

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Below is background information on the legislative priorities of the HRTPO 2016 Legislative Agenda:

- The HRTPO supports pursuit of federal/state funding by the Commonwealth of Virginia for preparation of a Tier II Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the continuation and expansion of intercity and higher-speed passenger rail service from Richmond to Hampton Roads. The estimated cost for the Tier II EIS is \$25 million.
 - Background: This project provides a higher-speed passenger rail link from Hampton Roads to the proposed Southeast High-speed Rail Corridor and existing Amtrak Northeast Corridor via Richmond Main Street Station. A TIER I EIS Record of Decision (ROD) was issued and became effective on December 7, 2012. A TIER II analysis would include site specific planning and detailed evaluations of the selected alternative; determine capital improvements for tracks, structures, station locations, routing within existing right-of-way, and bypasses. Upon completion of the study and permitting process, construction could proceed. The TIER II EIS for the Richmond to D.C. project is funded through a \$55 million cooperative agreement between the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) and the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA). The Raleigh to Richmond Southeast High Speed Rail Corridor project TIER II EIS is funded with \$3,845,250 DRPT, \$3,129,750 NCDOT, and \$4,000,000 FRA monies for a total of \$10,975,000.
- The HRTPO supports pursuit of federal/state funding for the widening of I-64 between the Hampton Roads Region and the Richmond Region.
 - According to the Governor, the I-64 Corridor between the Peninsula and Richmond is one of the two high priority corridors in the State. This is a critical transportation corridor between Hampton Roads and Richmond for the movement of people and goods. Segment I of this corridor from Jefferson to Lee Hall/Yorktown is currently under construction. The I-64 Peninsula Segments 1-3 from Jefferson to Route 199 West of Williamsburg (21 miles) is one of the three HB2 applications (#1 ranking) submitted by HRTPO. The Richmond Regional TPO has submitted, as an HB2 project, the segment between I-295 and Bottoms Bridge, about 5 miles (#6 ranking). The middle section from Bottoms Bridge to Route 199 West in Williamsburg (more than 30 miles) is not funded and no HB2 application has been submitted thus far. The Richmond Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RRTPO) and the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization are collaborating to address the gap in the I-64 corridor.

- The HRTPO supports the pursuit of funding for trains 2 and 3 from Norfolk to Washington D.C.
 - Background: DRPT's Rail Division supports both freight and passenger rail initiatives in Virginia through funding and advocacy for railroad network improvements. Improvements are implemented through four grant programs, with funds from other sources, such as the federal government, leveraged when possible. Passenger Rail funding includes operation of intercity passenger rail services. Currently, there is one daily round trip from Norfolk to Washington D.C. and the Northeast Corridor (Route 50). The addition of Train 2 from Norfolk to Washington D.C. is in the DRPT's FY 2016-2021 Six-Year Improvement Program (SYIP). State funding has been allocated for operating costs (\$2 million FY-20, \$2.06 million FY-21) for train two; capital equipment contribution for the second train of (\$4 million FY-16, \$8 million FY-17, and \$7 million FY-18); and capacity and speed improvement for a two train extension to Norfolk of (\$12 million FY-16, \$32.8 million FY-17, \$42.1 million FY-18, and \$20.1 million FY-19).

- The HRTPO supports amending the enabling legislation for HB 1402 (Highway maintenance: payments to City of Richmond for moving-lanes converted to bicycle lanes) to include any local government.
 - Background: The current enabling legislation for HB 1402 provides that cities and towns that receive highway maintenance payments from the Commonwealth based on moving-lane-miles of highway will not have such payments reduced if moving-lane-miles of highway are converted to transit-only lanes and allows the City of Richmond to convert 20 moving-lanes to bicycle lanes and not lose its maintenance payment. The bill also directed the Secretary of Transportation to report by December 1, 2015, on an appropriate maintenance formula for bicycle lanes. The appropriate formula recommendations or allocation for the maintenance of bicycle-only lanes has not been released.

