Governor Signs Bill at USF St. Petersburg
By: Holly Kickliter
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USF St. Petersburg hosted Governor Jeb Bush as he signed House Bill 1629, the Affordable Healthcare for Floridians Act, into law.

Gov. Bush signed the legislation in the Campus Activities Center at the first in a series of statewide town hall meetings June 14. The town hall meetings offered consumers the chance to hear from the governor, Lt. Gov. Toni Jennings and federal and state healthcare experts about new laws regarding Health Saving Accounts and Health Reimbursement Arrangements.

USF President Judy Genshaft, Campus Advisory Board President Ann Duncan and Mayor Rick Baker joined Regional Chancellor Karen A. White to welcome legislators to campus, including bill sponsors Senator Durell Peaden and Representative Frank Farkas.

Sponsored by Floridians for Health Care Choices, more than 200 people attended the event, including political science students who traveled to New Hampshire in January to work the first presidential primary in the Road to the White House course with Judithanne Scourfield McLauchlan, PhD.

Under the new law, consumers can deposit pre-tax dollars into their HSA up to the level of their deductible. All surplus money and interest that accrues in this account remains the property of the individual, and is fully transferable between jobs and to different states.

Governor Bush said, "This bill improves access to affordable health insurance in our state. By signing this legislation, we will open the door to improvements in the health insurance market, create a more consumer driven market and ultimately increase access to healthcare insurance for all Floridians."

For more information about HSAs or upcoming town hall meetings, please see www.saveforyourhealth.com.