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**Rep. Harris on the 2023-2024 Budget & Governor's \$500 Million in Vetoes**

**ORLANDO, Fla. – Governor DeSantis** has vetoed over \$500 million from the state budget, which was unanimously approved by state lawmakers earlier this year. **State Representative Rita Harris (D-Orlando)** issued the following statement:

“Governor DeSantis’ budget vetoes are not only irresponsible, but they are harmful to Florida's taxpayers. Instead of investing in Florida's economy, Governor DeSantis has withheld over \$500 million from Floridians in need of support simply because of Governor DeSantis’ political ambitions.

“I am frustrated that millions of dollars will not be distributed to help the local community, including funding that would have supported local food drives, not only in Orlando but throughout the entire state of Florida. The Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive, sponsored by the National Letter Carriers, allows Floridians with the means to donate to easily help their neighbors and would have brought an incredible amount of needed food into organizations that help distribute it in areas it is needed the most.

“While Governor DeSantis accredits ‘fiscal responsibility’ for his vetoes, he is doing so on the backs of hardworking Florida families.

“While I firmly disagree with the decision to veto \$500 million from the state budget, I am grateful that our bipartisan efforts to fund tourism programs survived the Governor’s veto and will be distributed to Central Florida. Programs like Visit Florida support the critical workers that help make Orlando one of the best tourist destinations in the world.

“Unfortunately, many good projects that would have relieved Florida's taxpayers with everything from flood water mitigation to neighborhood resource centers were vetoed because the Governor is disconnected from the needs of average Floridians.”

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