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Using Spanish-led company for I-595 project should have little roadblocks

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Recent letters to the editor lamenting the choice of a Spanish-led consortium for I-595 reflect a great misunderstanding of the deal. This \$1.2 billion project will start construction this summer only because the Florida DOT sought and found teams that could finance the entire project up front, in addition to building, managing and maintaining the rebuilt roadway in excellent condition for the next 35 years. No U.S.-led teams were available with the financial capability and the track record in operating toll lanes. The second-place finalist, led by Australia's Babcock & Brown, proposed a significantly more costly project than the winning team led by Spain's ACS.

Those worried about construction jobs being outsourced to Spain should stop worrying. It makes no sense for global companies like ACS to bring construction workers from half a world away, when ample labor exists here in South Florida. Likewise, the construction materials will be sourced locally. U.S. members of the team will play a major role in designing the project, and numerous U.S. subcontractors will help build the project. ACS's Spanish and other shareholders hope to make a profit from the project and since they have brought \$1.2 billion to the table, aren't they entitled to a chance at reaping some reward?

Robert W. Poole, Jr. is director of transportation policy for the Reason Foundation

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