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PROCEEDINGS

SECRETARY HOMER: Good evening. I'd like to begin tonight's public comment session by welcoming everyone here on behalf of Governor Kaine and the General Assembly. We hope to have a couple members of the General Assembly to join us tonight.

We were hoping to have Chairman Connolly here to be our host and welcome us. He's running a little bit late, and I'm wondering --

Mr. Zimmerman, since you're the Chair of the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority, a regional body -- I know you're here -- you are the chair of that body and probably a few others as well, and if it's okay with you, we'd like to begin with your statement in just a moment.

What I would like to do prior to that is just introduce a few people very quickly. To my left is Mary Lee Carter, who represents the Fredericksburg District, and Julia Connally, who is an at-large urban member, lives in Arlington and was with the General Assembly for a number of years.

To my immediate right is Dave Ekern. Dave is a Commissioner at VDOT, and we've spent about a year welcoming Dave to Virginia's big state -- west of Detroit, as we say -- and it's always good to be here.

To his right is Corey Hill. Corey is the Assistant Director of the Department of Rail and Public Transportation, a very important part of tonight's public hearing. He's standing in for his director, Matt Tucker, who could not be here tonight.

To Corey's right is Peter Schwartz. Peter is an at-large rural appointee to the Commonwealth Transportation Board.

Peter, thank you for coming all the way from Fauquier to join us, but you do a whole lot of commerce throughout the Washington region and are very familiar with our issues and concerns.

And last but certainly not least, is Doug Koelemay. For those of you who live in Northern Virginia and the Northern Virginia District -- and that's Prince William, Loudoun, Fairfax, Arlington, Alexandria, the cities of Manassas, Manassas Park, Fairfax and Alexandria -- if you've got a problem, call Doug.

(Laughter)

And the City of Falls Church (inaudible) as well. Doug is your representative here, and his phone number is in the phone book, so feel free to call him.

(Laughter)

I would also like to acknowledge two gentlemen who have among the hardest jobs in the public sector --

And Dave Ogle, could you stand up? Dave is the District Administrator for the Fredericksburg District, so that would be the City of Fredericksburg, Stafford and Spotsylvania and then on down, what we know as the Northern Neck affectionately. But many of you drive through that district or take a PRTC bus to that region.

And then also, Dennis Morrison. Dennis is the District Administrator for Northern Virginia and has the day-to-day management responsibilities at VDOT, and those are a lot of headaches.

So, between Doug Koelemay, Dennis Morrison and Dave Ogle and Mary Lee Carter -- if you've got a problem, those are the people to call.

Without any other introductions, I would like to begin the public hearing -- or, excuse me, the public comments.

Chairman Zimmerman, we welcome you to make -- I know you're speaking on behalf of a couple of entities, and if you could just say a few introductory remarks on behalf of the region, and then we'll move on to the testimony. Thank you very much.

MR. ZIMMERMAN: Thank you, Mr. Secretary. I am actually here and wearing one hat this time. As you indicated, I have the pleasure to address you tonight on behalf of the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority.

And we have other people that have other hats, since this one actually takes a little more to carry now than it did the last time I was with you, and indeed this is a more interesting time for those of us working in transportation than it was the last time we held a meeting -- I think it was even in this room.

And for us it is a particularly interesting time, so thank you very much for holding this hearing and giving me this opportunity.

We're going to be giving you -- and you should have received now -- a more detailed slide presentation with our comments. I'm not going to walk through all of that, but you can take that with you and consider it as you have time. But I will just make a few comments.

First, since Gerry is not here, I will say on behalf of the Region, welcome to Northern Virginia. For a number of you, that's home anyway, so welcome back in those cases.

And I want to just give you some of the highlights of what we have by way of concerns as a region and let you know a little bit about what we're doing in

some areas that I think are of interest that you've been very much involved in.

Obviously, the key thing for us is the implementation of the recently passed transportation finance legislation of 2007 and House Bill 3202, as recently signed into law by the Governor.

And so there's some background in there in the larger presentation, in which, as in some previous presentations, it discusses the significant population changes going on here in Northern Virginia and the implications for transportation, the jobs-housing imbalance and some update on our long-range plan, which we call TransAction 2030, adopted last year, which was the first major revision of the first regional plan done, which was the 2020 plan, and also some information about the status of activities for air quality in the region.

But now, of course, it is a much more meaningful plan than it was when it was simply hypothetical, given the potential to act on the legislation just passed.

