



# Florida House of Representatives

*Representative Adam M. Fetterman*

District 81

**District Office:**

Building B  
121 SW Port St Lucie Boulevard  
Port St Lucie, FL 34984  
Office: (772) 873-6500  
Fax: (772) 873-6502

**Tallahassee Office:**

1401 The Capitol  
402 South Monroe Street  
Tallahassee, FL 32399

**Email:**

[Adam.Fetterman@myfloridahouse.com](mailto:Adam.Fetterman@myfloridahouse.com)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

**CONTACT:**

Gaby Suarez  
O: (850) 488-8749  
[Gaby.Suarez@myfloridahouse.gov](mailto:Gaby.Suarez@myfloridahouse.gov)

**REP. ADAM FETTERMAN FILES 'RESTORE TRUST IN GOVERNMENT' ACT**

**PORT ST. LUCIE, Fla.** —State Representative Adam Fetterman (D-Port St. Lucie) filed House Joint Resolution 389 (HJR 389) today that would make it more difficult for lawmakers to raid state trust funds.

“For too long, Florida lawmakers have used bait-and-switch tactics when setting aside taxpayer dollars for specific purposes,” said Representative Fetterman. “My measure would amend the state constitution to make it much harder for the Legislature to raid state trust funds. In essence, we need to put the ‘trust’ back in ‘trust fund,’ and my measure will do just that.”

In recent years, budget watchers have become increasingly alarmed that lawmakers are using designated trust funds for other purposes.

These funds are initially set aside for important projects or programs with the promise that the designated money would *only* be used for that purpose.

In 2009 alone, over \$500 million in trust fund monies were diverted to balance the state budget. One notable example is a trust fund established to clean underwater contamination. In previous years, gasoline taxes funded the cleanup of underground and outdated storage tanks with the promise that monies would help offset the cost of cleanup. But in 2009, more than \$140 million was taken from the trust fund to pay for general government purposes.

“My idea is simple in that it says when we make a promise to taxpayers, we keep that promise,” said Representative Fetterman. “Is it any wonder that the public has lost faith in state government when lawmakers can’t even keep a simple promise? My bill will help force future legislatures to keep their word.”

Representative Fetterman's proposal is being submitted as a Joint Resolution, which requires a three-fifths majority vote of support in both chambers for it to be approved. If the measure passes both chambers, voters will then have the opportunity to consider it on the November 2010 general election ballot as an amendment to the Florida Constitution.

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