



CHARLIE CRIST
GOVERNOR

December 10, 2009

Secretary Ray LaHood
United States Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary LaHood:

I am pleased to inform you that the Florida Legislature, with the support of 111 state legislators, passed House Bill 1B on Tuesday, securing Florida's transportation future. This legislation will modernize the state's transportation system. I look forward to signing this legislation into law before December 24, 2009.

The transportation bill passed this week resoundingly demonstrates Florida's support for passenger rail transportation. As a result, the Sunshine State will reduce congestion on our roadways and create more efficient travel options for our residents and visitors. In addition, we look forward to the increased economic opportunities for local businesses and the subsequent job creation.

I am tremendously proud of the Florida Legislature for recognizing the importance of transit rail. It will not only modernize transportation in our most highly populated areas, but will also create jobs at a time when our state's unemployment rate tops 11 percent.

Florida has shown continued commitment to expanding rail service throughout our state, including developing high speed rail. Florida's Track 2 Application for the Tampa-Orlando-Miami High Speed Rail Program offers the best opportunity to deliver results as quickly as possible. Following Florida's pledge to further diversify our transportation system, I believe that high speed rail will be a critical component to strengthening our portfolio of alternative transportation. As you know, acceptance of Florida's Track 2 Application this year will ensure that implementation of the Tampa-Orlando segment can begin in 2010. Therefore, I formally request your approval of Florida's application to develop high speed rail.

Thank you for your careful and prompt consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Charlie Crist".

Charlie Crist

cc: Florida Congressional Delegation