It is not a small matter to actually undertake, now that we have the authority given in legislation to actually implement, not only for this year's legislation but actually for the bill that was passed five years ago that created the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority.

Because although -- it's not that we've been doing nothing in that time, but our activities were necessarily limited and we simply didn't implement various parts of the original legislation because we didn't have the ability to carry out the program.

Now we have to look at what's necessary for that, and so to do that we've created five working groups that are being led by members of the Authority, one of whom sits here and is involved in that, and we are looking in these five different areas, including financial, legal, project implementation, public outreach and organization, to answer the questions about what we need to do to actually make this a viable agency, as intended by the original 2002 Legislation, to fulfill the new legislation and, as we're saying, hit the ground running in July -- because, of course, the new legislation formally takes effect on July 1st.

So, we're trying to move from simply a planning and coordinating organization to something that will have real financing and management responsibilities. The five groups are going to be -- they're meeting very heavily with a lot of support from staff around the region and various agencies.

VDOT's been participating, and the various transportation staff and county attorney and city attorney staff from our localities are all volunteering time basically in helping to prepare reports in all these areas that are due on June 1st.

So, we're getting very close, and the NVRTA will have its next meeting on June 6th, which will be in the nature of a work session to go over those reports and take the next steps on the road to implementation -- as I said, to be ready in July.

We would note that the new legislation does make possible significant influx of new revenue for transportation that is much needed. We would note, though, that our estimates for the 2030 plan indicated the Region would need something on the order of 700 million dollars a year.

This legislation will not provide that. It gets you a good chunk of the way. It's the most significant funding in a very long time, but it does not provide all our funding. And there will continue to be a need for state support in many areas, and so you will continue to hear from us on that side.

We would -- and in the presentation this is more or less around where Slide 9 is, I guess. We would say that among the things that are important to us as a region in looking to the Commonwealth Transportation Board is, one, that we ensure that Northern Virginia receives at least a fair share of the revenues and the statewide revenues that are provided in statewide transportation bonds, and so on, that it would receive using the existing formulas.

Again, we need to go beyond what we are empowered to do at the regional and local levels in order to meet the needs that are well identified and well documented.

We also look for your help to support our efforts to improve emergency preparedness for our transportation system, and we would ask that you continue to provide funding for the Virginia Railway Express track leases and to support VRE's applications for the Rail Enhancement Program.

VRE, of course, will receive additional funding out of the Regional revenues if NVRTA acts pursuant to HB 3202. There's direct carve-out for WMATA and for VRE, and I think that's some of the most important initial things that we can do with that.

But, again, there will need to be continued support from the State for those very important parts of our transportation system.

We would also like to point out a few areas that I think are of some concern. One has to do with the revenue-sharing program. We'd like to make sure that it remains a viable 50/50 matching program for implementing jurisdictional priorities.

There is some feeling that it has not necessarily been that lately, with some of the ways that it's been administered. There is concern about, shall we say, strings and priorities other than those that are established by localities and by the funding itself, which we would like to see fully funded for each fiscal year.

We also would ask that when excess federal funding becomes available to Virginia as a result of, you know, the reallocation of funds on a national level prior to the end of the current federal fiscal year, that NVTVA be able to participate in the setting of priorities for the expenditure of such funds.

There obviously are time issues when those can become available, but we believe we can act expeditiously enough to provide useful input into what the best way to expend such funds would be.

We would ask that you encourage VDOT to move quickly in training local staffs and developers on the new Chapter 527 land use review and regulations, again part of the changing role in the new legislation, and there's a lot that people are going to have to learn to be able to properly administer that.

We're also asking that with new environmental reviews that are required under the legislation, that we work to streamline this process as much as possible so we can comply with them at the local level as efficiently as possible.

And we'd ask that state funds be provided to help offset transportation impacts in connection with the Base Realignment and Closure, or BRAC, Commission recommendations, with which I think you're all familiar.

In summary let me say, NVTVA is very appreciative of the additional transportation funding that has been provided. We know all of you played a role in helping to bring this about, and it was quite an effort for a lot of folks to bring about legislation, and six months ago nobody in this room, I think, would have bet any change in their pocket it would pass.

So, we do appreciate all the work that's been done to bring us to this point, and we thank you for applying the funding that you have to benefit projects in the six-year program that are important to Northern Virginia.

We are taking our new role in funding

transportation projects very seriously. We look forward to continuing to cooperate with you. We are getting a lot of assistance now as we're getting started, right from the Secretary's office on down, and we're very appreciative of that.

