

Dear Florida Legislator-

# **TRANSPORTATION**

## **“Saves” LIVES, TIME, MONEY & JOBS**

### **FUND IT!**

#### ***Facts & Solutions for Florida’s Future***

As you know, Florida’s amazingly-productive transportation system is:

- 1.) The backbone of our state's economy and
- 2.) Essential to our *individual*
  - A.) Traveling safety,
  - B.) Quality of life, and
  - C.) Future economic prosperity.

**Florida's business community understands the importance of transportation.** That's why the Florida Chamber Foundation, in its “*Transportation Cornerstone*” and “*New Cornerstone*” reports, state that:

- good transportation is the key to Florida’s economic future and
- even call for an **increase in transportation revenues!**

However, today **Florida is facing a HUGE transportation funding crisis!** According to the Florida DOT, an additional **\$2.7 billion is needed each year just to “maintain” current transportation conditions!**

Simply put, our state's economic future is now in *serious* jeopardy. Clearly, if we expect the benefits we enjoy from our state's transportation system to continue, then we’ve got to **adjust and improve transportation funding for Florida in 2005. THIS IS THE TIME TO ACT!**

#### **Key Facts**

**Safety** - Regrettably, ***Florida leads the nation in deaths for older drivers.*** In 2001, some 268 Florida drivers over the age of 70 were killed in traffic accidents in the Sunshine State.

**Congestion** - In a survey earlier this year, getting caught in traffic was the #1 most hated item -- ranking higher than visiting the dentist or going shopping on the busiest day of the year. Florida has 8 of the most congested U.S. cities and ***Orlando drivers now waste more time in traffic than New York City drivers!***

**Economic Benefits** - According to U.S. DOT Secretary Norman Mineta, Florida's transportation industry employs 202,000 workers and accounts for an annual payroll of \$6

billion. **Each dollar invested in transportation yields a \$5.50 benefit** to Florida's economy, and 47,500 new jobs are created by every \$1 billion spent on transportation.

### **Solutions**

First, there needs to be a fundamental recognition that **NOT ALL "TAXES" ARE THE SAME**. Transportation "user fees" are far different from general taxpayer dollars. These user fees provide a **time-honored, conservative, and fiscally-responsible way of funding a legitimate function of limited government**. Transportation investments -- *just like defense spending* -- have long been a part of America's effort to "provide for the common defence" and "promote the general Welfare" cited in the preamble to the U.S. Constitution.

We must commit to finding the *additional* transportation means necessary to protect our remarkable quality of life. That's why a **"menu" of transportation funding options should be considered during the 2005 Legislative Session**. These ideas might range from local options for enhanced transportation funding -- to statewide solutions like long-overdue adjustments to some transportation user fees that haven't been addressed in nearly a quarter century.

### **Bottom Line**

The choice before us now is really very simple:

- **ignore our looming transportation funding crisis and end up like California, or**
- **take steps now to keep Florida moving and growing, and our state's economy on the right track.**

For the sake of every Floridian, we at FBT encourage YOU to thoughtfully choose the second option!

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*Floridians for Better Transportation (FBT) is a statewide business and transportation association dedicated to making transportation safer and more efficient in Florida. FBT has a diverse membership of 150 businesses, organizations, and individuals, including the Florida Chamber of Commerce, the Florida Transportation Builders Association, Publix Super Markets, AAA Auto Club South, the Florida Institute of Consulting Engineers, the Florida Public Transportation Association, the Florida Ports Council, the Florida MPO Advisory Council, the Florida Airports Council, and numerous local businesses, Chambers of Commerce, MPOs, and transit providers in YOUR area.*