



Where's the Beef?

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Statement by FBT President Doug Callaway

Yesterday, the U.S. House of Representatives passed an \$819 billion economic stimulus package.

With Florida's unemployment rate now exceeding 8% – it's highest level in 16 years – I was hopeful this bill would stimulate our economy and help put people back to work.

Where's the Beef? But when I learned that **only 7%** of the package's total spending would go for transportation – \$30 billion for roads & bridges, \$9 billion for public transit and \$1 billion for inter-city rail – I thought of the old Wendy's hamburger commercial where Clara Peller asked the obvious question: **"Where's the Beef?"**

Seven Percent Solution? Simply put, **MORE** transportation investments – not the 7% that Florida Congressman John Mica called "almost minuscule" – are what we need to really move Florida *forward* and *quickly* get us out of this recession.

Short-Term AND Lasting Benefits! Not only do transportation investments create thousands of jobs and boost our economy in the short-term, they also leave a legacy of infrastructure improvements that will increase our competitiveness for years to come.

But Why? Florida could receive \$1.5 billion for transportation from this bill, and dollars such as these would be welcomed and put to very good use in short order. But knowing that:

1. we create 28,000 jobs for every \$1 billion spent on transportation,
2. our economy benefits to the tune of \$5.60 for every \$1 invested,
3. Florida DOT's Work Program has already suffered a reduction of \$7.2 billion since November 2006, and
4. FDOT has nearly \$7 Billion, not just \$1.5 Billion, in ready-to-go projects

... the larger question remains – why does transportation infrastructure investment constitute only 7% of the House economic recovery package?

Bringing a Knife to a Gun Fight? In Florida's case, that's like leaving \$5.5 Billion in "unrealized" Economic Stimulus POTENTIAL on the table – which roughly translates into:

- o 168,000 jobs or more that won't be created to employ Floridians, and
- o a \$33 Billion boost to our state's ailing economy that won't be happening!

Make Much Sense? When we're in the worst economic condition since the Great Depression, does that really make much sense? We at FBT don't think so either!

Floridians for Better Transportation (FBT)

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