

FLORIDA HIGH SPEED RAIL AUTHORITY

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February 12, 2009

Governor Charlie Crist

Office of Governor, State of Florida
The Capitol
400 S. Monroe St.
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0001

Reference: **Florida High Speed Rail and the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009**

Dear Governor Crist;

On behalf of the Florida High Speed Rail Authority, I write to immediately share with you the tremendous excitement that the reconciled Federal Stimulus Bill (American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009) has generated as relates to High Speed Rail. We understand that that the total amount of funds to be included in this bill specifically for High Speed Rail, has been reconciled at **\$8 BILLION, and does not require a State match**. That is quadruple the amount of previous versions, and reflects the elevated importance in the national agenda of this mode of transportation. As you know, President Obama specifically discussed the benefits and importance of High Speed Rail during his visit to Florida earlier this week.

The good news, Governor, is that Florida is in a very strong position to compete for a piece of this funding. These monies are going to be distributed based on a national competition among eleven designated High Speed Rail corridors, one of which is the Tampa-Orlando-Miami corridor. Based on the significant amount of investment and work done in the last decade on this corridor (including a signed Environmental Impact Statement for Tampa-Orlando), Florida will be in a very strong position and will likely have a more advanced process than any other corridor.

Due to the requirements of the competition, it is very important that we re-mobilize quickly to respond to the detailed Expressions of Interest that are due this September, 2009. Decisions will be made to distribute the Stimulus and other funding for High Speed Rail (as identified in HR4095 passed in October, 2008) based on the quality and substance of the application that we are able to prepare. To that end, I have called for a meeting of our Authority on February 26, 2009 to take action towards advancing our application.

We welcome your support of our efforts to compete for this unprecedented opportunity to bring a visionary and Green transportation solution to our great State. In conjunction with the highly complementary Sunrail system, Florida can take a national lead in addressing a sustainable future for generations to come.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lee Chira".

Lee Chira
Chairman, Florida High Speed Rail Authority
cc: FHSRA members