



May 8, 2013

The Honorable Rick Scott
Governor
State of Florida
The Capitol
400 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0001

Dear Governor Scott:

I am writing on behalf of the MetroPlan Orlando Board to let you know that we strongly support the \$50 million appropriation contained in the budget approved by the Florida legislature for the "Close the Gaps" initiative in our coast-to-coast regional trail network.

MetroPlan Orlando is the regional metropolitan planning organization for Orange, Seminole and Osceola Counties. Our Board is comprised of elected officials and representatives from transportation operating agencies from throughout our service area.

Investments we have made in trails using federal, state and local dollars have proven to be very popular with the public. Trails serve an important transportation purpose for getting people to work and to school safely. In addition, they promote public health by encouraging people to be more active. Trails also provide for economic development opportunities.

According to Visit Florida and the Florida Park Service, 65% of Florida visitors and 72% of Florida residents say outdoor recreation is very important. Also, it has been reported that one of the most frequent requests at Visit Florida welcome centers is "Where can I bicycle in Florida?"

We are proud of our evolving regional trail network but funding to "close the gaps" will be a huge boost for promoting eco-tourism. The potential is there to position the Sunshine State as a year-round, global destination for cycling enthusiasts. This will help to achieve the goal of increasing the number of visitors to our state, both domestic and international.

We ask for your support of this appropriation.

Sincerely,

Commissioner Daisy W. Lynam
Board Chairman

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