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2010-11 BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS EMPHASIZE GOVERNOR CRIST'S SUPPORT FOR VETERANS

~ Supports opening of new 120-bed veterans' nursing home ~

TALLAHASSEE – The Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs (FDVA) receives strong support for Florida's 1.7 million veterans from Governor Charlie Crist's 2010-11 budget recommendations, announced today.

"The governor's recommended budget of \$83 million reflects his commitment to Florida's veterans, their families and survivors," said FDVA Executive Director LeRoy Collins Jr. "The Sunshine State continues to be a leader in providing services and opportunities to those who honorably answered the call to serve our country. In doing so, Florida earned a reputation as one of the most veteran-friendly states in the nation."

Governor Crist's recommended budget for 2010-11 funds quality long-term health care and supports the opening of the state's sixth veterans' nursing home in late 2010. Governor Crist's Fiscal Year 2010-11 recommended budget also includes:

- Start-up costs for the Clyde E. Lassen State Veterans' Nursing Home in St. Augustine, including the hiring of 174 staff members.
- Two additional Licensed Practical Nurses for the FDVA Homes' Program.
- A Capital Improvement Program Plan of \$1,435,000 for maintenance, repairs and contingencies for FDVA's veterans' homes.
- Purchase of new and replacement equipment for the FDVA Homes' Program.

FDVA is responsible for assisting without charge Florida's veterans, their families and survivors by improving their health and economic well-being through quality benefit information, advocacy and education. FDVA will also provide long-term health care services in 2010-11 through six veterans' nursing homes (Daytona Beach, Land O' Lakes, Pembroke Pines, Springfield, Port Charlotte and St. Augustine) and one assisted living facility in Lake City.

For information on FDVA and benefits offered to Florida's veterans, visit www.FloridaVets.org.

For additional details on the Governor's recommended Fiscal Year 2010-11 budget, visit www.MyFlorida.com and click on "The People's Budget," or visit www.ThePeoplesBudget.state.fl.us

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