



February 15, 2007

Governor Charlie Crist
Office of the Governor
The Capitol
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0001

Dear Governor Crist:

I am writing you on behalf of the METROPLAN ORLANDO Board because crucial transportation projects in Central Florida are at risk. Property tax reform proposals under consideration in Tallahassee could have a significant impact on the ability of local governments to fund projects and programs, including the Central Florida commuter rail project.

This commuter rail project represents a partnership of four counties, various municipalities, the Florida Department of Transportation, the United States Department of Transportation and CSX Transportation. The project is one of our top priorities and is essential for meeting the mobility needs of our region.

A major milestone was reached last August when Governor Bush came to Orlando to announce an agreement in principle with CSX Transportation that included the public acquisition of the "A" line corridor through Central Florida. In addition, he announced the state's financial commitment to the project. Since then, significant progress has been made to advance the project in accordance with federal and state regulations.

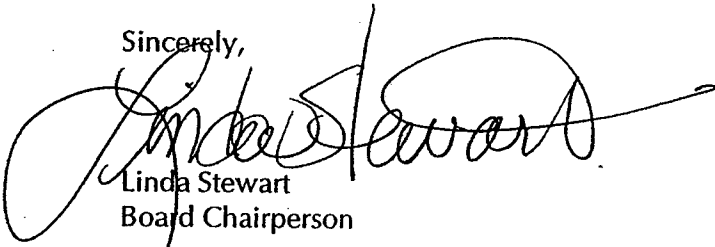
Work has been underway with the region's local governments on details for financing the project. Local governments are expected to provide \$140 million for the project's capital costs, or 25 percent of the total. In addition, local governments are expected to assume full responsibility for millions of dollars in operating and maintenance costs beginning in the year 2014.

Local governments made tentative commitments last year to provide the necessary funding to make this project a reality. These commitments were predicated on the best available local government revenue estimates at that time. However, if the proposed property tax reforms are approved and implemented, these will have a significant impact on local governments and it is likely that all prior commitments will need to be re-evaluated.

Governor Christ
February 15, 2007
Page 2

This matter was discussed at the METROPLAN ORLANDO Board meeting on February 14, 2007. It was the unanimous opinion of the Board that we needed to let you know that funding for the Central Florida commuter rail project could be at risk if all the property tax reform measures are implemented. We request that the implications of these proposals be fully analyzed and given careful consideration before any action is taken during the legislative session. An alternative would be for the State of Florida to fund an even larger role with the capital costs for the project and assume full responsibility for the long-term operating and maintenance costs after the year 2014.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Linda Stewart", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Linda Stewart
Board Chairperson

- c. Orange County Legislative Delegation Members
- Osceola County Legislative Delegation Members
- Seminole County Legislative Delegation Members
- Interim FDOT Secretary Stephanie Kopelousos