

Sun News, The (Myrtle Beach, SC)  
November 5, 2005  
Section: MONOP  
Page: A8

## SENATORS USE I-73 AS PAWN?

How upset should Grand Strand and Pee Dee residents be that both U.S. senators from South Carolina co-sponsor a bill that would kill Interstate 73? Sen. Lindsey Graham says: Not at all. He and co-sponsor Sen. Jim DeMint still support I-73 but are offering it up as a sacrifice to shame Congress into slashing the real pork from this year's transportation legislation.

Their bill, however, would strip all earmarked transportation projects out of the transportation legislation. The \$81 million allocated toward our road would be redirected to Gulf Coast reconstruction costs from Hurricane Katrina, along with the money for Alaska Rep. Don Young's infamous bridges to nowhere and other indefensible pork barrel projects.

Katrina relief is a worthy cause, to be sure. But by making I-73 and the people who need it a pawn in a Washington chess game, our senators invite their colleagues in Congress to view our project as frivolous, too. In reality, I-73 is an economically vital highway that also would abet evacuation if a Katrina-force hurricane takes aim at our state.

DeMint and Graham are playing a dangerous game. If they value their Horry County support at all, they had better make it work.