



Don't Snatch *Defeat*... From the Jaws of Victory!

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With additional federal transportation dollars widely anticipated as part of any national Economic Stimulus effort, ironically, Florida may be about to "Snatch Defeat from the Jaws of Victory!"

Wrong Way Marshall Despite playing in 302 consecutive NFL games, former Minnesota Vikings great Jim Marshall is probably best remembered as "Wrong Way Marshall."

On October 25, 1964, in a game against the San Francisco 49ers, Marshall recovered a fumble, but ran 66 yards with it the wrong way into his own end zone. Thinking that he had scored a touchdown for the Vikings, Marshall then threw the ball away in celebration. The ball landed out of bounds, resulting in a safety for the 49ers.

Wrong Way Legislature? Florida DOT has identified nearly \$7 billion worth of ready-to-go projects that Governor Charlie Crist has given to Congress and the Obama Administration.

Now that Florida appears primed to receive literally hundreds of millions in new transportation funding from a federal Economic Stimulus package, the last thing we need is a reduction in state transportation funding at the very same time!

But, believe it or not, such ill-advised action is on the minds of some Florida leaders.

D.C.'s Point of View? Congress and the new Administration will not view favorably any state that receives additional federal transportation funding – in order to quickly stimulate our ailing economy – but then turns right around and steers state transportation funds to non-transportation purposes. Simply put, if our state's leaders did this, they'd:

- Jeopardize Florida's share of these valuable federal transportation resources,
- Send a decidedly "mixed message" to our federal partners – as well as the public and the press, and
- Leave millions of dollars in unrealized Economic Stimulus "potential" on the table.

Run in the Right Direction! Our state leaders need to avoid making the same mistake Jim Marshall did 44 years ago. As Marshall himself recalled, "I was so intent on picking the ball up and doing something with it that I wasn't even aware of what I had done until the ball had been whistled dead." He added, "It was the perfect example of a young player using energy without thinking."

Our state leaders are also intent on doing something good for Florida, but unless they're careful, they too can make a horrendous mistake like Jim Marshall did.

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