



NVTTC

Northern Virginia Transportation Commission

April 8, 2005

Chairman
Hon. Paul Ferguson

Vice Chairman
Hon. Gerald E. Connolly

Secretary/Treasurer
Hon. David F. Snyder

Commissioners:

City of Alexandria
Hon. William D. Euille
Hon. Jay Fiset
Hon. Christopher Zimmerman

Fairfax County
Hon. Sharon Bulova
Hon. Gerald E. Connolly
Hon. Catherine Hudgins
Hon. Dana Kauffman
Hon. Elaine McConnell

City of Fairfax
Hon. Scott Silverthorne

City of Falls Church
Hon. David F. Snyder

Loudoun County
Hon. Eugene Delgaudio

**Virginia Department of Rail
and Public Transportation**
Karen Rae

Virginia General Assembly
Sen. Jeannemarie Devolites Davis
Sen. Mary Margaret Whipple
Del. David B. Albo
Del. Adam P. Ebbin
Del. Timothy D. Hugo
Del. Gary A. Reese

Executive Director
Richard K. Taube

Honorable John Warner
United States Senate
225 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510-4601

Dear Senator Warner:

At its meeting on April 7, 2005, the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission discussed the status of the federal transportation reauthorization bill. While the commission is generally pleased with HR-3 as passed by the House of Representatives, one aspect of this bill is particularly troubling.

HR-3 proposes to alter current federal law with regard to value pricing and tolling. Virginia and many other states view value pricing (also referred to as "congestion pricing") and tolling as an important supplemental source of transportation funding and method for managing transportation demand. Several large projects in Virginia include I-395/95 and I-495 here in Northern Virginia and I-81. Thus, the Commission strongly supports changes to federal law that would give states greater latitude to use these tools, but HR-3 as drafted does just the opposite by capping the number of such projects nationwide.

In Sections 1209, 1603, and 1604 of HR-3 as approved by the House, the total number of projects allowed by these sections would be limited to 25, three, and three, respectively. Previously approved pilot projects count against these caps, and the total number of projects approved to date exceeds what HR-3 would allow.

In short, if these unfortunate provisions of HR-3 are enacted by the Senate, states (including Virginia) would be prevented from starting new congestion pricing/tolling projects for the duration of the act. This would have profound, negative implications for Virginia and other states entertaining new congestion pricing/tolling projects by , preventing what promises to be a very potent funding and demand management strategy.

I urge you and your colleagues representing the many states that view congestion pricing/tolling as a vital tool to enact a reauthorization bill that does not contain the limitations that are imposed by HR-3. Last year's Senate reauthorization bill (S1072) did not contain these limits and could serve as a useful starting point.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

Paul Ferguson
Chairman

cc: Virginia Congressional Delegation