

Session 2004 Report 2

Week 1 Activities

State Transportation Trust Fund (STTF)

Earlier this week I reported that the Governor has recommended another “sweep” of the STTF. This year it is \$100 million (last year it was \$200 million). In the next few weeks we hope to have a better handle on what each of the Appropriations Committees will do. Under the leadership of *Senator Dan Webster (R-Orlando)*, Chairman of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation and Economic Development, we are very confident he will do everything in his power to keep the State Transportation Trust Fund whole.

We have been working with Floridians for Better Transportation to obtain signed pledges from legislators stating they will oppose and vote against any sweep, raid or diversion of transportation trust fund dollars. To date, 23 Senators (out of 40) have signed the pledge and 17 (out of 120) House members. Use this link to see who has signed on: [Legislators who have signed the Transportation Trust Pledge](#) Please let them know you appreciate their support. Simply click on their e-mail address to send an email. This information is also available on the FTBA website.

Work Zone Safety

[HB 1103](#) by *Representative Dave Russell (R-Spring Hill)*
[SB 2414](#) by *Senator Jim Sebesta (R-St. Petersburg)*

We still do not have committee references on either of these bills. The bills will allow the use of camera-enforced radar in active construction work zones. We appreciate those who have emailed the Governor asking for his support on this issue. After meeting with his staff, we believe he will not be an obstacle. We just have to get it through the legislature.

Diversion Bills

[HB 491](#) by Representative Don Davis (R-Jacksonville)
[SB 1630](#) by Senator Gwen Margolis (D-Miami) -- WITHDRAWN

Senator Margolis withdrew her bill from further consideration! HB 481 relates to the Rental Car Surcharge. The bill reduces the percentage the STTF receives from the rental car surcharge and would give it to two tourism-related trust funds. According to FDOT the negative impact would be \$90 M to the work program.

[SB 2214](#) by Senator Evelyn Lynn (R-Ormond Beach)
[HB 1049](#) by the Committee on Transportation

These bills revise the specialty license plate formation process. The bills divert \$1 of motor vehicle license plate revenues from the STTF to the Highway Safety Operating Trust Fund for the recruitment and retention of state law enforcement. According to FDOT the negative impact would be \$140 M to the work program.

LEGISLATIVE RECEPTION

FTBA is co-hosting a Legislative Reception with the Asphalt Contractors Association of Florida, Florida Concrete and Products Association and the Underground Utility Contractors Association of Florida. The reception will be held on Monday, March 29th from 5:30 – 7:30 pm at Hospitality Square, 200 W. College.

A block of rooms has been secured at the Holiday Inn Select on Tennessee Street (this is the round Holiday Inn). Please call 800-648-6135 for reservations. The code for the group rate is: TRA.

High Speed Rail Press Conference

Governor Jeb Bush, along with CFO Tom Gallagher and Palm Beach Co. Commissioner Burt Aaronson, held a press conference this morning urging the support of a ballot initiative, allowing citizens to decide the fate of the “bullet train.” They stated Floridians need to be able to make an informed decision based on information now available. Much of their opposition to the railway stems from the tremendous cost of such an undertaking and its interference with other transportation projects. CFO Gallagher also mentioned his concern with Florida’s Bond rating should Florida have to proceed with the train.

They each signed a Constitutional Amendment Petition Form. If enough signatures are collected and the Supreme Court approves it, this could be on the November ballot. The ballot summary reads: “This amendment repeals an amendment in the Florida Constitution that requires the Legislature, the Cabinet and the Governor to proceed with the development and operation of a high speed ground transportation system by the state and/or a by a private entity.”

For more information on the Legislature, please use the following links:

[Florida Senate](#)

[Florida House of Representatives](#)

