



October 16, 2003

STOP Highway “Robbery!”

Dear Governor Bush,

As preparations for the upcoming 2004 Legislative Session begin, you will be faced with a variety of pressing issues. However, we believe transportation makes everything else possible. Our quality of life, our children's future, the traveling safety of our elderly, and the success of our state's economy is literally “riding” on Florida's transportation system. That's why we strongly encourage you to prevent another multi-million dollar “diversion” from the Transportation Trust Fund and ask you to fully fund transportation in your proposed 2004-05 budget.

Earlier this year \$200 million was “redirected, raided, diverted or swept” from the State Transportation Trust Fund. These funds did not come from general revenue, but were collected from transportation user fees: gasoline taxes and tag fees. They are taxes paid by the traveling public in Florida for a very specific purpose -- transportation maintenance and improvement. To use them for any other purpose is simply wrong.

Our state is blessed with a unique location and is poised to take advantage of the emerging markets of Central and South American in the 21st Century. But, as Ohio Governor Bob Taft said earlier this year when he proposed increasing transportation spending in his state, “a good location without good access is a prescription for decline.” The same is true of Florida.

Florida's future is at a transportation crossroads. One road leads to prosperity, freedom, and a better tomorrow. The other leads to greater traffic congestion, economic decline, and the kind of problems we see in California today.

What do YOU want Florida's future to look like? Which road will YOU take? The choice is YOURS. Please do not propose another Transportation Trust Fund “raid,” but instead fully fund transportation in your 2004 budget proposal.

Floridians for Better Transportation
Florida Transportation Builders Association
Florida Airports Council
Florida Public Transportation Association
Metropolitan Planning Organization Advisory Council
AAA Auto Club South
Trade and Transport Council
Florida Limerock & Aggregate Institute

Florida Chamber of Commerce
Florida Ports Council
Florida Institute of Consulting Engineers
Florida Trucking Association
Asphalt Contractors Association of Florida
1000 Friends of Florida
Florida Concrete & Products Association
Florida Chapter of the American Planning Association