

December 9, 2013

Pinellas Board of County Commissioners  
315 Court Street  
Clearwater, FL 33756

Re: Greenlight Pinellas Referendum

Dear Honorable Commissioners,

On behalf of the members of the St. Petersburg Area Chamber of Commerce, we thank you for your commitment to serve Pinellas County, your focus on providing a positive economic climate for business, and for creating a desirable community for our visitors and residents.

On Tuesday, December 10th you'll be considering approving the Greenlight Pinellas Referendum and we offer our support for this very important referendum. The St. Petersburg Area Chamber of Commerce Board of Governors unanimously supported the motion to endorse the Greenlight Pinellas Referendum – attached. Economic Development is the #1 priority of our Chamber, and our community needs a public transportation system that meets the growing needs of employers and the labor force, while providing a solid foundation for economic expansion.

As the advocate for the business community, our Chamber works to provide leadership on economic growth and community vitality. A robust transportation system would allow for an increase in employment and growth in the economy - a vision that the St. Petersburg Area Chamber supports.

By replacing the ad valorem tax with a 1 cent sales tax, the enhanced bus service and light rail will provide for the redevelopment of commercial and residential areas, and the creation of transit connections between major activity centers. Most importantly, the extended late evening and early morning hours will improve economic growth, by providing viable transit for second shift and third shift workers.

We have America's best beaches, a diverse population, and a great business climate. Yet the lack of convenient, viable public transit system puts us all at an increasing economic disadvantage to peer cities with robust transit systems. Residents and tourists alike will benefit from an improved transportation system.

Please approve the Greenlight Referendum.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



David R. Punzak  
Chair, St. Petersburg Area Chamber of Commerce