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March 14, 2006

Dr. William C. Merwin
President
Florida Gulf Coast University
10501 FGCU Blvd, S.
Fort Myers, FL 33965-6565

Dear President Merwin:

Thank you for contacting me to seek my support for the proposed Transportation Management Center at Florida Gulf Coast University. I appreciate your taking the time to share your thoughts with me about this important and exciting project.

Florida Gulf Coast University (FGCU) is tremendous asset for Southwest Florida, and the addition of the FGCU Transportation Management Center will add even more value to the University's presence in the region.

Last year, House Transportation Committee Chairman Don Young visited Southwest Florida to see first hand the extent our region's transportation infrastructure challenges. During our town hall meeting, FGCU officials shared the Transportation Management Center concept with Chairman Young, Congressman Mario Diaz-Balart, and me.

I share your opinion that the creation of a transportation center of excellence at FGCU would bring together and unleash the best minds in the country to assure that the United States transportation system remains the safest, most secure, and most efficient in the world. Through these efforts, FGCU would be able to leverage the collaborative efforts of all levels of government together with public and private partnerships in order to advance the technological future of our nation's transportation community.

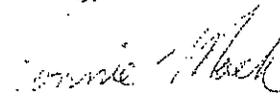
The Coconut Road ITS interchange, built in conjunction with the FGCU Transportation Management Center, stands to be the cutting edge demonstration project in America to study and improve hurricane and crisis evacuation transportation safety programs. In addition, given Southwest Florida's phenomenal growth, coupled with the critical role I-75 plays as an evacuation route and in the region's daily economy and quality of life, I believe there is not a more appropriate place in the country to locate this demonstration program.

Dr. William C. Merwin
March 14, 2006
Page 2

However, as we discussed, in order for this project to reach its full potential, the Lee County Metropolitan Planning Organization must approve in its Financially Feasible Long Range Transportation Plan a full interchange at Coconut Road and Interstate-75.

Please feel free to contact me if I can be of any further assistance on this or any other matter.

Sincerely,



CONNIE MACK
Member of Congress