

TRANSPORTATION - Talking Points

The humorist Will Rogers once said that:

“Even if you’re on the right track, you’ll get run over if you just sit there.”

This quip pretty much summarizes Florida’s transportation dilemma –

- we may be on the “right track” but growing traffic congestion is forcing us to “just sit there” ... and we’re gonna get “RUN OVER” if we don’t do something soon!
- I know that transportation *isn’t* a “sexy” subject and it’s *not* something that people generally talk about at cocktail parties.
- But make no mistake, transportation **IS** the **fuel** that “drives” Florida’s economy ... and without it, the Florida we know and love wouldn’t be possible.
- And yet, like a thief quietly siphoning fuel from your car’s tank, growing traffic congestion threatens to bring us all to a screeching halt.
- Simply put, our transportation gas tank is on “E” and **NOW** is the time to take reasonable, common sense steps to **Move Florida Forward!**

The Florida Chamber’s New Cornerstone *Revisited* report (December 2007) indicated that Florida does:

- A.) a great job of maintaining our *existing* highway system ... but
- B.) has little money left for **ADDING badly-needed new capacity!**

A Reason Foundation report from last June confirms this. Here’s the Bad News for Florida transportation-wise:

Bad News:

- **Fatality Rate** per 100 million miles 34th
- Urban Interstate miles **congested** 40th
- **Total Disbursements** per mile 48th
- Overall Rank for 2004 & 2005 41st

FDOT'S LIMITATIONS

- The FDOT budget, by law, is self adjusting. It cannot spend more revenue than it takes in.
- **Over the last three years, FDOT had to defer 268 projects statewide at a total cost of \$5.7 Billion.**
- Knowing that these types of “ready-to-go” projects return \$7 in economic benefit for every \$1 invested in transportation ...
- **just imagine how much better Florida's economy would be today if these transportation “investments” had been made as originally planned!**

Now we can't change the past ... but we can prepare for the future – and that's why I strongly encourage you to approve the Transportation Funding recommendations before you!

- The major source of revenue – the fuel tax – is stagnant and may actually be declining. Florida needs a minimum of **\$2 billion** in new, critically-needed recurring money for the State Transportation Trust Fund (STTF).

“More efficient roads mean lower transportation costs for the many products and goods that make our abundant way of life possible. So what we're proposing is to add the equivalent of 5 cents per gallon to the existing **highway user fee, the gas tax. The cost to the average motorist will be small but the benefit to our transportation system will be immense.”**

President Ronald Reagan - November 27, 1982

- The last time the federal gas tax was increased for transportation purposes, was under Reagan in 1982!
- Ronald Reagan loved cutting taxes, but he **Raised the Highway User Fee** to Strengthen the American Economy!
- Reagan proved tax cuts can spur our economy, but he also knew investment in our highway and public transportation systems is essential.

“The talk you hear about adapting to change is not only stupid, it's dangerous. The only way you can manage change is to create it.” -Peter Drucker