



May 31, 2017

The Honorable Rick Scott
Office of the Governor
The Capitol
400 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0001

Re: VETO REQUEST CS/CS/SB 374 Postsecondary Education

Dear Governor Scott:

We are writing to respectfully request that you veto CS/CS/SB 374, the postsecondary education bill. As with our earlier request for a veto of HB 7069, our concerns relate only to the lack of transparency in the process by which significant policy decisions regarding Florida's higher education system were decided.

We have a constitutional right of access to legislative meetings during which legislative action is discussed, Governor. From what we've learned, CS/CS/SB 374 was decided in secrecy and seemingly in direct violation of the right of access to legislative meetings guaranteed under Article III, s. 4(e), Fla. Con. The secretive process precluded any opportunity for public oversight or input on major changes to Florida's to postsecondary education policy. We are extremely concerned that not only were university and higher education officials shut out, but also legislators from key committees were unaware of changes made to this critically important bill.

We have said this before and it bears repeating: Our elected leaders must comply with the constitution and uphold our Florida Sunshine laws that are the benchmark of good government.

We ask that you veto CS/CS/SB 374 and allow the Legislature to come back to Tallahassee to reconsider the education policy in a more open and transparent manner during a special session.

Sincerely,

Barbara A. Petersen, President

Cc: Jon Kaney, General Counsel, First Amendment Foundation
Samuel Morley, General Counsel, Florida Press Association
Gil Thelen, Executive Director, Florida Society of News Editors

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