

The Honorable Charlie Crist
Governor, State of Florida
Plaza Level 05, The Capitol
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0001

Dear Governor Crist,

I want to express my concern about the proposed budget cuts for the Florida Department of Transportation. While I understand the need for the state to tighten its financial belt, I also understand the tremendous need of new and improved infrastructure for our state. Nothing will stimulate our economy like the building of new infrastructure.

Based on recommendations from the Revenue Estimating Commission, the FDOT has already reduced its Five Year Plan by \$550 Million. This is a result of declining gas tax revenues. The latest REC recommendations may require the FDOT to cut an additional \$500 Million! We are facing a cut of over \$1 Billion in the Five Year Plan. It's as though the FDOT budget is getting hit twice, without any action from the Legislature. As I like to say, "FDOT has already given at the office."

Building Florida's transportation infrastructure has a huge economic benefit to the state. For every \$1 spent for infrastructure, the state receives \$7 in benefit. Every \$1 Billion in highway and bridge spending generates 47,500 jobs.

You are doing an excellent job of leading our state. I would ask that you consider appointing a high level task force utilizing some of the state's brightest minds to consider and recommend alternatives for funding our transportation needs. This is an issue we cannot ignore. The gas tax has been an excellent source of revenue for many years but is a declining source at a time of increasing need. We must find additional sources including, but not limited to, private investment and tolls.

During the upcoming Special Session on the budget you and the Legislature will have to make difficult choices. Cutting transportation spending has a serious negative impact on our economy. It will only slow the recovery we are all looking to have happen. I would hope you will reconsider imposing any additional cuts on the Department of Transportation Work Plan and am happy to discuss with you my thoughts on this.

With best regards,