



## NEWS RELEASE



### IM4Transit.org Gains Steam in Recruiting 100,000 Pro-Transit Floridians

#### HART Rider Wins HDTV by Simply Saying, “I am for Transit”

TALLAHASSEE, FL – March 9, 2011 – The IM4Transit campaign of the [Florida Public Transportation Association](http://www.floridapublictransit.org) is on track to build a community of hundreds of thousands of pro-transit Floridians. The association announced today that HART rider Maria Melaragno of Tampa is winner of the monthly drawing for a 42” HDTV donated by the business community.

“Taking the bus to work makes my whole day better. When I drive alone, it’s just me and irritating traffic. When I take the bus, I get to say hello to my neighbors at the bus stop. While riding, I simply relax, read, or chat with my friends on the bus. It’s just a much more pleasant start of the business day.” Maria went on to say that, “Riding the bus saves money, it’s green, and it makes me feel good not to buy so much gasoline”. As a certified professional planner, Maria knows that fixed-route public transportation creates jobs and is a catalyst for economic development.

“Maria is an example of the growing number of passengers who value the convenience and benefits of public transit,” said David Armijo, CEO of Hillsborough Area Regional Transit Authority (HART). “During the past few years, HART has implemented improvements to its service -- such as more late-night service, more shelters and improved frequency of buses – to provide a better product to customers. Our growth in ridership is in response to these improvements.” HART bus ridership in February 2011 was 1,138,046, compared to 958,515 last year -- a 19 percent increase!

IM4Transit is a new campaign of the Florida Public Transportation Association to recruit 100,000 Floridians to stand up and be counted as supporters of public transit. Sign up on [IM4Transit.org](http://www.im4transit.org) or look for IM4Transit on Facebook and Twitter. Maria Melaragno wins a prize valued at \$500 because her employers, Tindale-Oliver Planning and Engineering, invited employees to sign up at [www.facebook.com/im4transit](http://www.facebook.com/im4transit). The HDTV was donated by [Tectrans](http://www.tectrans.com).

The Florida Public Transportation Association is a nonprofit association whose members include every major public transit agency in Florida, as well as interested citizens and businesses. The FPTA acts as a collective voice in promoting the recognition, use, expansion and enhancement of public transportation in the state of Florida. The transit industry in Florida employs tens of thousands of Floridians, transports about 262 million riders a year, and creates billions of dollars per year in annual economic activity.

*For more information visit [www.im4transit.org](http://www.im4transit.org)*

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