

## TRANSPORTATION NEEDS

### Rough Outline of Remarks

Yesterday – The Gentleman from Loudoun who is chairman of Transportation spoke eloquently about a source of funding for transportation and particularly our maintenance needs. His approach was *innovative, rational, and easily comprehended*.

Today – I want to take a few minutes and attempt to describe the existing transportation *needs* and provide some short term *suggestions* to improve our situation.

Let me share with you some statistics:

Statewide: 1980 – 3.5 million registered vehicles in VA

2009 – 7.6 million registered vehicles in VA

#### *The number of vehicles DOUBLED*

Northern Virginia: 1980 – 682,000 registered vehicles in VA

2009 – 1,764,000 registered vehicles in VA

#### *The number of vehicles TRIPELED*

Vehicle Miles traveled Statewide: 1980 - 57 million miles per year

2008 – 225 million miles per year

*The vehicle miles traveled QUADRUPLED*, clearly we have a substantial increased use of our transportation infrastructure.

Now let me specifically talk about Virginia's *infrastructure*:

- More than **8,000** of Virginia's *bridges* are structurally deficient or functional obsolete, mostly in rural areas of Virginia
- Approximately **23%** of Virginia's major *roads* are in substandard or mediocre condition
- **33%** of Virginia's major *urban highways* are congested.
- By 2014: Under the *present criteria*, all state construction funds will be used solely for maintenance of the existing roadway system; therefore there will be no new construction.
- By 2025: **45%** of our *roadways* are projected to be *congested*.
- NOVA: 2<sup>nd</sup> worst congestion in entire country – Hampton Roads is not far behind, I suspect particularly at the tunnels.
- 84% of the \$165 billion worth of *commodities* delivered from sites in Virginia is by trucks on our highways. So clearly transportation is critical to our *commerce*.
- I would suggest our transportation system is causing a *diminution in our quality of life*.
- Each urban motorist spends **38 hours** annually in *delays*.
- I would argue that our transportation system is *negatively impacting* our ability to *attract new business*.

- **Transportation is a utility** not unlike water, sewer, and electricity. We pay for those why not pay for transportation, adequately. I suspect your water, sewer, electric bill has gone up since 1986 but our major source of transportation funding has not.

## So what should we do?

**First**, we must have an honest, forthright **discussion** about funding. Chairman May put forth an interesting concept yesterday and laid the foundation and has been for future discussion. I admit **funding** will be **controversial and difficult** but that conversation must be held and must begin sooner rather than later. So what other **interim steps** can be considered as we move toward a solution of the funding issue.

**1<sup>st</sup>**: Consider **moving \$250 million/year** for 4 years from maintenance to construction. I will come back to that in a moment.

**2<sup>nd</sup>**: Establish a **shortlist of projects** that without regard to location

- Provide additional capacity
- Meet a true cost/benefit ratio test
- Relieve congestion and provide relief to commercial and commuter transportation users.
- Enhance economic viability
- Begin immediately with the above infusion of funds

**3<sup>rd</sup>**: Determine quickly what projects may be of interest to the **private sector**; request and evaluate proposals quickly.

**4<sup>th</sup>**: **Reduce** permitting times and evaluation time

**5<sup>th</sup>**: Use the **Research Council** in Centreville to provide us with a list of practical and implemental ideas on materials and methodologies, as an example.

Now back to diverting \$250 million/year for 4 years from maintenance to construction.

- During the next 4 years about:
  - \$15 billion will be spent on transportation with about
  - \$2 billion for construction and
  - \$7 billion for maintenance
- IF we reduce maintenance by \$1 billion, then we have left:
  - \$3 billion for construction
  - \$6 billion for maintenance
- Why is moving up projects important by spending \$1 billion worth of construction 4 years sooner?
 

We should save \$350 million in interest and escalation construction costs. The construction market is starving for projects and bids are extremely favorable.

Finally, we have talked about **jobs** a lot this session.

- Every **\$1 billion of construction** creates about **28,000 jobs** so not only would this investment help us on **moving forward** in transportation, but it would also **create thousands of jobs** in an industry that is truly depressed. Where else can we create this many jobs literally overnight?
- US DOT says every \$1 invested in highway system yields \$5.40 in economic benefit.

THEREFORE, according to my math, Virginia would receive \$5.4 billion in economic benefit – a great return on our investment!

We are nearing the end of this session, and **my request** to the body is to **think** about these ideas, **propose** your own ideas and let's **find common ground** so we can move Virginia forward on transportation solutions. I don't think anyone here disagrees that we have a problem, we just disagree on how to solve it. I'm calling on you to put on your innovative thinking hats when you go home and let's come back and be prepared to address our transportation needs both in necessary funding and short term relief.

The time to act is NOW!

Thank you for your attention and your consideration.