

# RightTrackFlorida

Weekly Newsletter Update – April 15, 2009

## News

# MORE WORK FOR SUNRAIL

### *Weekly Electronic Newsletter About SunRail*

We're now on the "home stretch" 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 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. This edition of our Weekly Electronic Newsletter for [SunRail](#) provides highlights of the tremendous support [SunRail](#) now enjoys across the State of Florida.

### *SunRail Passes Temporarily Passed*

Over 73 "folks" submitted cards to "stand and speak" in support of [SunRail](#) (Senate Bill 1212) at this morning's Florida Senate Transportation and Economic Development Appropriations (TED) Committee Meeting. Due to many late filed amendments, and extensive debate on the bill, Florida Senate Transportation and Economic Development Appropriations (TED) Committee Chair Mike Fasano decided to "Temporarily Pass" the measure in order to continue the debate on [SunRail](#) at a later date and time.

By the end of business today, we will know when the rescheduled TED Committee Meeting will be held; it will either be Saturday, April 18, 2009, or Monday, April 20, 2009. As soon as a decision is made on when the next meeting is scheduled, and when the bill is to be heard, rest assured we will let you know to so that everyone will be able to make plans accordingly.





Upper Left: Senate Co-Sponsor Lee Constantine (R-Altamonte Springs) presents **SunRail** (SB 1212) to the Committee in front of a "standing room only meeting." Upper Right: Buddy Dyer, Orlando Mayor and Chair of the *Central Florida Commuter Rail Commission* talks to media after the Committee Meeting. Lower Left: Members of the Florida Senate Transportation and Economic Development Appropriations (TED) Committee, Senator Andy Gardiner (R-Orlando) and Senator Alex Diaz de la Portilla (R-Miami) discuss Amendments to **SunRail** (SB 1212). Lower Right: Linda Watson, LYNX Chief Executive Officer; Jeffery Q. Jonasen, First Vice Chair, *Central Florida Partnership* and Partner, Baker Hostetler; and J. Marsh McLawhorn, LYNX Chief Government & Community Affairs Officer, pictured at today's Committee Meeting.

### ***Strong Attendance by SunRail Supporters***

Thank you, too, to those who were able to make the trip to Tallahassee and stand in support of **SunRail**: Orlando Mayor and *Central Florida Commuter Rail* Chair Buddy Dyer; *Orange County* Mayor and *Central Florida Commuter Rail* Board Member Richard Crotty; *Volusia County Council* Chair and *Central Florida Commuter Rail* Board Member Frank Bruno; *Seminole County Commission* Vice Chair and *Central Florida Commuter Rail* Board Member Mike McLean; *Florida Transportation Commission* Chair Marcos Marchena; *Floridians for Better Transportation* President Doug Callaway; *Florida Chamber of Commerce* President and CEO Mark Wilson; *Winter Park* Mayor Ken Bradley; Debbie Grubb from the *Florida Council for the Blind*; *Jacksonville Transit Authority* Director of External Affairs Mike Miller; *Walt Disney World* Senior Vice President of Public Affairs Shannon MacAleavey; *Winter Park Council* person Karen Deibel; *TBARTA* Executive Director Bob Clifford; *Tampa Bay Partnership* President and CEO Stuart Rogel; *Work Force Central Florida* President and CEO Gary Earl; *Orlando Regional Realtor Association* President Frankee Elliott; *The Chamber, Daytona Beach/Halifax Area* Government Affairs Director Jim Cameron; *Tampa Bay Partnership* Vice President of Advocacy Matt Mucci; *METROPLAN ORLANDO* Executive Director Harry Barley; *Audubon of Florida* and member of the *Central Florida Transportation Corridors "Task Force"*, Charles Lee, Sr.; President & CEO, *Haines City Economic Development Commission* H. Paul Senft, Jr.; *Joe Smith Enterprises* Principal Joe Smith; *Orange Crown Holdings* Owner Ryan von Weller; LYNX Chief Executive Officer Linda Watson, *Orlando Regional REALTOR Association* Vice President Governmental Affairs Frankee Elliott, and *Baker Hostetler* and First Vice Chair, *Central Florida Partnership* Jeffery Q. Jonasen.

In addition, there were other members of the Core Strategy Team (CST) for Commuter Rail, Council of "Great Thinkers," Advocates and Supporters of **SunRail**, and the *Central Florida Transportation Corridors "Task Force;"* along with other business, government and civic leaders from across the *Central Florida* Region; all ready to stand in support of **SunRail**.

### *Your Calls and Emails Will Make a Difference for SunRail*

If you have not done so yet, I urge you to pick up the phone and call or email each of the members of the Florida Senate Transportation and Economic Development Appropriations (TED) Committee and ask for their support of **SunRail** (SB 1212). All Legislative Offices "count their calls" and, too, "count their emails." So, right now, please call each Senator on the Committee; please call their District Office; and please call their Capitol Office. Plus, a short email from you would go a long way if it were to be received by these Florida Senators.

