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Contact: Rachel Gustafson
(850) 222-3767
rachel@coremessage.com

Statement By:
Bob Burleson, President, Florida Transportation Builders' Association
Calling for Veto of Transportation Trust Fund Sweep; Raid Eliminates 7,000 Jobs

“The long-term impacts of the transportation trust fund sweeps approved by the Florida House and Senate this year will be felt with statewide job losses and increased congestion on our roadways. In all, the \$150-million sweep of trust fund dollars to general revenue creates a potential \$250-million reduction in the Department of Transportation’s (FDOT) construction work program from now through June 2012, resulting in the elimination of 7,000 Florida jobs. This is unacceptable and goes against everything this newly elected legislature has claimed they stand for.

The Florida Transportation Builders’ Association (FTBA) could not be more disappointed with the tone and actions of Florida’s lawmakers. We heard throughout the process that both the Senate and House understood the damages that will be felt by raiding the transportation trust fund, yet they still trudged forward allowing for the next generation of Floridians to deal with the outcomes of their actions.

When it comes to balancing the budgets, there are hard choices to make and then there are bad choices. The Legislature made many hard choices but this is a bad choice. This budget has a surplus and no doubt, a few pet projects so it is frustrating to hear lawmakers profess raiding the trust fund was an action of last resort. That is simply not the case. DOT’s budget encompasses and provides for more than roads and bridges – ports, public transit, rail, freight and even aerospace are all funded through the department’s budget and the state transportation trust fund. While lawmakers are calling for improvements in transportation infrastructure, they are at the same time tying DOT’s hands with this project and job-killing legislation.

Next year, federal transportation funding will also be cut by 20 to 40 percent. Coupled with a detrimental transportation trust fund raid, you can guarantee Florida’s already struggling transportation building industry will be forced to let go even more hard-working Floridians. Governor Rick Scott campaigned on a job creation platform and we are confident he will consider a veto of this anti-jobs legislation. Due to the actions of legislators, we call on Governor Scott to make the right choice and keep transportation working for Florida by vetoing any transportation trust fund raids.”

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