

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
General Assembly
Richmond

September 15, 2010

The Honorable Charles J. Colgan
President pro tempore
Senate of Virginia
P.O. Box 396
Richmond VA 23218

The Honorable William J. Howell
Speaker
House of Delegates
PO Box 406
Richmond VA 23218

Dear Senator Colgan and Speaker Howell:

Thank you for forwarding a copy of your September 14 letter to Jay Fisette, Chairman of the Arlington County Board, regarding the I-95/395 HOT lane project. We share and appreciate your support for meaningful measures to deal with the transportation crisis in Northern Virginia, and we believe that properly designed and managed HOT lanes in this corridor could be one such measure. At the same time, we believe that the Arlington County Board has the responsibility to take all appropriate steps to defend its constituents' interests when it feels those interests are not adequately addressed in the transportation planning process. Clearly the County Board felt that issues involving the environmental impact should be properly assessed in the case of the planning and design for the I-95/395 HOT lanes project.

Concern over the details of this project is not limited to Arlington County. You may be aware that on September 7 Chairman Sharon Bulova of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, Alexandria Mayor William Euille, and Chairman Fisette wrote to Governor McDonnell. In that letter, they provided a consensus list of outstanding technical issues that must be resolved if the project is to achieve its goal of moving people through the corridor efficiently. A copy of their letter and list is attached.

Due to financial considerations, this project has been on hold for over a year. While it is regrettable that the parties failed to take advantage of this hiatus by engaging in constructive dialogue to resolve these issues, the joint Fairfax/Alexandria/Arlington letter provides the basis for a renewed effort to reach closure. We hope that you will use your good offices to urge the Governor and VDOT to come to the table and negotiate in good faith; we will do the same at the local level.

We have discussed this matter with members of the Arlington County Board. Based on those conversations, we are confident that the Board is not pursuing litigation for its own sake, but rather seeks to ensure through the legal process that the County's legitimate environmental impact concerns are adequately addressed. We agree and hope that all parties to this dispute will act to resolve it expeditiously so that we can work together to meet Northern Virginia's pressing transportation needs.

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/s/
Robert H. Brink
Delegate, 48th District

/s/
Patrick Hope
Delegate, 47th District

/s/
Mary Margaret Whipple
Senator, 31st District

cc: Governor Robert F. McDonnell
Attachment