We look forward to continuing to work with you and begin to address the challenges that all of us in this room have been discussing and been frustrated over for a long time, and we hope that now everybody can feel like we're beginning to make some progress.

Thank you very much.

SECRETARY HOMER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The next speaker is Marty Nohe, to be followed by Mark Dudenhefer of the Stafford County Board.

Welcome, Mr. Nohe.

MR. NOHE: Thank you.

Secretary Homer, Commissioner Ekern, members of the Commonwealth Transportation Board, good evening. My name is Marty Nohe. I represent the Coles Magisterial District of the Prince William Board of County Supervisors. I'm currently Vice Chairman of that board, as well as being Vice Chairman of the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority.

My friend is passing out copies of this testimony, which I will not read from verbatim because I don't do well when -- I sound stilted when I do that -- but I'll also add a few comments probably in addition to these notes here.

First, I would like to start by thanking each of you for your efforts in this year's General Assembly to make sure that a bill was passed and signed that included State, regional and local funding for transportation improvements around the Commonwealth of Virginia -- and particularly for your efforts in securing funding for Northern Virginia.

I can speak, I believe, for the Board of Supervisors in saying that we sincerely recognize and appreciate the fact that there are tools in the recent reforms of transportation funding in the State that allow money to be generated within Northern Virginia that is guaranteed to stay within Northern Virginia.

This Board has heard -- and indeed probably every citizen in Northern Virginia has heard over the years -- about the concern that not enough money stays in Northern Virginia.

To know that any new funding that's generated here will stay here, I think, is crucially important to the people of Prince William County and certainly to our Board of Supervisors.

I'd also like to take this opportunity to remind the CTB that in the past nineteen years the citizens of Prince William County have approved over a half a billion dollars in bonds to address road needs in Prince William County for both local and, more importantly perhaps -- or more significantly -- primary roads.

This demonstrates how the citizens of Prince William County are well aware of congestion problems that we face today and in the future, and I guess I would add to that the observation that much of the discussion that led to the passing of HB 3202 involved the notion that Northern Virginia problems need to be solved in Northern Virginia.

I think the people of Prince William County, and particularly my board, are very proud of the fact that that's a concept we've understood well for a very long time. I know Secretary Homer is perhaps more acutely aware of that concept perhaps than even I am, having been a crucial part of making that come to pass. The voters and the elected leadership in Prince William County are very interested in playing a large role in solving our own problems.

With the new infusion of funding allocated by the General Assembly this year, Prince William County agrees that projects currently in the plan should be fully funded and constructed.

We'd also like to remind the CTB that as funding becomes available there are many important projects in Prince William County that need continual and additional funding as well as start-up funding.

With that in mind, I'd like to just speak to Prince William County's priorities for the FY'08 Six-Year Transportation Plan.

Prince William County congratulates VDOT and the CTB on completing the following major projects in Prince William County: specifically, the I-66 widening and HOV lane extension from Route 234 Business to Route 234 Bypass.

And something that affects my district and my personal commute a great deal is the widening of Route 234 or Dumfries Road. It's now a four-lane road along its entire length.

And the other day I had the -- I found myself in the need to drive from the Town of Dumfries all the way up to Route 66 in the morning and drive back that same route almost to the Town of Dumfries, so I got to drive the entire length of both sides of the road, and, let me tell you, it's a beautiful road -- beautiful from a congestion-relief perspective, but it actually looks nice

too. And we want to thank you for that.

The Board also wants to thank you for fully funding the projects that are currently under construction. We ask that these projects remain on schedule and fully funded throughout future plans.

That would be the I-66 widening and HOV extension from 234 Bypass to Route 29, construction of the Route 123 Occoquan River Bridge and reconstruction of the Route 28 Bridge over Broad Run.

That last project, the widening of the Route 28 Bridge, is particularly important, as widening of the travel lanes up to that bridge were a critical part of the recent bond initiative that was passed by our citizens last November.

So, completion of that project on time is vital to our ability to implement our bond initiative projects in the coming years.

The Board also thanks VDOT and the CTB for fully funding the following projects which have been designed and have right-of-way secured or are ready to be acquired, and the Board asks that these projects be advanced as soon as possible for construction advertisement.

That would include the reconstruction of the I-66/Route 29 Gainesville interchange, which is perhaps one of the most significant choke points for traffic anywhere in the Commonwealth, and the construction of the Route 1/Route 123 interchange and reconstruction of the bridge and widening of Route 1 at Neabsco Creek, where just a few inches of rain can cause traffic to back up for miles when the bridge floods.

