



April 17, 2009

Stephanie C. Kopelousos
Secretary
Florida Department of Transportation
605 Suwannee Street, MS-32
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0450

Dear Secretary Kopelousos:

Since its inception in 1932, the Florida Utilities Coordinating Committee (FUCC) has demonstrated coordination through cooperation and an understanding with the Florida Department of Transportation. The FUCC membership is comprised of Utility owners, Consultants, Local Governments, Railroad representatives and Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) personnel from the State of Florida. This organization meets on a quarterly basis with this main objective: to accomplish the construction and reconstruction of roadways in Florida with the least amount of problems and set backs. The FUCC organization is over 77 years old and has satisfied our predecessors of roadway design and construction in this Great State of Florida.

Recently it has come to our attention that the current Economic Stimulus Package for Florida Roadway work has resulted in several questions and reservations of many of our Utility members. The need to discuss and plan the upcoming Stimulus package requires the most ever needed cooperation between our organizations since the inception of this Committee in 1932. The Stimulus package rollout throughout the State for MBE/DBE participation with prime contractors has been most admirable by your department. But Utility questions and concerns that I have been hearing from our membership can only conclude that there has been a communication breakdown covering the entire Stimulus process with the State Utilities. This communication is surely needed to avoid any future delays in projects and goal accomplishments that will be set by the State on the Stimulus projects selected by your District personnel. The upcoming FUCC meeting in May encourages attendance by Utility owners and Local Governments, as well as, FDOT District DUE/DUA participation. There is a need, more than ever, to resolve potential roadway utility issues that may be quite troubling to the Stimulus Roadway rollout and results if these issues are not addressed at this meeting. The need for all the FDOT District DUA's and DUE's to be present at this and our future FUCC meetings is imperative as well as critical to the mission of the FDOT to provide a safe transportation system by giving the motoring public, a safe, efficient and effective means of road re-construction.

Recently it was decided by your Central Office Staff that one person could represent the entire State of Florida at our meetings. In the past we have had 80% attendance from the entire State District DUE/DUA FDOT personnel. In fact, the FDOT Central office even coordinated their quarterly State meetings around our meeting schedule times with the FUCC providing meeting space during the conference. Today, I received notification from Tom Bane and Brian Blanchard of your Central Office Staff that **no one** will be attending our upcoming FUCC conference in May to represent your Department, a sad day for the FDOT and the State Utility Companies for future coordination efforts on roadway projects. During the past two years our organization has met with Tom Bane of your Central Office Staff to help in the organization and rewrite of the State Utility Accommodation Manual (UAM). This rewrite had several of our FUCC/UAO membership volunteering their time and travel to meet with Tom Bane on several occasions throughout the State for the main purpose to display cooperation through coordination with your office on this re write. Let me say, without the respect that our membership has for your office and the FDOT personnel that have attended our meetings this may not have been accomplished.

The FUCC has tried through the years to build a fair and equal playing field in the State concerning roadway work. By bringing the principals of roadway work together quarterly we discuss issues, as well as, programs and concerns that will affect roadway work in all the FDOT Districts. Without the DUE and DUA from each District in participation at the FUCC meetings is purely a step backwards in the sense of working together for a common cause.

We ask you to please reconsider the decision made at your Central Office level to limit FDOT participation at these meetings. There is no other time than now "**The State Stimulus Project rollout**" that indicates the "**mission critical**" attendance nature of these FUCC quarterly State coordination meetings that will ensure that the most efficient transportation projects will continue to be delivered to the citizens of this great State of Florida.

Our belief and commitment to the present structure of the FUCC organization is of such a vital nature that I would be willing to meet with you personally at your office to discuss any questions you may have in respect to the concerns that I have expressed in this letter. Hopefully at our next FUCC conference we will be able to sit once again with your District personnel at the grassroots' level and work out the potential roadway construction problems before they occur in the field.

Our partnership with the Florida Department of Transportation is crucial in roadway construction and growth. Let us continue to work together in the future and not apart.

Sincerely,



Gary A. Monday
Florida Utilities Coordinating Committee, Chairman
Visit us at www.fucc.org

cc: Florida Utilities Coordinating Committee Officers
Mr. Thomas Bane P.E. State Utilities Engineer, FDOT Central Office