



NEWS CLIPS

Your "Voice" for Transportation!

Quote of the Week: **"Half of something is better than all of nothing."**
- **B.K. Roberts**

MONDAY, 5/9/05

[Legislature approves growth bill](#)

(05/07/2005 © Bradenton Herald)

TALLAHASSEE - A growth management reform bill passed unanimously by both chambers Friday night in the waning minutes of the Legislature's 2005 session. By a vote of 40-0 in the Senate and 114-0 in the House, the bill gained legislators' approval and now heads to Gov. Jeb Bush for his signature to become law.

[Lawmakers reach deal on growth policy](#)

(05/07/2005 © Daytona Beach News-Journal)

TALLAHASSEE -- In the final hour of the 60-day legislative session, lawmakers reached a deal Friday on an anti-sprawl bill after striking controversial sections on taxes and impact fees. The agreement, reached a little before midnight, clears the way for a plan to spend \$1.5 billion on new roads, schools and water treatment plants -- a first step in addressing a backlog of critical infrastructure needs that state analysts estimated at \$35 million.

[Sides reach deal on growth reform](#)

(05/07/2005 © Ft. Myers News-Press)

TALLAHASSEE Florida lawmakers agreed Friday to major new mandates on how schools, cities and counties can develop without making it easier for them to raise taxes to pay for it. The compromise cleared the way for passage of Florida's first overhaul of growth management law since 1985.

[Unfulfilled potential](#)

(05/09/2005 © St. Petersburg Times)

The Florida Legislature deserves credit for seriously wrestling with big issues such as growth management, Medicaid and ethics reform. House Speaker Allan Bense and Senate President Tom Lee restored a measure of civility and collaboration to lawmaking that has been missing in recent years. Yet their smiles at the end cannot hide the fact that they aimed high and just missed. The growth management legislation is particularly disappointing.

[Traffic, frustration here to stay](#)

(05/09/2005 © Florida Today)

Interstate 95 is the second-most despised roadway in Florida, according to a poll released this month by Floridians for Better Transportation. The most hated roadway

was I-4, which connects the Tampa area to Daytona Beach through Orlando. Floridians for Better Transportation created the online poll to give residents a chance to talk about their most dreaded roadways.

[Half-hearted](#)

(05/09/2005 © Orlando Sentinel)

Florida lawmakers didn't do enough during the legislative session to make roads safer. That's particularly disappointing, considering that the state is experiencing a record number of traffic fatalities. Red-light running and unbuckled seat belts are two of the most obvious traffic-safety problems.

[After Navy leaves, Cecil Field is coming back](#)

(05/09/2005 © Miami Herald)

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. - The screams of Navy F/A-18 Hornets picking up speed for takeoff have been replaced by corporate jets, including one flown by actor John Travolta. The bunkers once housing nuclear weapons have been bulldozed and gleaming new equestrian and community centers have risen among the palmettos.

TUESDAY, 5/10/05

[Senate defies White House on highway bill](#)

(05/10/2005 © Tallahassee Democrat)

WASHINGTON - The Senate moved toward approval of a giant highway bill that exceeds the spending ceiling set by the White House, challenging the administration over what would be President Bush's first veto. Senate leaders on Monday introduced a plan that would boost spending for the six-year highway and mass transit bill by \$11 billion over the \$284 billion passed by the House in March.

[Traffic here among worst in U.S.](#)

(05/10/2005 © Miami Herald)

It's no surprise to Eddy Barrera and millions of others of you stewing in your cars and trucks in traffic day after day: Rush-hour traffic in South Florida ranks sixth worst in the nation, according to a new national study released Monday.

[Rush-hour jams taking a big toll](#)

(05/10/2005 © Orlando Sentinel)

Orlando-area commuters lost an average of 55 hours apiece stuck in rush-hour traffic in 2003, about the same as the year before -- but the cost went up. An annual study by the Texas Transportation Institute found Orlando drivers lost \$510 in time and gasoline while creeping along in rush hour, up from \$490 in 2002. That made Orlando the ninth-worst place in the country in 2003.

[Drivers losing 34 hours per year](#)

(05/10/2005 © Florida Times-Union)

A national study of traffic congestion in 85 urban areas shows Jacksonville motorists are losing more time to rush-hour delays, landing the city a ranking of 32nd worst in the country. The Texas Transportation Institute's report, released Monday, is based on evaluation of data from 2003.

