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**FLORIDA BUSINESS AND NONPROFIT GROUPS SPEAK OUT
FOLLOWING CAT FUND ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING**

Tallahassee, Fla. – Leaders from statewide business and nonprofit groups voiced their opinion following a meeting of the Florida Hurricane Catastrophe Fund Advisory Council. Based on the conclusion that the state may have a nearly \$1.8 billion shortfall this upcoming storm season and will be unable to fill its obligations, the Council is requesting Gov. Rick Scott and other state officials borrow money to shore up the Cat Fund.

Bill Newton, Executive Director, Florida Consumer Action Network

“Yesterday’s meeting of the Florida Hurricane Catastrophe Fund Advisory Council concluded something we have known to be true for months – Florida consumers and the financial security of our state are at risk if changes are not made to the Cat Fund. Because the Florida Legislature failed to pass good and necessary legislation this past session and because the Cat Fund’s advisers have determined that it will not be able to issue a sufficient amount of bonds if needed to pay its claims in full after a major hurricane or series of hurricanes, Cat Fund leaders are now left with the task of trying to cobble together financing that will enable claims to be paid. We hope the legislature will get another opportunity to fix the Cat Fund before it is too late.”

Thomas C. Feeney, III, President & Chief Executive Officer, Associated Industries of Florida

“One of the largest threats to Florida’s businesses and economy are the massive, self-implementing hurricane taxes that will follow if a large storm or series of smaller storms make landfall in Florida. Whether or not Gov. Scott and other state officials approve the Cat Fund Advisory Council’s recommendation to borrow additional money to help shore up the fund, this decision will be at the expense of all Floridians. Unless reformed, the Florida Hurricane Catastrophe Fund will continue to be a financial threat to the state’s fledgling economic recovery and to all homeowners, business owners, renters, churches, charities and automobile policyholders.”

Manley Fuller, President, Florida Wildlife Federation

“For years the Florida Wildlife Federation has urged our elected officials to reform the Florida Hurricane Catastrophe Fund. We believe changes will have a positive impact on Florida’s environment as we are opposed to subsidizing homeowners who choose to build in the most hazardous area of the state. The conclusion made by the Florida Hurricane Catastrophe Fund Advisory Council that the Cat Fund will once again come up short of being able to pay its obligations in the wake of the next large storm comes as no surprise to our organization. We, like so many other Florida nonprofits and business organizations, have fought for reform of both the Cat Fund and Citizens Property Insurance Corp. for years, and will continue to do so until these state-run entities are returned back to their original mission as the insurer of last resort.”

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Christian R. Cámara, Director of Florida Insurance Project, The Heartland Institute

“For years the CAT Fund has posed an enormous risk to Florida's economy, and the findings by the CAT Fund's Advisory Council yesterday should serve as yet another wake-up call to the Legislature for meaningful reform. If Florida is affected by a sufficiently bad hurricane season, the CAT Fund will likely impose crushing taxes on every Florida resident and business or worse, will be unable to pay hurricane victims' claims. Both are unacceptable scenarios, and lawmakers should do something about it before it is too late.”

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