



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

November 15, 2011

CONTACT: Bernie Navarro

(305) 502-8511

bernie@benworthcapital.com

Latin Builders Association Supports Destination Resorts Legislation

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. - The Latin Builders Association (LBA), the largest Hispanic construction association in the nation, held a press conference today in the Capitol rotunda to announce their support of destination resorts legislation put forth by Sen. Elyn Bogdanoff (R-Ft. Lauderdale) and Rep. Erik Fresen (R-Miami). Both lawmakers were also present to help underscore the job-creating benefits of their legislation. Among other legislative actions, the Destination Resorts Act would allot a maximum of three licenses for the creation and operation of destination resorts if approved by lawmakers. This would provide an influx of construction industry jobs to help bring back to life one of the hardest hit industries in the state.

"We are here to today to speak on behalf of the Latin Builders Association's 750 Florida business members. LBA is proud to stand with Sen. Bogdanoff and Rep. Fresen, whose destination resorts measure will help alleviate the severe economic challenges facing our members and the rest of the state," said Bernie Navarro, president of LBA. "The economic struggle has been massive and only a massive undertaking could possibly help our state recover. This is exactly the massive undertaking that Florida needs to get back on its feet. The Act requires that each destination resort invest \$2 billion into the construction and development of each complex. That's a \$6 billion dollar investment in our industry alone, and that's only a portion of the dollars spent on creation and operation of destination resorts."

The ultimate creation of three destination resorts in Florida would bring needed employment opportunities numbering in the hundreds of thousands in a variety of industries, including more than 45,000 construction industry jobs during the initial building of the resorts. Additionally, thousands of permanent, contractual maintenance jobs would be created through the operation of each destination resort.

"Currently, the construction industry has a statewide unemployment rate of 20 percent and has been on a downward slope dropping 52 percent from peak employment years in 2005 and 2006," said Noelia Moreno, immediate past president of LBA. "This Act puts Florida businesses in the position to be the largest job creators in the state's recent history. This legislation has been dubbed "the game-changer" and it really is just that. This is why we have traveled to the capitol today to voice our support."

The LBA encompasses builders, developers, contractors, architects, engineers, plumbers, electricians and tradesman concentrated in the South Florida region who would immediately benefit from the development of destination resorts. LBA member companies receive hundreds of job inquiries each year from unemployed Floridians. Many of the construction industry's talented workers and business owners have left Florida in search of construction work in other states and out of the country. LBA members realize the significant impact three destination resorts will on Florida's construction industry and the potential contract work that would accompany these projects.

###

Established in 1971, The Latin Builders Association® (LBA) is the largest Hispanic construction association in the United States. The association, a non-profit organization that encompasses a vast array of individuals and companies related to South Florida's vibrant construction industry, embodies the interests of builders, developers, contractors, architects, engineers, plumbers, electricians and tradesmen. We strive to provide a vital forum for discussion, networking, training/development, and representation at local and state level. To learn more visit www.LBAorg.com.