

PROPOSED MOTION REGARDING COCONUT ROAD INTERCHANGE
EARMARK—submitted by Carla Brooks Johnston, MPO Chair:
8-17-07

We have two problems:

- 1) We have a long list of transportation needs in Lee County—top of the list is making sure that I-75 is improved sufficiently to evacuate people from hurricanes.

Alaskan Congressman Young gave us \$10 million for a project that wasn't even on our list—a Coconut Road Interchange.

- 2) We lost \$10 million for improving and widening I-75 when, AFTER the House and Senate voted on H.R.3 Conference Report Bill, someone erased the \$10 million for “Widening and Improvement of I-75” and substituted “Coconut Road Interchange.”

For these reasons, I move:

- 1) that the MPO immediately cancel the study to produce a Coconut Road Interchange Justification Report.
- 2) That the MPO delete all Coconut Road Interchange related projects in both the 2030 Long Range Plan and in the Transportation Improvement Project list. These items were added only after the MPO thought there was no choice other than to spend the money on a Coconut Road Interchange.
- 3) That the MPO insert into the 2030 Long Range Plan and the TIP an indication that \$10 million is available for the “Widening and Improvement of I-75” with the detailed project expenditures to be brought to the MPO at a future meeting after FDOT, the TAC, CAC and relevant jurisdictions resolve the details.
- 4) That, in accordance with Section II.B. of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)/U.S. DOT Implementing Guidance (October 2006) for SAFETEA-LU (P.L. 109-59) High Priority Projects Program, Lee County MPO requests FDOT to submit to FHWA Division Office a loan request for 85% of the authorized amount from Project #462 of Section 1935 of P.L. 109-59 to Project #3828 of Section 1702 of P.L. 109-59.

In other words, under the provisions of section 1935 of SAFETEA-LU (P.L. 109-59), FDOT is authorized to lend contracting authority (CA) and obligational authority (OA) between any project listed in section 1934 (Transportation Improvement Projects), which includes project #462, Coconut Rd. Interchange, and projects numbered 3677 through 5173 in section 1702 (High Priority

- 5) That Lee County MPO authorize that MPO Chair send a letter to our Congressional Delegation respectfully requesting that the delegate take immediate steps to correct the record in order to honor the their actual Congressional vote for this earmark by inserting the appropriate language into a *Technical Amendment to SAFETEA-LU (119 Stat. 1509) [P.L. 109-59, Section 1934]* that would state the following:

The table contained in Section 1934 of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (119 Stat. 1509) is amended in item number 462 by striking 'Coconut Rd. interchange I-75/Lee County' and inserting 'I-75 widening and improvements in Collier and Lee County, FL'.

(Note: The first of several opportunities to do this is H.R.1195 Technical Corrections Bill, now in the Senate (S. 1611) on the Senate Calendar awaiting action. This bill already contains 13 SAFETEA-LU technical corrections to Florida projects of some 255 items in bill.)