



# **NEWS**

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## **PRIDE IS BACK ON TRACK**

### ***Florida's Prison Industries Training Program Improves Under New Management***

**TALLAHASSEE** — Florida TaxWatch commends Prison Rehabilitative Industries and Diversified Enterprises (PRIDE) for making significant strides in recovering from financial losses that had resulted in an accumulation of debt and core asset depletion. Under a new Board of Directors and new management, the company achieved \$72 million in sales and generated \$6 million net income in 2005, the most in dollars and as a percentage of sales in its 24-year history.

Florida TaxWatch studied PRIDE's progress and reported the findings in a December 2006 *Briefings* report entitled "[Florida's Prison Industries Training Program is Back on Track](#)". This report was a follow-up to a February 2005 Florida TaxWatch *Briefings* entitled "[Getting Florida's Prison Industries Training Program Back on Track](#)".

PRIDE has operated Florida's inmate training program since 1981, following legislative transfer of the program from the Department of Corrections. The private sector company receives no state appropriations and its operations are funded completely from gross profits from the sale of the products and services it produces, including printed documents and forms, and specialty products like imprinted key chains, bumper stickers, and plaques.

Florida law directs that the prison industries program's mission is to provide work training programs and post-release job placement, reduce inmate idleness and recidivism, simulate a real-world working environment, and reduce the cost of state government.

While acknowledging the gains, the report notes that the number of PRIDE jobs fell in relation to the inmate population, down to 2.5%, less than the nationwide proportion of 3.7%.

To further improve the performance of PRIDE and increase the public benefits provided through its operations, the report includes the following recommendations for consideration:

- A long-range strategic plan should be developed, in partnership with the Florida Department of Corrections, which identifies specific objectives and implementation plans to be developed.

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- The new Florida Management Information System, FMIS, should include the capability to identify types of goods and services purchased by state agencies to ensure agencies are purchasing from PRIDE when appropriate.
- An analysis of the economic impact of PRIDE's operations on the state and its citizens should be conducted.

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**MEDIA AVAILABILITY: Dave Davis and Chuck Hefren, the Florida TaxWatch Senior Research Analysts who worked on the report, are available for interviews. They can be reached at (850) 222-5052.**

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