



FLORIDA TRANSPORTATION BUILDERS' ASSOCIATION, INC.

Bob Burleson, President, Florida Transportation Builders' Association Regarding Gov. Crist's Veto of Transportation Trust Fund Sweep

"Today, Governor Crist took a major step forward for thousands of Floridians whose jobs were threatened by the irresponsible raids on the State Transportation Trust Fund (STTF). The Florida Transportation Builders' Association (FTBA) applauds the Governor for his long-term vision in protecting the trust fund, the thousands of Florida jobs and the vitality of the state's transportation infrastructure.

The very first week of session, members of the House made it clear that the Transportation Trust Fund would be a target for plugging the state's budget holes. Thankfully, Governor Crist saw the serious ramifications of blindly stealing from the Florida Department of Transportation's (FDOT) funding source. If lawmakers were successful in their short-sighted policy, \$160 million would have been forever eradicated from the trust fund, resulting in the elimination of more than 11,000 Florida jobs. Further, FDOT's five-year work plan would have seen far-reaching road project deferrals - more than \$400 million - over the next fiscal year. In fact, some of the projects would have most likely never come to fruition, worsening Florida's congested highways.

Florida's transportation industry has always been a key element in the strength of our state's economy. We know that for every \$1 spent on road construction, \$7 is returned to the economy. Given the economic consequences, Florida could guarantee the passage of this job-killing bill would have been crippling to Florida's future. Over the past few years, the legislature has worked to divert transportation dollars out of the trust but, lawmakers must understand that stripping funds from an industry which offers immediate economic stimulus is not the answer.

The People's Governor made the right decision today. By vetoing the trust fund raids, Governor Crist recognizes that a proper investment in Florida's transportation system supports our diverse economy and the needs of Floridians. In the midst of rising unemployment rates and a struggling economy, this is one action that surely moves Florida in a positive direction.