



The Florida National Guard

Maj. Gen. Michael A. Calhoun, Adjutant General of Florida

<http://www.fl.ng.mil>

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-- PRESS RELEASE --

Governor Scott's "Fighting for Florida's Future" Budget Fights to Support Military Heroes and Their Families

ST. AUGUSTINE, Fla. – Governor Rick Scott's "Fighting for Florida's Future" Budget includes investments to allow the men and women of the Florida National Guard to remain ready and able to support their national, state and community missions. Governor Scott's "Fighting for Florida's Future" budget invests \$85.9 million in the Florida Department of Military Affairs in order to continue providing ready military units and personnel to support national security and protect the State of Florida. Funding will be used to complete improvements on armories throughout the state, maintain community based programs for youth and adults and support Guardsmen pursuing a higher civilian education.

Governor Rick Scott said, "This year, hundreds of members of our National Guard put their own lives in danger in order to help keep our families and communities safe following the two hurricanes and a tropical storm that impacted our state. These brave men and women deserve our full appreciation and support, and we must do everything we can to support our military members and their families and ensure Florida remains the most military friendly state in the nation."

"Governor Scott continues to be one of the greatest advocates for our Soldiers and Airmen," said Maj. Gen. Michael Calhoun, the Adjutant General of Florida. "This year's budget reflects his ongoing commitment to ensuring we remain fully prepared to safeguard our citizens, state and nation."

The "Fighting for Florida's Future" Budget includes:

Governor Scott's recommended budget includes \$6 million to finalize the updates to the Florida National Guard armories that serve as the core of Florida's hometown-based units. The updated facilities enable Florida Guardsmen to be trained and ready to react when the state or nation calls upon them. The final armory to be renovated is the Robert F. Ensslin armory in St. Augustine. This funding will complete renovations to the prioritized list of armories in communities from Homestead to Pensacola, enhancing the stationing facilities of nearly 10,000 Army Guardsmen.

In addition to armory renovations, this year's budget provides \$3.4 million for the maintenance and repair of armories statewide, and \$2 million to improve armory security.

The budget also adds \$765,000 to the Florida Youth Challenge Academy, a 17 ½ month voluntary program geared toward Florida's 16-to-18-year old at-risk youth. The program consists of a five-and-a-

half-month residential phase and a 12-month post-residential phase. More than 4,000 young people have graduated from this program since its inception. For more information, please visit www.floridayouthchallengeacademy.org.

The “Fighting for Florida’s Future” Budget also includes \$750,000 for Education Dollars for Duty. This program reimburses Florida National Guard service members for education expenses incurred in pursuit of technical certificates and/or associate’s, baccalaureate or master’s degrees from public or private institutions located here in Florida.

"The governor's continued commitment to funding the Educational Dollars for Duty program is one of the things that truly makes Florida the most military friendly state in the nation," said Maj. Butler Strain, Educational Officer for the Florida National Guard. "This program has enabled hundreds of Soldiers and Airmen to pursue their higher education goals, making our Guard and our state stronger."

"The Florida National Guard is dedicated not only to military excellence, but also to taking care of our citizens," said Lt. Col. Brian Fallon, Florida Department of Military Affairs State Quartermaster. "We are very pleased that the governor's budget continues to provide funding for these programs that add such value to our communities."

"Our armories are at the center of all we do," said Maj. Sam Sargent, Florida National Guard Force Protection Officer. "Under Governor Scott, we have made tremendous strides in the modernization and improvement of these facilities. This budget will allow us to continue that work to ensure that we are the most ready and capable National Guard in the country, and that our armories are safe environments for our Soldiers, Airmen and citizens."

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Prepared by the Florida National Guard Public Affairs Office
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