

RESOLUTION NO. R-02- 322

A RESOLUTION OF THE MANATEE COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS SUPPORTING SARASOTA-MANATEE METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION'S RECOMMENDATIONS FOR REAUTHORIZATION OF THE TRANSPORTATION EQUITY ACT FOR THE 21ST CENTURY (TEA-21)

WHEREAS, the United States Congress will soon be considering new federal legislation reauthorizing the Transportation Equity Act for the 21 st Century which expires September 30, 2003; and

WHEREAS, the Manatee County Board of County Commissioners has actively participated both individually and through its membership and representation in the Florida Advisory Council in the development of recommendations regarding the federal reauthorization; and

WHEREAS, the recommendations (Attached Exhibit A) developed by the "State of Florida's Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century Florida Organization" express the positions and concerns of the Manatee County Board of County Commissioners; and

WHEREAS, implementation of these recommendations by Congress in the reauthorization legislation will enhance the critical transportation needs of the Manatee County Board of County Commissioners; and

ADOPTED IN OPEN SESSION WITH A QUORUM PRESENT AND VOTING
THIS 3rd day of December 2002.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
MANATEE COUNTY, FLORIDA

By: *Jerry Stein*

ATTEST: R.B. SHORE, Clerk
Circuit Court

By: *R.B. Shore*
bga

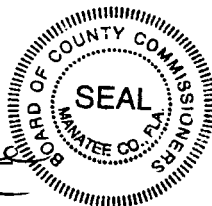


EXHIBIT A

TEA21FL Recommendations

Maximize the Return of Funding to Florida

Historically, Florida, as a "donor" state, has received less than a dollar back for each dollar sent to the Highway Trust Fund. Improvements were made in TEA-21. Even with these improvements, Florida still gets back about 88 cents on each dollar contributed. The next federal act should guarantee all states at least a 95 percent rate of return on all funds distributed to the states.

Protect and Strengthen Transportation Funding Guarantees

The Firewall and Revenue Aligned Budget Authority (RABA) provisions of TEA-21 should be strengthened to improve the predictability of funding and ensure that all revenues in the Highway Trust Fund are spent for transportation purposes.

Seek Opportunities for Increased Funding

Opportunities to continue to provide increased funding for transportation from the Highway Trust Fund and General Fund should be explored. Such opportunities include, but are not limited to, (1) eliminating the transfer of 2.5 cents per gallon on sales of gasohol to the General Fund, (2) rebating the 5.3 cents per gallon subsidy for gasohol from the General Fund to the Highway Trust Fund, and (3) spending down the balance of funds in the Highway Trust Fund.

Continue to Expand Innovative Financing Techniques

The innovative finance tools included in TEA-21 (Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA), State Infrastructure Banks, Grant Anticipation Revenue Vehicles (GARVEE) bonding authority, advanced construction provisions, and flexible match provision) should be continued. Additional tools should be considered.

Simplify the Federal Program Structure

Reauthorization of TEA-21 will bring many requests for additional programs and funding set-asides for targeted purposes. Over 40 new programs were created in TEA-21 and the previous act. The federal program structure can be simplified and the eligibility within the existing program structure should be broadened, if necessary, rather than adding new programs.

Support Florida's Environmental Initiative

Florida, in cooperation with federal agencies, is implementing an "Efficient Transportation Decision Making Process" to improve cooperative transportation decision making in a way that protects our natural and human environments. This will help provide the highest quality of life and optimal level

of mobility. Any changes in environmental requirements should enhance, not impede, Florida's process.

Exhibit A continued

Support Florida's Special Transportation Needs

Every state has special transportation needs that require extra attention. In Florida, mobility options for the elderly is an example of an area warranting special attention. Maximum flexibility should be provided in the next act so that each state can address its own special needs.

Coordinate Congressional Project Designations

Projects specified in the next surface transportation act and annual appropriations acts should be coordinated with the statewide and metropolitan planning process. This will minimize disruptions to state and local plans and programs and help ensure that project expectations can be met.

**Talking Points For
"The Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21)"
Reauthorization Legislation**

**Sarasota/Manatee Metropolitan
Planning Organization**

1. Florida Should Get More Revenue Returned

ISSUE: Florida Contributes more transportation money to the Federal Highway Trust Fund than it receives back (only 88¢ is returned to Florida for each dollar contributed).

SOLUTION: New Federal Act should guarantee all states are returned at least 95¢ for each dollar sent to Federal Highway Trust Fund.

2. Federal Funding is too Unpredictable

ISSUE: Funding to the states and metropolitan areas is too unpredictable causing delays and uncertainty in planning and making critical transportation improvements.

SOLUTION: Strengthen the provisions of the Firewall and Revenue Aligned Budget Authority (RABA) statute and prohibit using Highway Trust Fund revenues for non-transportation purposes.

3. Increased Funding Options

ISSUE: Currently gasohol sales are taxed at 5.3¢ per gallon less than regular gas (13.1¢ per gallon instead of the 18.4¢ per gallon on regular gasoline). In addition, of the tax revenues collected from the 13.1¢ per gallon gasohol tax, 2.5¢ per gallon is transferred from the Highway Trust Fund to the General Fund. Also, a large balance of funds is left unspent each year in the Highway Trust Fund. These policies reduce dollars which could be spent on much needed transportation projects.

SOLUTION:

- a) Prohibit the transfer of 2.5¢ per gallon gasohol tax revenue from the Highway Trust Fund to the General Fund; and
- b) Transfer 5.3¢ for each gallon of gasohol sales from the General Fund to the Highway Trust Fund to make up the revenue lost because of the gasohol subsidy; and

- c) Require federal agencies to spend the money in the Highway Trust Fund each year except for a very low carryover balance.

4. **Simplify and Add Flexibility to Federal Transportation Programs**

ISSUE: ISTEA and TEA-21 have created over 40 new transportation funding programs which restrict funding to very narrow targeted purposes. This means there is a large amount of planning, decision-making and administrative time expended to separately seek funds from the numerous programs.

SOLUTION: New legislation should broaden the eligibility and uses of funds from existing programs. Two examples of increasing simplicity and flexibility are: 1) to expand the number of programs from which funds can be used to pay for surface transportation projects; and 2) funding should be allowed in some program to pay for "transit operating costs" in urban areas over 200,000 population which is currently not permitted.

5. **Continue Innovating Financing Techniques**

ISSUE: Local communities are constantly challenged to find the necessary funds required to pay for transportation projects. Even when a project qualifies for federal funding, it is often difficult for local jurisdictions to pledge and allocate the required matching funds.

SOLUTION: TEA-21 provided some flexible financing techniques and programs such as the Transportation Infrastructure, Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA), State Infrastructure Banks, Grant Application Revenue Vehicles (GARVEE) bonding authority, advanced construction funding provisions and flexible match provisions. These tools should be continued in the new legislation and additional programs and tools considered.

6. **Support Florida's Special Transportation Needs**

ISSUE: Florida has special transportation needs such as mobility options for the elderly and an abundance of coastal communities. Current programs and funding are limited to use to study and solve these needs.

SOLUTION: New Act should provide maximum flexibility of eligibility and funding for programs to address Florida's special transportation needs.

7. **Congressional Projects Should Follow Normal Planning Process**

ISSUE: Annual appropriation acts by Congress include special project funds, commonly referred to as "pork belly" projects. These projects are currently not required to follow the normal state and metropolitan planning processes which can cause disruption and confusion to state and local projects and planning programs.

SOLUTION: The new Act should require congressional special projects and appropriations to follow the laws, rules and procedures of the state and metropolitan planning processes.