

**For Immediate Release**

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**United Faculty of Florida Condemns Governor DeSantis' Veto of Crucial Healthcare Funding for Higher Education Employees**  
*Statement by United Faculty of Florida*

**Tallahassee, Fla. (June 25, 2024)** - The United Faculty of Florida (UFF), the largest higher education union in the state, today released the below statement expressing deep disappointment and concern over Governor DeSantis' recent veto of a budget line item that would have funded the inclusion of Florida College System (FCS) employees in the state health insurance plan. This move undermines the well-being of faculty who deserve access to affordable and effective healthcare.

“The signed budget provided the funding for the successful integration of the state college system into the state employee health system by 2025, a change that promises to reduce costs and improve coverage for FCS employees. However, by vetoing the necessary funding, Governor DeSantis has once again prioritized his political agenda over the needs of higher education professionals.

“Governor DeSantis frequently touts Florida's university and college system as a cornerstone of the state's success in higher education. Yet, when it comes time to support our educators and staff, where it truly counts, his actions speak louder than his words.

“This veto not only jeopardizes the health and financial stability of our faculty and graduate assistants but also sends a clear message that their contributions are undervalued. At UFF, our commitment to enhancing Florida's higher education system is unwavering. Unlike the Governor, we back our words with action, tirelessly advocating for the rights and well-being of our faculty, graduate assistants, and students. This veto is another in a series of attacks that seek to weaken the infrastructure and diminish the power of our higher education institutions.

“We call on the Governor and the legislature to reconsider this decision and to prioritize the health and welfare of those who are the backbone of Florida's higher education system. The future of our state's academic excellence depends on it.”

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*The United Faculty of Florida represents over 25,000 faculty at all 12 public universities, 15 colleges and Saint Leo University, along with graduate assistants at four universities.*