



TO: Gentlemen, Excursions Plus
FROM: Jon McHenry
DATE: January 30, 2009
RE: Survey Results Regarding Florida Commuter Rail

Our firm completed 641 interviews throughout Florida this week, January 27-29, 2009, regarding the Department of Transportation's agreement to purchase railroad tracks from CSX. Our survey shows that a majority of voters – both statewide and within each region – oppose funding the agreement after hearing a series of facts about the agreement, and oppose a transfer of liability from CSX to the state. When presented with three options – keeping the agreement as it stands, rejecting the current terms and renegotiating the agreement, or rejecting the agreement outright – a majority of voters chooses an outright rejection of the agreement. Key findings of the survey are:

1. A majority of voters opposes funding the agreement with CSX. Florida voters oppose funding the agreement by a 61 to 25 percent margin statewide, including majority opposition in each region, as shown below.

	Northwest	Northeast	Central	Southwest	Southeast
Support	14%	27%	30%	17%	23%
Oppose	65%	62%	60%	71%	59%

2. Four-fifths of voters oppose transferring liability for tracks in the commuter rail corridor from CSX to the State of Florida. Voters statewide oppose this transfer by an 82 to 9 percent margin, with consistently high opposition within each region.

	Northwest	Northeast	Central	Southwest	Southeast
Support	3%	13%	11%	7%	8%
Oppose	87%	81%	80%	87%	83%

3. Given three options for their legislators to choose moving forward, a majority of voters choose an outright rejection of the agreement. Even when presented with an option of renegotiating the deal, voters prefer an outright rejection of the agreement, with the money applied to the current budget shortfall. The question wording was:

Please tell me which of the following three options for this agreement you would prefer your state legislators to choose: (ROTATE TOP TO BOTTOM, BOTTOM TO TOP):

- a. *Keep the agreement for commuter rail in place as it is;*
- b. *Reject the current purchase terms and price and start negotiations over; or*
- c. *Completely reject the deal and use the money to help solve the current budget crisis.*

Fifty-nine percent of voters statewide prefer an outright rejection, while 20 percent prefer renegotiation and 12 percent prefer to keep the agreement under its current terms. A majority of voters in each region prefers an outright rejection.

	Northwest	Northeast	Central	Southwest	Southeast
Keep Agreement	5%	18%	12%	8%	12%
Start Negotiations Over	17%	19%	23%	17%	18%
Completely Reject Deal	66%	57%	54%	68%	62%

Methodology

This survey of 641 registered voters was conducted January 27-29, 2009. Respondents were selected randomly from a list of registered voters throughout the state. Oversamples were conducted in smaller regions to ensure a margin of error below 10 percent within each of the five regions defined by the Florida Public Transit Act. Demographically, the sample reflects statewide voter registration, with 70 percent white, 13 percent African American, 12 percent Hispanic, and 6 percent Asian/other/refused. For the full sample, the margin of error for responses with an even split – 50 percent for one response and 50 percent for another response – is plus or minus 3.87 percent. By region, the margins of error for responses with an even split are: Northwest, plus or minus 9.90 percent; Northeast, plus or minus 9.70 percent; Southwest, plus or minus 9.85 percent; Central, plus or minus 7.19 percent; Southeast, plus or minus 7.85 percent.