Mica supports billion-dollar high-speed rail in Florida, with a caveat

Congressman appears satisfied with federal stimulus for project.

Posted: January 19, 2011 - 12:00am

By Larry Hannan


Sort of.

On Tuesday morning Mica, chairman of the House Transportation Committee, expressed support for the project to the Florida Senate Transportation Committee, holding a meeting at the Florida Department of Transportation.

But Mica tempered his support by saying no state money would be used.

Federal stimulus money is expected to pay for about 20 percent of the cost.

The rest of the money should come from the private sector.

"This project includes a link from Orlando International Airport to Tampa," Mica said.

Mica also reiterated support for Amtrak service from Jacksonville to Miami, but stressed it had to make economic sense.

"Jacksonville to Miami is an important route," he said.

U.S. Sen. Bill Nelson, D-Fla., also expressed support for the project.

Mica is a frequent critic of Amtrak, and on Tuesday reiterated support for a private company.

Private support is also worth looking at on the Amtrak system.

The state estimates that 865,000 trips would occur in the first five years.

Mica's views are significant because of his position as a frequent critic of Amtrak, and on Tuesday reemphasized his support for a private company.

Rick Scott on Monday. Scott has not said if he plans to support the project.
The candidates          | The issues                          | "I think my views are in line with what Gov. Scott thin
Alvin Brown            | City finances                      | Kevin Thibault, executive director of Florida Rail Ent
Mike Hogan             | Unions & pensions                  | speed rail plans, and the state is moving forward with
Steve Irvine           | Public safety                      | Private companies have expressed an interest in a p
Warren Lee             | Downtown                           | If Scott decides not to build it, the federal government
Audrey Moran           | Jobs & the economy                 | another state. Ohio and Wisconsin refused money aft
Rick Mullaney          | Quality of life                     | their money is now going to Florida.

Mica said he supports efforts to get people out of cars
different transportation elements haven't come together.

"The people mover here in Jacksonville was built 30 years too soon," he said, referring to the Skyway. "It anything connecting to it."

A commuter rail system in Jacksonville would help the Skyway, and Mica urged officials to look at the new International Airport that is designed to encompass rail, air travel, buses and future high-speed rail.

That would be a good long-term model for cities like Jacksonville, and hopefully high-speed rail would ev
The state plans to extend high-speed rail from Orlando to Miami. A Jacksonville connection would be ne
The two most likely routes would parallel the CSX tracks from Orlando or have the system run next to th
Thibault said.

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Comments (4)

No tax dollars should go to
By palmreader | 01/19/11 - 08:04 am

No tax dollars should go to this train it will benefit only Disney and Busch Gardens. It would hurt all busi
What waste of money.
**I say do it, and begin**
By kauphycup | 01/19/11 - 09:33 am

I say do it, and begin construction the day Amtrak breaks even and the Skyway goes somewhere and b sustaining and there is a guarantee the system will not be subsidized by tax dollars Federal or local.

**i don't have a problem with**
By Billy Jones | 01/19/11 - 09:39 am

i don't have a problem with mica and his statements.......this is an interesting time......

**They're ALL tax dollars!!!**
By John Galt | 01/19/11 - 11:21 am

They're ALL tax dollars!!! What a moron. Mica needs to go home and the sooner the better.

"Shrug"

"Quemadmoem gladis nemeinum occidit, occidentis telum est". ("A sword is never a killer, it's a tool in hands.") Lucius Annaeus Seneca "the younger" ca. 4 BC - 65 AD

"Si vis pacem, para bellum."