**Chairman: Senator Mike Fasano (R)**

District Phone: 727.848.5885

Capitol Phone: 850.487.5062

Email: [fasano.mike.web@flsenate.gov](mailto:fasano.mike.web@flsenate.gov)

**Vice Chairman: Senator Anthony C. "Tony" Hill, Sr. (D)**

District Phone: 904.924.1646

Capitol Phone: 850.487.5024

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**Senator Alex Díaz de la Portilla (R)**

District Phone: 305.643.7200

Capitol Phone: 850.487.5109

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**Senator Paula Dockery (R)**

District Phone: 863.413.2900

Capitol Phone: 850.487.5040

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**Senator Andy Gardiner (R)**

District Phone: 407.428.5800

Capitol Phone: 850.487.5047

Email: [gardiner.andy.web@flsenate.gov](mailto:gardiner.andy.web@flsenate.gov)

**Senator Christopher L. "Chris" Smith (D)**

District Phone: 561.650.6801

Capitol Phone: 850.487.5112

Email: [smith.chris.web@flsenate.gov](mailto:smith.chris.web@flsenate.gov)

**Senator Ronda Storms (R)**

District Phone: 813.651.2189

Capitol Phone: 850.487.5072

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### *Congressional Delegation Supports SunRail*

Just yesterday, members of Florida's Congressional Delegation wrote to Senate President [Jeff Atwater](#), House Speaker [Larry Cretul](#), and Governor [Charlie Crist](#) stating that, "It is vital to Florida's future that we

create transportation systems that keep pace with other states. Central Florida and South Florida must develop efficient, competitive rail systems consistent with our nation's largest metropolitan areas."

"Not only can **SunRail** and the continued development of *Tri-Rail* relieve congestion, but they can also improve air quality, and stimulate economic development throughout the region and the entire state."

"Clearly, failure to act now during this legislative session in support of these critical transit projects will send federal transportation dollars to other states and damage Florida's credibility as Congress considers a major federal transportation bill this year."

### ***Resolutions and Letters of Support for SunRail***

There are now over 75 Resolutions and Letters of Support at [www.RightTrackFlorida.org](http://www.RightTrackFlorida.org). Orlando Mayor and *Central Florida Commuter Rail* Chair Buddy Dyer touted this incredible achievement in a recent letter to Florida Senators.

"More than 75 civic organizations, business groups and local governments from around Florida that stand in support of **SunRail**. As you are no doubt aware, Central Florida stands solidly behind this project. But this broad, grassroots list of supporters also includes many statewide organizations. These groups support **SunRail** because they understand the critical importance of a statewide rail network to Florida's future. They realize **SunRail** is a pivotal first step in achieving this goal. They also recognize that **SunRail** will help jump-start our ailing economy by immediately creating thousands of real jobs for Floridians desperately in need of work. They know that **SunRail** is critical to Florida's future."

### ***Development Council Endorses SunRail***

Earlier this week, Ray Gilley, Chair of the *Florida's Economic Development Council* (FEDC), sent a letter to legislators endorsing **SunRail**, "No doubt there are tough decisions to be made this Legislative Session. None are more important than those that keep citizens employed during this economic downturn."

"In addition to providing much needed jobs, it will also make Florida more attractive to businesses looking to expand or relocate and allow companies to tap into geographically broader talent pools, as well as to help ease congestion on our state's gridlocked roads. Suffice it to say, this is about more than just Central Florida – **SunRail** will be the backbone of a larger statewide system, changing the way Floridians travel for generations to come."

### ***County Commissioner Says "Go SunRail"***

*Orlando County* Commissioner Linda Stewart sent a "call to action" email to supporters Monday, asking them to contact Florida Senators, stressing the national importance of the effort. Stewart's push mirrors a similar one by the *Orange County League of Women Voters*, who also launched an on-line **SunRail** lobbying effort.

"One of the pillars of President Obama's agenda is a new rail system that will connect major cities all across the country. This initiative will be on the scale of President Eisenhower's interstate road system and will create millions of new jobs. He has dedicated \$8-billion in the stimulus package for high-speed rail corridors alone."

"Central Florida is at the top of the list for one of 11 high-speed rail projects around the country. Before we can begin the President's high-speed rail project, the State Legislature must pass **SunRail**."

### ***Florida Realtors Support SunRail***

Yesterday, the *Florida Association of Realtors* voted to support **SunRail** at its statewide public policy meeting in Tallahassee. [Frankie Elliott](#), Vice President of Governmental Affairs for the *Orlando Regional REALTOR Association*, announced the support of the *Florida Association of Realtors* at the meeting of the Florida Senate Transportation and Economic Development Appropriations (TED) Committee earlier today.

### ***SunRail Will Be Positive for Port Manatee***

Tuesday's *Bradenton Herald* Editorial reads that, "the Central Florida Commuter Rail Project, also known as **SunRail**, is the linchpin to greater rail access out of Port Manatee — and a boost for businesses. Container ships could drop their cargo here and ship it throughout the East Coast and beyond — by rail."

"Many ports, including Tampa's, are boxed in by urban development, contend with traffic congestion and would have difficulties adding ship berths. That's not the case with Port Manatee. With better access to rail, Port Manatee would rely less on trucks for distribution. That would ease traffic on our highways, another bonus, and unclog Interstate 4 through Orlando."

"With the passage of **SunRail**, commuter trains in the Tampa Bay region have a stronger chance of coming on line. The state could be spared the expense of widening Interstate 75 and other roadway expansions. We urge the Florida Senate to resolve the outstanding issues and approve **SunRail**. The economic development benefits to a major portion of the state — including Manatee County — are too great to pass up."

### ***Get the Word Out About SunRail***

Everything you need to help "get the word out" is at [www.RightTrackFlorida.org](http://www.RightTrackFlorida.org). Sample Resolutions of Support, important "Talking Points," recent News Articles, significant Letters of Support to Legislators, and most importantly, a place where you can reach out to the Governor, Cabinet, Members of the Florida House of Representatives and Members of the Florida Senate. With just "one click," you can let them know your feelings about **SunRail**.

### ***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**.