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Our take on: A jobs roadblock & Osceola County Jail

A jobs roadblock

Lawmakers in Tallahassee have declared creating jobs to be a top priority. That's a good thing. Figures released this week show the unemployment rate in Florida hit 11.9 percent in January; it was even higher in Metro Orlando, at 12.4 percent.

So why would lawmakers even consider raiding \$428 million from the state's transportation trust fund to balance the budget? The head of a construction-industry trade group said this week that the raid would eliminate funding for projects that could create between 80,000 and 100,000 road-building jobs.

Lawmakers should leave trust funds alone. There are far better ways to close the state's budget gap, such as streamlining agencies, targeting fraud in health and insurance programs, and cutting back on perks for higher-paid state employees.

Bartles & jail

Michael Rigby, the alleged king of the Bloods street gang in [Poinciana](#), remains at large after slipping away last month from the [Osceola County Jail](#).

Perhaps inmates toasted his escape with cocktails. Turns out the bar's open behind bars at Osceola's joke of a jail. Corrections officers Tuesday discovered six inmates were brewing "buck" — homemade hooch often bartered for goods or favors.

Using a stash of fruit stuffed into a large plastic bag, the inmates fermented the liquor inside a wall space between adjoining cells. Of late, the jail's endured a suicide, a smuggled gun, Rigby's escape and moonshiners. What's next, a meth lab?

County and jail officials need to figure out what's broken — or bring someone in who can.