



CHARLIE CRIST
Governor

SECRETARY MICHAEL W. SOLE
Florida Department of Environmental Protection

DAVID HALSTEAD
State Coordinating Officer

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
SEPTEMBER 15 2010

CONTACT:
GOVERNOR'S PRESS OFFICE, (850) 488-5394

Governor Crist Announces “Back to the Beach” Tourism Advertising Campaign

~ Directs Department of Business and Professional Regulation to assist restaurant and lodging association ~

www.ShareALittleSunshine.org

TALLAHASSEE – As part of his ongoing focus on Florida’s economic recovery in the wake of the Deepwater Horizon oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico, Governor Charlie Crist today announced \$700,000 to speed the economic recovery for Florida’s hospitality industry affected by the oil spill. The Department of Business and Professional Regulation will return to the Florida Restaurant and Lodging Association funds originally intended to support the hospitality industry for use in an enhanced advertising of upcoming coastal events. The campaign will work to attract potential visitors who may have postponed, or previously cancelled, their travel to Florida.

“Florida’s tourism industry is vital to the Sunshine State’s economic security, and we must do all we can to help the businesses harmed by this summer’s oil spill,” Governor Crist said. “I applaud our dedicated and friendly hoteliers and restaurateurs for their work to create a great getaway experience for traveling Floridians, as well as out-of-state and international visitors.”

The 10,000 members of the Florida Restaurant and Lodging Association (FRLA) will lend their expertise in grassroots marketing to the advertising and marketing efforts of VISIT FLORIDA and the local tourist development councils to promote local and regional events during the upcoming months. The advertising campaign, dubbed “Back to the Beach – ‘Fall Back into Summer,’” will encourage participation in fishing tournaments, concerts, a songwriter’s festival and seafood festivals to promote Florida seafood.

“This is incredible news for Florida hoteliers and restaurateurs as we work to bring visitors back to the Sunshine State – particularly to the Northwest Florida region,” said Carol Dover, president and CEO of the Florida Restaurant and Lodging Association. “Thank you to Governor Crist for his leadership and in supporting this ‘Back to the Beach’ campaign. This is a great time for tourists and residents alike to discover the beauty of Northwest Florida during the fall season.”

FRLA will also work to expand VISIT FLORIDA's 'Share a Little Sunshine' campaign, which offers Florida residents online tools to easily extend a personal invitation to out-of-state friends and family, encouraging them to visit the Sunshine State. By listing the 'Share a Little Sunshine' Web site, www.ShareALittleSunshine.org, on restaurant receipts, table tents and signs, Floridians and visitors will learn how they can send custom e-mail postcards to friends and family directly from the site. Each invitation carries information about special offers in the sender's geographic area. The 'Share a Little Sunshine' Web site will also promote deals eligible at coastal hotels.