

## **Remarks from State Representative Leslie Waters**

### **FBT Leadership Retreat**

Orlando, Florida

Thursday, July 15, 2004

#### **STTF Reduction**

I was very pleased that we were able to keep the State Transportation Trust Fund intact. When the final analysis was done, I was pleased to see we did not need those funds. We all know the impact transportation investments has on our economy, and any members who were not aware of the consequences were educated very quickly by many people in this room today.

#### **Work Program**

This is the largest work program ever undertaken by this state totaling approximately \$26.6 billion over the next five years. The 04-05 work program is \$5.76 billion.

This work program is 5.7% larger than the previous work program, and over the next five years will:

- Construct an additional 1,014 new lane miles of road capacity;
- Resurface 11,907 lane miles of roadway;
- Repair 1,007 bridges and replace 28 of them; and
- Provide \$2.5 billion for the public transportation program.

#### **Strategic Intermodal System**

We are also using our transportation dollars more efficiently. Not too long ago FDOT looked at each mode of transportation separately. There was a state-wide rail plan, transit plan, seaport plan, and airport plan. Not too long ago most MPOs were only concerned with local traffic movement, but more and more MPOs are conducting freight studies, forming inter-MPO committees, and taking a more regional perspective. Now FDOT has integrated modal studies and the Strategic Intermodal System.

\$100 million was appropriated to fund the Strategic Intermodal System. This system will give us the most bang for our buck by concentrating limited transportation funds on our most economically important transportation projects. We were able to fund the SIS by repealing the dormant Transportation Outreach Program.

#### **SCRAP and SCOP**

While this budget funds our statewide needs, it also helps smaller counties with their local roads. Through revised revenue estimates we were able to accelerate

the funding of the Small County Outreach program at \$20 million (program was not supposed to be funded until 05-06). This program was very popular among counties with a population of 150,000 or less, because FDOT pays 75% of the costs of eligible county road projects.

This budget also continues to fund The Small County Road Assistance Program at \$25 million to help smaller counties with resurfacing counties road.

### **Homeland Security**

\$4 million was provided for seaport security and funds were provided to continue the Florida Airport Council's study of airport security needs.

### **High Speed Rail**

Some of you may have heard me give my reasons why I oppose the high speed rail project:

- The Tampa to Orlando segment was supposed to cost \$1.6 billion, the costs are now estimated at almost \$3 billion and going up.
- The peer review panel would not endorse the High Speed Rail Authorities ridership revenue study. The panel did not have confidence in the forecast because of the methods used to forecast market share, and because of the scant time savings compared to travel by car (a four minute savings during off-peak travel time and a 16 minute savings during peak travel time). The panel also questioned the acceptance of HSR by the public based on Florida intercity travel characteristics.
- We don't know if the federal Government is going to help. We cannot responsibly commit to funding this project without a hefty federal funding commitment, and it is not looking good. It could be at least \$150 million a year state commitment with no federal funds just for the Orlando to Tampa leg.
- This funding will come from significant regional transportation initiatives, projects which relieve congestion on the state highway system and major road arteries. In order to carry out the HSR initiative, projects that have been selected and prioritized by your local MPOs and FDOT district offices will have to be set aside. These could be projects that directly effect your business. There is simply not enough funding to implement both high speed rail and our other critical transportation projects.

But in the spirit of the Constitutional Amendment this budget responsibly funds High Speed Rail by investing \$5 million in intermodal centers which will be used as hubs for other modes and authorizes the HSR Authority to use \$4 million in federal funds for administrative and consultant costs.