



EDUCATE. ADVOCATE. CONNECT.

2020 Legislative Communication Series

"International Trade"

July 7, 2020

Dear Florida Legislator,

With more than 95 percent of the world's population and 80 percent of the world's purchasing power outside the United States, future economic growth and jobs for Florida will increasingly depend on expanding U.S. trade and investment opportunities in the global marketplace. Over the last decade, the total value of Florida's merchandise trade (exports plus imports) has nearly doubled, reaching \$153.6 Billion in 2019. Florida companies act as key suppliers to buyers in dozens of countries worldwide, shipping goods made in Florida, elsewhere in the United States, or in another country. With 14 deepwater ports, Florida is an excellent gateway for non-U.S. companies selling their goods to the U.S. market.

Florida is an exporting powerhouse, accounting for \$72.3 Billion in goods that were shipped through its borders in 2019. The state ranks 7th in the U.S. for exporting \$56 Billion worth of goods produced in the state.

According to *The Business Roundtable* and Florida Chamber of Commerce:

- International trade – including exports and imports of goods/services – supports 2.4 million jobs in Florida.
- One in five Florida jobs is supported by international trade.
- Jobs in Florida's trade and logistics industries pay 30 percent higher wages than the state average.

Continued strong support from the Florida legislature is critical to help Florida companies expand market opportunities and maximize job growth related to international trade. **Call to Action:**

- **Support funding for export-assistance:** examples include one on one counseling, export sales lead programs, and overseas trade missions. These programs are offered through Enterprise Florida (EFI) in partnership with the Florida SBDC Network and give businesses a risk-free chance to explore trade opportunities in the global market.
- **Support Florida's international development offices:** EFI maintains international development offices in Jacksonville, Tallahassee, Pensacola, Tampa, Orlando, Miami and Palm Beach. The purpose of these offices is to help Florida companies break into global markets and increase market share.
- **Support Florida's foreign representatives' network:** This network, managed by EFI, provides vital leads for foreign direct investment and prospect recruitment initiatives.
- **Support the development of state level business incentives to attract high wage jobs and capital investment in Florida's Targeted Industry Sectors. This will further diversify Florida's economy and create economic resiliency against natural disasters and global pandemics.**

International Trade is a "big business" in Florida. We appreciate your leadership and support to keep FDI growing in our great state.

Sincerely,