[S. Florida rush hour worsening, study says](#)

(05/10/2005 © Ft. Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel)

A report released Monday by the Texas Transportation Institute, based on the most recent, 2003 statistics, said rush-hour trips in Broward, Palm Beach and Miami-Dade counties took 26 percent longer in 1993 and 9 percent longer in 1982.

[Growth Management Bill Is Flawed Accomplishment](#)

(05/10/2005 © Tampa Tribune)

Florida lawmakers made some improvements but missed a historic opportunity to fashion a growth management system that would finally stop development from smothering roads, schools and taxpayers.

[Mica: Raise security fee on airline tickets](#)

(05/10/2005 © Orlando Sentinel)

SANFORD -- Congressman John Mica, chairman of the House aviation subcommittee, said Monday he supports doubling the security fee on airline tickets to pay for new technologies that would make airports safer.

WEDNESDAY, 5/11/05

[Moving America](#)

(05/11/2005 © Gainesville Sun)

Americans didn't really need this week's study from the Texas Traffic Institute to tell them what they already know: that traffic is bad and getting worse. According to the respected highway research organization, Americans wasted 3.7 billion hours and burned 2.3 billion gallons of gasoline sitting in traffic in 2003.

[From bad to worse](#)

(05/11/2005 © Miami Herald)

In South Florida, we have come to expect the annual bad news about traffic congestion from the Texas Transportation Institute. So it's easy to greet this week's news that South Florida congestion is sixth-worse in the nation with a shrug and a sigh because, surely, there's not much that we can do about it, right? Well, not exactly.

[A call to action](#)

(05/11/2005 © Orlando Sentinel)

Los Angeles, Atlanta. Those cities are synonymous with gridlock. But Orlando? You bet. According to a new study by the Texas Transportation Institute, the Orlando metropolitan area ranked ninth in the nation for the amount of time that motorists spend idling in rush-hour traffic. Blame decades of mismanaged growth, failed efforts to increase sales taxes to pay for transportation improvements, a decision by four Orange County commissioners to kill a light-rail project in 1999, and an anemic bus system that local governments continually refuse to finance properly.

[Guest editorial: Paving the way to a veto](#)

(05/11/2005 © Naples Daily News)

Unless the two sides manage to finesse it — and both would dearly love to do so — the coming showdown between the White House and Congress should be fascinating politically and with the added fillip that it's Republican versus Republican.

[Bennett defends impact-fee effort](#)

(05/11/2005 © Sarasota Herald-Tribune)

BRADENTON -- State Sen. Mike Bennett, R-Bradenton, gave the Legislature a mostly favorable report card on Tuesday, saying it deserves high marks for its last-minute passage of a sweeping growth management act. "By and large, it was a great session," Bennett told the Bradenton Kiwanis club. "Growth management came out on top."

[Tolls, bypasses for U.S. 98?](#)

(05/11/2005 © Tallahassee Democrat)

A bill that could lead to bypasses or toll roads around U.S. Highway 98 in the Florida Panhandle is on its way to Gov. Jeb Bush for his signature.

[New buses could put city on the fast track](#)

(05/11/2005 © St. Petersburg Times)

ST. PETERSBURG - An express bus guaranteed to beat traffic lights might be zipping passengers across the city by 2008. Such a "bus rapid transit" vehicle would go fast, look slick and not stop as often while traveling First avenues N and S, St. Petersburg's east-west arteries linking downtown to the beaches.

[Ardor for raising gas tax subsides](#)

(05/11/2005 © Florida Today)

VIERA - Raising local gas taxes to help pay for new county roads is losing steam now that it looks as though the cost would be passed on to consumers at the pumps. That leaves Brevard County commissioners with a shrinking list of options for raising money to build much-needed roads to accommodate growth.

THURSDAY, 5/12/05

[Pilot strays into restricted air space, prompting evacuations](#)

(05/12/2005 © Tallahassee Democrat)

PHILADELPHIA - (KRT) - Jim Sheaffer set out from Smoketown Airport in Lancaster, Pa., Wednesday with a new map and a student pilot in a two-seater Cessna, bound for a fun-filled weekend. They took off at 10:58 a.m. EDT, flying south to an air show in Lumberton, N.C. Just 58 minutes later, the first Blackhawk helicopter pulled alongside. They had taken a wrong turn - a REALLY wrong turn.

