

Hundreds of State Businesses Support Mayors Response to Governor on High Speed Rail

Joint High Speed Rail Statement
Tampa Bay Partnership and Central Florida Partnership
March 3, 2011

With less than one day remaining to reach an agreement on High Speed Rail, the Governor and the Mayors supporting the project have reached an impasse. **Today, the Mayors of Tampa, Orlando, Lakeland and Miami sent a letter to the Governor addressing the remaining concerns he expressed in a meeting Monday evening.**

[Read the letter from the Mayors of Tampa, Orlando, Lakeland and Miami to Governor Rick Scott](#)

The Tampa Bay Partnership, Central Florida Partnership, Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce and the business communities they represent support this solution that spells out unequivocally that the Orlando to Tampa High Speed Rail line can be built with full protection for Florida taxpayers.

The letter outlines the structure devised to privatize the project and provides an explicit response to each concern raised by the Governor. The federal grant of \$2.4 billion dollars will pay for 90% of the project. Private contractors have expressed their willingness to pay the rest. All contracts would be handled by an entity formed by the Mayors that would protect the state from liability.

Any worthwhile investment has some risk, but the Mayors have managed to eliminate all reasonable and foreseeable risks, with the cooperation and approval of the U.S. Department of Transportation. **If we refuse to move forward based on the possibility of remote and speculative risks, then we will cease to invest in our future.**

This project presents a once-in-a-lifetime chance to build a high-impact project that will help transform our economy. It will create a link among great medical and technology centers in Orlando and Tampa, world-famous tourist attractions, and globally competitive airports and seaports, and it will be the start of a state-wide system linking Orlando, Tampa, Miami, and Jacksonville. **As the first bullet train in the United States, it will lay the foundation for a whole new industry for Florida, attracting businesses, tens of thousands of jobs, innovation, and talent to our State.**

We also strongly support construction of a statewide high speed rail system that will, in time, connect to an interstate high speed rail system. Tampa to Orlando is only the first leg. The Orlando to Miami corridor will be the critical second leg of the statewide system.

As was stated in the Mayors' letter, "If we do not go forward with this project, this decision will not contribute one bit to reducing the federal deficit or lowering the federal taxes Floridians pay. Instead, and quite ironically, we will simply be forced to stand by and watch the federal dollars Floridians have paid be diverted to other states to help build their high speed rail systems, putting Florida at an increasing competitive disadvantage."

We urge you to let the Governor know you support high speed rail in Florida.

**Office of Governor Rick Scott
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The Capital
400 S. Monroe St.
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0001**

(850) 488-7146

Email the Governor:

<http://www.flgov.com/contact-gov-scott/email-the-governor/>

We also encourage you to share this message with your employees, stakeholders, constituents and others through traditional and social media channels so the Governor can understand the importance of this project for our state and the level of support to do it right without burdening state taxpayers.

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