



## Florida Department of Transportation

CHARLIE CRIST  
GOVERNOR

605 Suwannee Street  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0450

STEPHANIE C. KOPELOUSOS  
SECRETARY

April 1, 2009

Mr. Lee Chira  
Chairman  
Florida High Speed Rail Authority  
c/o Florida Department of Transportation  
605 Suwannee Street  
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0450

Subject: Intercity Passenger Rail Efforts

Dear Chairman Chira:

I applaud your passionate approach in pursuing high-speed and intercity passenger rail service for the State of Florida and your ideas to bring a portion of the \$8 billion provided by the federal government in the American Recovery & Reinvestment Act (ARRA). Since we jointly share responsibility for providing passenger rail service to the people of Florida, I believe it is important that we work together in this endeavor.

Florida's ability to compete for federal funds rests on a number of key aspects, as has been correctly indicated in some of the recent discussions. First, we must make certain that all appropriate documentation is complete and acceptable to federal agencies. Second, we must verify what funding, if any, will need to be made available from other sources. These factors are critical in light of the fact that state transportation revenues continue to decline, adding to the \$9 billion of Work Program projects which have already been deferred over the last two years. It is thus unlikely that new projects can be prioritized and funds committed to this effort.

However, I recognize the value in completing environmental documents in order to be considered for federal project funding and that a federal earmark of \$4 million is available to the state to proceed with this effort. In keeping with our efforts to streamline programs and reduce the cost of program service delivery, I propose that the department, using in-house staff, update the environmental documents as well as pursue a Record of Decision from the Federal Railroad Administration. Although we could use the Authority's existing PD&E consultant to contract to assist in this effort, using our own resources would result in significant savings to the state and it maximizes the federal earmark funds.

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Our staff is ready and willing to begin this task immediately. I hope to hear from you as soon as possible so that we can promptly initiate completion of the documents.

I look forward to our partnership in this endeavor.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "SKopelousos". The signature is written in black ink and includes a horizontal line extending to the right from the end of the name.

Stephanie C. Kopelousos  
Secretary

SCK:jp