- The HRTPO supports gubernatorial appointment(s) of additional Hampton Roads representation to the Commonwealth Transportation Board.
 - Background: According to Virginia Code §33.2-200. (Effective until July 1, 2016), The Commonwealth Transportation Board shall have a total membership of 18 members that shall consist of 14 nonlegislative citizen members and four ex- officio members as follows: the Secretary of Transportation, the Commissioner of Highways, the Director of the Department of Rail and Public Transportation, and the Executive Director of the Virginia Port Authority. The nonlegislative citizen members shall be appointed by the Governor as provided in §33.2-201, subject to confirmation by the General Assembly, and shall serve at the pleasure of the Governor. Appointments of nonlegislative citizen members shall be for terms of four years commencing on July 1, upon the expiration of the terms of the existing members, respectively. Vacancies shall be filled by appointment by the Governor for the unexpired term and shall be effective until 30 days after the next meeting of the ensuing General Assembly and, if confirmed, thereafter

for the remainder of the term. The Hampton Roads Highway Construction District is represented by one member on the CTB and until recently, Hampton Roads was represented by three CTB members. The Hampton Roads Region contains approximately 20% of the population of the Commonwealth of Virginia yet is represented by only 7% of the Commonwealth Transportation Board voting membership (1 of 14).

- Supports HRTAC efforts to revise its enabling legislation to improve both operational and governance efficiencies.
 - Background: The HRTPO supports the Hampton Roads Transportation Accountability Commission (HRTAC) 2016 Legislative Agenda. The items in the HRTAC 2016 Legislative Agenda include revisions to the current enabling legislation. The items listed in the draft agenda are as follows:
 - *Transfer of HRTF Monies to HRTAC*
 - *Expanded Use of HRTF Monies for Administrative Expenses*
 - *Commission Member “Designees”*
 - *Continuity in Representation of Counties*
 - *System-Wide Financing Approach*

- The HRTPO supports Congressional approval for a long-term surface transportation funding authorization act.
 - Background: Federal transportation funding is being maintained through the use of short term extensions to the *Moving ahead for progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP 21)*. The Highway Trust Fund is becoming insolvent and is no longer a viable option as the major source of funding for maintaining and building our national transportation infrastructure. Short-term authorization extensions do not provide the dependable funding stream necessary for making significant improvements to a regional transportation system. Hampton Roads is a region of national importance and a significant economic engine for Virginia that relies on a robust and reliable transportation system. Building and operating an intermodal transportation system that provides reliable and safe mobility for individuals, as well as the efficient movement of goods and delivery of services, requires a dependable, stable, and long-term source of funding.

- The HRTPO supports Congressional approval of the Marketplace Fairness Act (MFA) and that the revenues from the passage of the act are allocated in accordance with HB 2313.
 - Background: To date, Congress has not passed the Marketplace Fairness Act which triggered an increase from 3.5 percent to 5.1 percent in Virginia’s wholesale gas tax on January 1, 2015. Revenues from the passage of the MFA would accrue to the Transportation Trust Fund and be allocated by existing formula, in addition to providing funding to support local transportation. This is not a new tax since consumers are required under existing state law to pay sales and use taxes on the goods they purchase. Online sellers are not

required to collect taxes the same as local businesses which puts the local businesses at a disadvantage. Consumers can be audited and penalized for failing to pay sales and use tax, but states are often not able to enforce the requirement. The MFA allows states to collect sales and use taxes through the Streamlined Sales and Use Tax Agreement (SSUTA) or with the adoption of minimum simplification requirements.

- The HRTPO requests that the U.S. Congress reward regions that increase local taxes to begin bridging the gap between federal transportation funding and transportation infrastructure needs by providing bonus funding to these metropolitan regions.
 - Background: The Hampton Roads Planning District (PD23) has generated additional revenues, primarily through HB 2313 legislation (HRTF), which were approved by the General Assembly in 2013. The revenues raised are solely for new construction projects on new or existing highways, bridges, and tunnels in the localities comprising Planning District 23. Priority is given to projects that provide the greatest reduction in congestion for the greatest number of citizens. The additional revenues raised at the regional level are substantial and worthy of recognition and consideration during the Federal transportation funding allocation process.