org) an FHCA-formed 501(c)(4) educational organization created to remind legislators and citizens of their responsibility to Florida’s “Greatest Generation.” The survey was conducted March 30-31, 2008, and included 800 likely Florida voters. The survey has a margin of error of $\pm 3.76\%$ in 95 out of 100 cases.

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(Go to www.ourfloridapromise.org and click on “New Poll” for more details. All FHCA press releases are found on www.fhca.org under “What’s New.”)