The Board requests that VDOT and the CTB consider additional funding and/or adding these projects to the Six-Year Plan to begin the process of getting these projects to construction.

These projects are the next priorities of the Prince William County Board and should be considered as additional funding becomes available:

That would be the I-66 extension of HOV lanes from Route 29 to Route 15, including interchange improvements at -- between I-66 and Route 15 and a grade-separated interchange at Route 15 and Route 55; the widening of Route 1, which, again, is partially funded through the recent bond initiatives that we passed, but certainly not fully funded; the construction of a Route 234 North Bypass from I-66 to the Loudoun County line; the widening of Route 28 between the City of Manassas and Fauquier County and the extension of I-95 HOV lanes from 234 into Stafford County.

We thank you again for your time and effort in these crucial transportation matters. We in Prince William County will continue to work with you in moving all projects forward and in solving the increasingly serious mobility and air quality problems facing the County, region and the Commonwealth.

The other observation I would make -- and I make this in part in my NVTAs role and in part speaking on behalf of my Board. An issue that is of great concern to us is that some of the challenges that have been presented with HB 3202 is that NVTAs, as Chairman Connolly stated -- we were a bit surprised.

I believe that when Dana Fenton called me and told me what the Governor's amendments were, I said, "He did what?" We are pleased nonetheless, surprised in a good way about those changes and particularly pleased that the General Assembly approved them and the Governor signed those amendments.

One of the challenges that we face with the NVTAs is that from a staff and organizational prospective we're not prepared initially for this new additional responsibility.

I know that Chairman Zimmerman has spoken to the Secretary a little about some opportunities to provide some short-term operational funding until we're actually able to generate reliable revenue streams, but this is an issue of great concern for Prince William County and, I suspect, for other localities as well, because up until now, and actually at least for the current year and moving forward, most staff support for NVTAs has been from jurisdictional staff.

In these times of dropping real estate assessments and therefore tightening local jurisdictional budgets, there isn't necessarily a tremendous amount of additional staff support to be provided, so as soon as NVTAs can be up and operating on its own, we would really appreciate that.

And I guess I'd also add that Prince William County is acutely aware of the opportunity that this has created for us to truly operate on a regional level in a way that Northern Virginia perhaps never has before.

We would point to the Upper Occoquan Sewer Authority and the creation of George Mason University as projects that were started on a regional basis and are now extraordinary successes.

But transportation is an issue that literally touches the lives of every single man, woman and child in Northern Virginia every single day, and we look forward to the opportunity to work with our regional partners to help

start solving these problems.

And although there is no silver bullet, we believe that we certainly have taken steps in the right direction, and we look forward to continuing to work with you on this matter.

Thank you very much.

SECRETARY HOMER: Thank you, Mr. Nohe.

The next speaker is Mark Dudenhefer, to be followed by Lloyd Robinson.

MR. DUDENHEFER: Mr. Secretary --

SECRETARY HOMER: Welcome.

MR. DUDENHEFER: -- Mr. Commissioner and members of the CTB, my name is Mark Dudenhefer. I'm the Vice-Chairman of the Stafford County Board of Supervisors, I'm the Vice-Chairman of the Fredericksburg area Metropolitan Planning Organization, I'm the co-Chairman of the Quantico Growth Management Committee, looking at BRAC, and about four or five other communities, commissions and committees that I don't care to mention.

SECRETARY HOMER: All well paid.

MR. DUDENHEFER: Absolutely. If I don't get fired from my day job, I'll be very lucky after four years of this.

But I really hadn't intended to come here tonight; I don't have any prepared remarks. I'd like to start my comments, though, by saying in addition to all of those things that I just mentioned to you, I'm also the father of a seventeen-year-old daughter who lost her life on a Virginia secondary road, combined with a little bit of speed, but the construction of a road that was dated back to the Civil War and just had asphalt on it and probably has about a hundred times as much traffic as -- than it was designed to handle now.

But I can tell you that that's the reason I'm standing here today -- is because of my goal or my mission in life to see that these are fixed and make safety as big an issue as congestion.

Sometimes that's hard to do because we have a lot more people who are backed up in traffic, but I don't think we should ever, ever consider any project where safety isn't also a major consideration in that.

So, that really wasn't the primary purpose for me being here tonight, but with a pre-conversation with Mr. Ekern, it reminded me of why I stand here as an elected official today -- is because of what I believe has been a very lengthy time for the State to ignore -- really ignore -- the real issue of transportation in the Commonwealth.