[Growth bill may contain a loophole](#)

(05/12/2005 © Sarasota Herald-Tribune)

TALLAHASSEE -- While state planning officials on Wednesday praised the Legislature's latest effort to curb Florida's rapid growth, some environmental groups and local officials say the bill may contain a loophole that will allow development to occur even if adequate roads are not in place.

[A weak agreement](#)

(05/12/2005 © Daytona Beach News-Journal)

The future quality of life in Florida will depend on how the state manages growth. Lawmakers had the opportunity to strengthen the state's growth rules in the session that just ended. Instead, they shifted too much of the responsibility for managing growth onto

cities and counties. Though they committed more state tax dollars to cover costs associated with development, they did little to discourage unbridled growth.

[Cargo's Rising Tide](#)

(05/12/2005 © Ft. Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel)

Ocean trade is growing so fast across the Americas that seaports, railways, roads and other transport systems need to be expanded fast to handle the soaring cargo traffic. That was among the conclusions Wednesday from SeaCargo Americas, a two-day trade show and conference in Miami expected to attract more than 1,500 people from more than a dozen nations.

[Amtrak Wasn't Notified About Acela Brakes](#)

(05/12/2005 © Lakeland Ledger)

WASHINGTON Cracks on the brake disc rotors of Amtrak's Acela Express trains were detected as long as three years ago but the railroad was never notified, Amtrak's inspector general said Wednesday.

[On track?](#)

(05/12/2005 © Miami Herald)

While serious financing questions remain to be answered, Miami city commissioners are expected to roll a little farther down the tracks today toward creating a sleek \$132 million streetcar system from downtown to the Design District.

[Ireland divided over highway past 'sacred capital'](#)

(05/12/2005 © Daytona Beach News-Journal)

HILL OF TARA, Ireland -- This grassy, windswept hill outside Dublin was long the spiritual and political center of Ireland, an earthen fort where Celtic chieftains jockeyed for power and legend says St. Patrick confronted paganism. Today, the Hill of Tara is at the center of another showdown -- over whether Ireland, a rapidly expanding country where construction often uncovers the past, can reconcile its rich heritage with the demands of modern life. Capping two years of arguments, the government on Wednesday authorized archaeologists to begin excavating 38 sites along the proposed route of a new highway past the hill.

FRIDAY, 5/13/05

[Bush likely to OK seat belt bill](#)

(05/13/2005 © Ft. Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel)

TALLAHASSEE Gov. Jeb Bush said Thursday he will likely sign a measure that would let police pull over drivers if they see an unbuckled minor in the car. The provision was part of a wide-ranging transportation safety bill passed last week by the Legislature.

[High-Speed Rail Authority Still Exists](#)

(05/13/2005 © Lakeland Ledger)

LAKELAND -- Florida's high-speed rail program is alive, if not exactly well. Although the mandate to build a statewide system of bullet trains was pulled out of the constitution by voters last year, the agency charged with building the system is still alive and in hibernation. Legislators never even bothered with a request during their just-ended session to disband the authority.

[State assumes growth, offers little management](#)

(05/13/2005 © Palm Beach Post)

Just because the Legislature put up \$1.5 billion for the coming year and pledged to spend \$750 million a year for the next 10 years doesn't mean the state did anything to manage growth. In fact, the legislation weakens growth management. It lets builders write a check for roads or schools, then go ahead and build, even if the local community can't build the roads or schools fast enough.

[Bush Should Scuttle Port Power Grab](#)

(05/13/2005 © Tampa Tribune)

Gov. Jeb Bush should see the gaping ethical holes in legislation that would mandate conflicts on the Tampa Port Authority and rob the governor of the ability to select the best board members. Hillsborough Rep. Ed Homan is responsible for this shipwreck. His bill would expand the Tampa Port Authority from five members to seven and mandate that two members be from the maritime industry.

[Traffic jams aren't better, just wider](#)

(05/13/2005 © Orlando Sentinel)

The two big stories during my morning commute don't seem like they ought to be on the same radio, let alone in almost the same breath. "Fuel prices are at a record high . . . " is followed by "Traffic is backed up on Interstate 4 . . . and 436 . . . and the East-West . . . and the Trail . . . and so on and so forth." How can we still afford to get in each other's way like this?