



LEE COUNTY
SOUTHWEST FLORIDA
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

John E. Manning
District One

February 14, 2012

Brian Bigelow
District Two

Ray Judah
District Three

Tammy Hall
District Four

Frank Mann
District Five

Karen B. Hawes
County Manager

Michael D. Hunt
County Attorney

Diana M. Parker
County Hearing Examiner

The Honorable Connie Mack
United States House of Representatives
115 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Mack:

Surface Transportation Authorization is currently being considered in both the House and Senate. Lee County is greatly concerned by the House Committee on Ways and Means tax title of the Surface Transportation Authorization Bill (HR 7). Specifically, we object to provisions that would redirect revenues from the 2.86 cents of the current motor fuel tax that are now dedicated to transit investment, to other purposes. Lee County believes strongly that fuel tax revenues that are now dedicated to public transportation should remain dedicated to public transportation in the new authorization bill.

For nearly 30 years, a portion of federal motor fuels tax revenues has been dedicated to transit investment under federal law. These tax revenues will generate an estimated \$25 billion over the 5 year period covered by the House bill and would support nearly 50 percent of the funds authorized for transit investment in the bill. These revenues are a dependable and predictable source of funding for transit investment and should remain dedicated to public transportation.

New funding sources will be required to fully fund both transit and highway investment authorized under the bill. These new funding sources should be used to help support authorized funding that cannot be paid for with existing dedicated revenues, instead of redirecting funding away from existing purposes.

As in many communities across Florida and the Country, Lee County is seeking ways to reduce auto dependence and expand transit options for our community. More people are using Lee County Transit (LeeTran) than ever before. Investment in public transportation in Lee County directly supports more than 250 local jobs, and provides thousands in our community with access to jobs, healthcare and education every day. The federal investment is being used to fund a new operations facility for LeeTran, which is estimated to bring 500 direct jobs to this community during the construction phase over the next two years. It is important that the long term stability and predictability of the federal program remains intact to allow major investments such as this one.

We urge you to join with us to oppose the proposal to divert the dedicated motor fuel taxes from transit to other purposes.

Sincerely,

John Manning, Chairman
Lee County Board of County Commissioners

JM/ng