

**DRAFT RESOLUTION
OF THE
COMMONWEALTH TRANSPORTATION BOARD**

December 6, 2017

MOTION

Made by: XXXXX, Seconded by: XXXXX

Action: XXXXX

**Title: Recommendation of a Preferred Alternative for the Washington, D.C. to Richmond
Southeast High Speed Rail Tier II Environmental Impact Statement**

WHEREAS, the Commonwealth Transportation Board adopted Recommended Alternative A-Plus, as set forth in the *Study Area Alternatives Recommendation Report for the Southeast High Speed Rail Tier I Draft Environmental Impact Statement*, dated March 5, 2002; which was subsequently adopted by the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) in the Tier I Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Record of Decision (ROD); and,

WHEREAS, the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT), in conjunction with FRA, have continued to further the effort of implementing higher speed passenger rail service within the Southeast Rail Corridor (SEC) by developing the Washington, D.C. to Richmond Southeast High Speed Rail (DC2RVA) Project, a Tier II EIS to identify a preferred alternative within the selected 123- mile corridor between Washington, D.C. and Richmond; and,

WHEREAS, DRPT conducted significant public and stakeholder involvement for DC2RVA including direct mail; newspaper advertisements; project website and social media campaign; ten public meetings; four formal public hearings; and multiple local meetings and workshops; and,

WHEREAS, the DC2RVA Tier II Draft EIS that evaluated multiple alternatives in six Alternative Areas along the CSX Transportation corridor between Washington, D.C. and Richmond was published on September 8, 2017 and was followed by a 60-day public comment period; and,

WHEREAS, the Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) included in the Draft EIS a recommended preferred alternative for Alternative Areas 1, 2, 3, 4, and 6 of the DC2RVA study corridor; and,

WHEREAS, recognizing the unique nature of the region and concerns from the community over Draft EIS alternatives in Alternative Area 5, DRPT convened the Town of

Ashland/Hanover County Community Advisory Committee (CAC), to take a more intensive look at all rail options that could meet the purpose and need of the DC2RVA project, while also minimizing or avoiding any potential impacts of those options; and,

WHEREAS, the CAC, at the conclusion of a series of five meetings between April and September of 2017 and the consideration of over thirty potential rail alternatives, identified the following three least-objectionable alternatives for Alternative Area 5: maintain two tracks through the town of Ashland (5A), add a two-track west bypass (5C), and add a three-track trench through the Town of Ashland (variation of tunnel option previously screened out).

WHEREAS, the Commonwealth Transportation Board was briefed by DRPT on the agency's recommendation at its October 23, 2017 Workshop meeting and at its November 9, 2017 Rail Committee meeting.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Commonwealth Transportation Board recommends to FRA the following preferred alternative for inclusion in the forthcoming Rail Alignment Recommendation Report, Final EIS and ROD, in concurrence with DRPT's recommendation, in the following areas of the DC2RVA study corridor: Alternative Area 1-1A, 1B, or 1C; Alternative Area 2-2A; Alternative Area 3-3B; Alternative Area 4-4A; Alternative Area 5-5A; Alternative Area 6-6F.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the recommended preferred alternative for Alternative Area 1 (Arlington) will include the retention of all three alternatives 1A, 1B and 1C until after completion of the Long Bridge Tier II EIS study, whereby one of the three retained alternatives will be selected as the recommended preferred alternative based on compatibility with the Long Bridge Tier II EIS preferred alternative.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that if it is determined before 2045 that additional rail capacity is needed in Alternative Area 5 to meet the performance standards required for additional passenger trains, DRPT will be directed to conduct a new study based on updated information, including but not limited to future freight volumes, land uses, and capacity needs within the overall rail network.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Commonwealth Transportation Board will direct DRPT to explore the need for other potential improvements in downtown Ashland (Alternative Area 5) that will help protect the safety of motorized and non-motorized roadway users, and to facilitate emergency access.

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