

# M-CORES = Big Sham, Big Bucks, Big Questions

## 1. The task force process is looking more and more like a big *sham*; a *rubber stamp* of Senate President Galvano's costly whim.

- We found out on August 27 that the task forces will not be involved in determining routes. In fact, FDOT announced on October 16 that the routes will be announced in January 2020!
- The law signed by Governor DeSantis doesn't give the task forces the final say on whether the roads get built; it calls for highway construction to begin by 2022 no matter what the task forces recommend.
- At the House Transportation & Tourism Appropriations Subcommittee Wednesday, October 16, 2019, Rep. Jay Trumbull, R-Panama City said "The onus is on the department to make sure that there's enough public input moving forward, that it doesn't look like a card trick."

## 2. To add insult to injury, the "no build" recommendation may not even be an official option for the task forces.

- On October 16, the Sarasota Herald-Tribune reported that Will Watts, FDOT Chief Engineer, said "*No build is always an option*" and "*task forces can make any recommendation they want to.*"
- But, another FDOT source says "*the M-CORES Task Forces will develop guiding principles regarding avoid, minimize, mitigate, and enhance to guide the Department's planning and project development work and make related recommendations. The "no-build" option will be considered during the project development process.*" FDOT is in charge of the project development process, not the task forces.

**Bottom line:** Whether or not they can recommend "no build," task force members have no authority to actually stop these toll roads. They will only be able to recommend "minimizing" the catastrophic destruction these roads will inflict (whatever that means).

## 3. The "consensus based" decision-making mechanism being used with the task forces is part of the problem. It appears to be designed to effectively eliminate the "no build" recommendation option and to push task force members to stay quiet if they want to oppose or vote "no" on any proposed recommendation:

Straight from the FDOT M-CORES slide show:

### *Consensus Building Process*

- *Task forces will seek consensus on recommendations*
- *Consensus is striving for agreements members **can support, accept, live with, or agree not to oppose***
- *Task forces will develop recommendations using consensus building techniques with the assistance of facilitators*

## 4. "Nobody" wants these roads!

- Who spoke up for adding 300 miles to Florida's toll roads? Only road builders! Tampa Bay Times reporter Lawrence Mower revealed on October 6 that "*Out of hundreds of public comments solicited by the Florida Department of Transportation in August about the largest toll system expansion in 60 years, only two dozen came*