

# RightTrackFlorida

## Weekly Newsletter Update - March 11, 2009

We're now in the Second Week of the Legislative Session in Tallahassee. To keep you properly informed; on a regular basis, the *Central Florida Partnership* will be providing this Weekly Electronic Newsletter Update on ***SunRail***.

We invite you to "bookmark" the web site for Right Track Florida at [www.RightTrackFlorida.org](http://www.RightTrackFlorida.org) and "check back" frequently for "daily postings" and "breaking news" between now and the end of the Legislative Session.



Top Left: Jason Shader Smith, Director of Youth Awareness for SunRail testifying before the Committee. Top Right: The Honorable D. Lee Constantine, Florida Senator, District 22; The Honorable Buddy Dyer, Mayor, City of Orlando. Bottom Left: Charles Lee, Sr., Director of Advocacy, Audubon of Florida, testifying before the Committee. Bottom Right: (From Left to Right) The Honorable D. Lee Constantine, Florida Senator, District 22; John C. Hitt, Ph.D., President, University of Central Florida; The Honorable Buddy Dyer, Mayor, City of Orlando; Alex Martins, Chair-Elect of the Central Florida Partnership, Chief Operating Officer, Orlando Magic.

### [SunRail Passes its Second Committee Hearing](#)

Today, Senate Bill 1212 passed its second Committee Hearing in as many weeks. The Florida Senate Committee on Judiciary, just moments ago, voted in favor of *SunRail* by a vote of 6 to 3. Please join me in thanking those leaders who supported the measure by sending a thoughtful email message.

Chair: [Senator Lee Constantine \(R\)](#)

[Senator Carey Baker \(R\)](#)

[Senator Mike Fasano \(R\)](#)

[Senator Mike Haridopolos \(R\)](#)

Senator Garrett Richter (R)

Senator Jeremy Ring (D)

*Business and Community Leaders Show Their Strong Support*

The *Partnership* couldn't do it without you! We are truly grateful for your continued time and commitment not only on the issue of commuter rail **SunRail**, but in realizing all the goals of the *Central Florida Partnership*.

Today was a shining example of the tremendous support of the business, civic and governmental leaders who "Traveled to Tallahassee" to support *SunRail*. A special thanks to: The Honorable Buddy Dyer, Mayor of Orlando and Chairman of the Central Florida Commuter Rail Commission; Charles Lee, Sr., Audubon of Florida and member of the Central Florida Transportation Corridors "Task Force"; The Honorable Michael McLean, Seminole County Commissioner; The Honorable Michael E. Harford, Osceola County Commissioner; H. Paul Senft, Jr., President & CEO, Haines City Economic Development Commission; Douglas B. Thomas, City Manager, City of Lakeland; Joe Smith, Principal, Joe Smith Enterprises; Matt Mucci, Vice President/Advocacy, *Tampa Bay Partnership*; Jim Cameron, Vice President, Government Relations, The Chamber, Daytona Beach/Halifax Area; Alex Martins, Chief Operating Officer, Orlando Magic and Chairman Elect, *Central Florida Partnership*; Jerry Miller, Progress Energy, member of the Central Florida Transportation Corridors "Task Force", and Chairman Elect of the Central Florida Development Council; Jeffery Q. Jonasen, Baker & Hostetler LLP and First Vice Chair, *Central Florida Partnership*.

Also in attendance today were: Billy L. Hattaway, P.E., Managing Director of Transportation - Florida, VHB/Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc., member of Central Florida Transportation Corridors "Task Force"; John C. Hitt, Ph.D., President, University of Central Florida; Douglas Conner, Centerplate, Inc.; Frankie Callen Elliott, Beverly Evans, Beverly Y. Pindling and Kathleen A. Gallagher-McIver, Representing the Orlando Regional REALTOR Association. Plus, we were joined by other members of the Core Strategy Team (CST) for Commuter Rail, Council of "Great Thinkers," Central Florida Transportation Corridors "Task Force," and Supporters and Investors in the *Central Florida Partnership*.

I especially want to call your attention to the powerful testimony of Jason Shader Smith, a 14-year old who spoke of Smart Growth, asking, "What's smarter than **SunRail**?" Jason, we couldn't agree more. Thank you for your intelligent remarks.

*What's Next?*

Senate Bill 1212 is now headed to the Florida Senate Transportation and Economic Development Committee (TED); however, it has not yet been calendared for action. At your convenience, please convey your personal thoughts about *SunRail* to the following members of the Florida Senate Transportation and Economic Development Committee (TED):

Chair: [Senator Mike Fasano \(R\)](#)

Vice Chair: [Senator Anthony C. "Tony" Hill, Sr. \(D\)](#)

[Senator Alex Diaz de la Portilla \(R\)](#)

[Senator Paula Dockery \(R\)](#)

[Senator Andy Gardiner \(R\)](#)

[Senator Christopher L. "Chris" Smith \(D\)](#)

[Senator Ronda Storms \(R\)](#)

### *It's Time to Rally!*

Our "*SunRail Rally*" is planned for Wednesday, March 18, 2009, from 11:45 to 12:15 p.m., in the Capitol Rotunda (Senate Side) in Tallahassee.

The "*SunRail Rally*" is part of the Capitol Connection, being advanced by a Coalition of Central Florida Chambers of Commerce (Apopka Area, East Orlando, Hispanic, Orlando Regional, Oviedo-Winter Springs, Seminole County Regional, West Orange and Winter Park).

The *Central Florida Partnership* is delighted to host this event and invited to be in attendance are Orlando Mayor Buddy Dyer, Chairman of the Central Florida Commuter Rail Commission, and the other members of the Commission; Orange County Mayor Richard Crotty, Seminole County Commission Chairman Carlton Henley, Volusia County Council Chairman Frank Bruno, and Osceola County Commissioner Brandon Arrington. Also invited to join us are Congressman John Mica and Congresswoman Corrine Brown and supporters from the Florida Senate and the Florida House of Representatives.

During the "*SunRail Rally*," it's planned that each of the Chambers of Commerce participating in the Capitol Connection will present their Resolutions of Support for *SunRail*.

### *Did You Know?*

According to a survey by the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) that despite job losses and falling gasoline prices, record numbers of Americans rode subways, buses and commuter rail last year, boosting public transportation ridership to its highest level in 52 years.

In fact, advocates say the ridership figures show growing support for public transportation. More investment in transit not only helps the economy, advocacy groups say, but also helps the environment and fosters energy independence.

"Now, more than ever, the value of public transportation is evident, and the public has clearly demonstrated that they want and need more public transit services," said APTA President William W. Millar. "These are investments that pay off for decades and decades to come," he said.

For the complete article, which appeared earlier this week, please "click" here: [Washington Post](#).

### *Don't Forget!*

Please go to our comprehensive web site, [www.RightTrackFlorida.org](http://www.RightTrackFlorida.org) to find recent reports, talking points, and articles of interest. In addition, please utilize the "Email Your Elected Officials" page to let Governor Crist, Florida's Cabinet Members, and the Legislature that you support commuter rail!

### *So You Will Know*

As our Governor and Legislative Leaders continue their work in Tallahassee, I will continue to represent the *Central Florida Partnership* "on the ground;" advancing *SunRail* and other key issues that will positively impact the Central Florida Region.

[Need More Information?](#)

Please let us know please if there is any information we may provide to you and your organization as we work enthusiastically toward successfully advancing **SunRail**.



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