



May 22, 2017

Honorable Tom Rooney
United States Congress
2160 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Rooney,

On behalf of the Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority (PSTA), we are writing to offer our support of your efforts to restore Congress' Constitutional authority to make needed investments in our country's aging infrastructure. While your efforts are currently focused on vetted U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Bureau of Reclamation projects, we believe that restoring this critical Constitutional authority will allow a future Congress to prioritize funding for transportation projects, like the public transit infrastructure investments PSTA is making in our Pinellas Community. These projects are already scrutinized for their scientific and economic merit, and promote President Trump's agenda to restore America's aging infrastructure.

Throughout Florida, the public transit industry is implementing important infrastructure projects in our key urban areas including Jacksonville, Orlando, Broward County and here in Pinellas County. PSTA's Central Avenue Bus Rapid Transit project is strongly supported and advancing towards a 2020 opening. Our proposed tourist-oriented, traffic mitigation Clearwater Beach busway project is exactly the type of needed infrastructure project our Florida economy needs. It is welcome to see your support for Army Corps' projects that have similar public appreciation, and it is most appropriate for our elected representatives, the Congress, to participate in the prioritization and funding process.

Like the Corps' traditional process, the annual appropriations process used to give PSTA and other transit agencies a chance to secure funding for vetted transit capital projects, such as necessary bus replacements to ensure reliable service to our customers. But since 2011 this practice has been banned under the earmark moratorium. The earmark moratorium presents a consistent challenge for our local economy, particularly when we have no recourse to advocate for necessary federal funds for transportation projects that are endorsed by a range of local interests. PSTA supports your efforts to establish limited exceptions to the earmark moratorium in the hopes that it can be strategically expanded from Corps' projects to transportation investments as well.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "B. Miller", is written over a horizontal line.

Brad Miller, CEO
Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority

Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority

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