



**RICK SCOTT**  
GOVERNOR

February 18, 2013

Chairman Dean Colson  
Colson Hicks Eidson  
255 Alhambra Circle, Penthouse  
Coral Gables, Florida 33134

Dear Chairman Colson:

As Governor, the Cabinet and I are often asked to vote on whether to approve bond issuances for university construction projects. When reviewing potential bond deals, my view is simple: borrowing must be thoroughly scrutinized because overreliance on debt will push the cost of a university education beyond the reach of many Florida families.

I know that universities share these concerns and are constantly evaluating ways to reduce costs and improve quality. This includes working together to determine the need for additional facilities and the best way to finance them. In particular, universities and the Board of Governors have a joint responsibility to critically evaluate and justify the use of debt as a financing tool. Quantitative metrics must be used to ensure that each dollar borrowed is essential to our universities' core mission of educating tomorrow's leaders.

Accordingly, projects financed through the issuance of bonds, certificates of participation, long-term leases, or similar contractual arrangements must clearly provide tangible benefits to students. Before advancing such projects, universities should:

- Review quantitative metrics justifying the need for construction;
- Calculate a return-on-investment for revenue-generating projects and other appropriate measures for non-revenue-generating projects; and
- Assess whether the private sector can offer a comparable alternative at a lower cost.

Further, in order to enhance accountability, those using debt to finance construction should compare the projections used during the evaluation and approval process with the actual results achieved. These policies should apply whether facilities are financed directly by universities or through direct support organizations.

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Since taking office, I have consistently called on universities to lower costs and increase efficiencies. I believe that our goal of ensuring that college remains both affordable and high-quality is achievable if universities focus on their core mission and on creating operational efficiencies.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Rick Scott", with a large, stylized flourish at the beginning.

Rick Scott  
Governor

cc: Chancellor Frank Brogan, Florida Board of Governors