

A message from Jeff Wright, FEA Director of Public Policy Advocacy

Good afternoon to each of you. I know you are all barely keeping your heads above water and you are trying to do all you can to balance the work. As you know you seldom get an email from me but this is one of the times that I feel compelled to share some thoughts with you. As many of you know I have been doing this Union work in some capacity since 1969... yes, before some of you were even born. Many times over the years I have heard -- and have used the expression "this is the most important election of our lifetime". I would like to outline from my perspective what's at stake and how **this is truly the most important election of our lifetime.**

For the last eight years, I have had the privilege of serving as the Director of Public Policy Advocacy. During this time we have been fortunate to have had a firewall either in the Florida House, the Florida Senate or the Governor's office. This has allowed FEA to derail many of the attacks that our detractors have used to obliterate FEA's and our local unions' influence.

Just this spring, we saw the herculean effort it took to stop Senate Bill 6. Think about what it would be like for our members today if that bill had not been vetoed.

Well if you thought Senate Bill 6 was a bad piece of public policy let me share with you what I believe happens if we do not do all we can to elect ALEX SINK as our next Governor.

Remember the next Speaker of the Florida House will be Dean Cannon unless we can defeat him in his reelection bid. The next Senate President will be Mike Haridopolos, neither of which care about Public Schools and certainly want FEA out of their hair.

If Rick Scott is elected Governor, we have a huge task on our hands. His education plan will mean more vouchers, more charters, more virtual, more home schooling.

When asked how he would pay for these programs, he said by cutting funding

for K-12.

These three men know that FEA is the only organization that has consistently fought back on stupid policies that do harm to students and to the people we represent. If we are no longer strong due to reduction in the number of people served by public schools, then they can do what they want with the education budgets of today.

If this crew is in charge here is what I think you will see, and yes my crystal ball is foggy, but these are my predictions anyway:

- A challenge to us as exclusive bargaining agent where we don't represent at least 50% of the eligible workforce
- Elimination of Collective Bargaining in the Constitution
- Elimination of Payroll Deductions for **ALL** dues
- Merit Pay in its worst form (SB 6)
- Expansion of all anti public school programs
- Elimination of local control of schools
- Salaries and benefits set at the state level
- Base all employment decisions on student test scores
- A DOE that will be running wild without anyone to stop them

I could continue with this list but I think you get the picture. Our only hope here is to **ELECT ALEX SINK GOVERNOR.**

While we do not have the ability to influence a majority of the 5.5 million Floridians

that are expected to vote this year, we must, MUST deliver the vote of our own 140,000 members.