I'd like to also echo the previous speakers and thank you for your pursuit in your efforts towards 3202. I also would have six months ago bet a paycheck -- which is exorbitant, as the Secretary said -- on the fact that nothing was going to come out of this last legislative session. So, I am extremely happy that it offers some opportunity.

But I'm also very jealous. I, you know, come in here to Northern Virginia and, hearing all the projects that have been funded for Northern Virginia, I've got to say that I'm jealous, because while they look at that as a famine situation, if you were down in the Fredericksburg region you would see that as an incredible amount of money that is being spent.

The area that I represent is in the northern part of Stafford County, and we look more like Prince William and Fairfax than we do some of the more rural areas down there.

And the people who I represent don't even -- they consider themselves part of Northern Virginia, and they can't understand why the allocation of money that comes into Stafford, at the Garrisonville Road interchange for instance, doesn't match up to anything comparable with many of the other areas in the Commonwealth.

Two particular topics I'd like to just address is the importance of the HOT lanes to the residents of Stafford and the Fredericksburg region.

While the Northern Virginia -- it ends at -- as far as they're concerned, the problem ends at the Dumfries Road merger there. I can tell you that that's where the problems begin for the people that I represent.

And being a member of probably the fastest growing area in the state of Virginia, I don't think that we can ignore that part of the project which goes south. We were briefed recently by (inaudible) and talked about including a phased part -- or part of Phase 1 would be some type of mitigation to the Garrisonville Road exit, and I would like to ask that that continue to be pursued. That's extremely important, and I think that would go a long way to getting the traffic at least past that one major -- I'll call it a Northern Virginia interchange that's there.

The second issue that I'd like to talk about is the interchange at 630, which is Courthouse Road in Stafford County, which -- you've already been briefed on this if you've attended the other meetings.

I don't plan on spending a lot of detail -- we've got a time limit -- but we've been waiting fifteen

years with an agreement between the State and the Federal Government to get that interchange. That is in the dead-center heart of Stafford County, and I would challenge anyone who -- I would compare it to the congestion and the problems that any of my northern -- or southern neighbors have, for that matter.

I would ask you to please fund the PNE that we need to get started on that project. Again, we have a hospital going in there, and we have to build a new courthouse. Stafford is growing at a rate that looks like Northern Virginia and the way it was in the past, and we are very anxious to unclog the center part of Stafford County.

We had a bond referendum that didn't pass, and I'll tell you that it will come up every single year until it does pass. And I think the passage of 3202 will -- has raised the visibility in the County of Stafford to an understanding of where that goes.

And again, I will push that for as long and as hard as I have to, until the last breath of my political life, which may only be a short period of time at this point.

So, thank you very much. Again, please take those into consideration, and we look forward to working with you in the future.

SECRETARY HOMER: Thank you, Mr. Dudenhefer.

Our next speaker is Lloyd Robinson, to be followed by Paul Ferguson.

MR. ROBINSON: Mr. Secretary, Chairs, members of the Board, I'm pleased to be here. My name is Lloyd Robinson. I'm the Transportation Planning Director for the George Washington Regional Commission, and I'm also the Administrator for the Fredericksburg Metropolitan Planning Organization.

Chairman Matt Kelly of the Fredericksburg MPO sends his apologies. He had a previous conflict and couldn't be here.

I'm going to keep my remarks brief, both because I know you want me to but also because the Red Sox are playing the Yankees on TV.

I want to talk about three things. First -- well, I won't tell you who I'm rooting for; it would cost the region money.

I'd like to talk about growth in our region, Mark just referred to that. I'd like to talk a little bit about what we're doing about it and then talk about a little bit about projects.

In 1960 our PDC had a population of 65,000. It was the fourth smallest PDC in population in the Commonwealth.

In 2006 our PDC had a population of 310,000 and was the fourth largest PDC in the Commonwealth and the fastest growing. The socioeconomic data and projection we've now completed for our 2035 plan shows the population in the range of 600,000 people.

That's our growth issue. What are we doing about it? Two areas, planning and partnering. We re-organized the old RADCO under the George Washington Regional Commission and essentially merged it with the MPO.

Transportation and land use planning are on the land use on the George Washington Regional Commission side of transportation and on the VAMPO side are being merged from a long range plan.

We've hired staff with the capabilities of national models and modeling programs and revised those so that we come up with a workable real-time model in our region to do transportation and land use modeling simultaneously and interactively. That will probably be exploratory throughout the Commonwealth and perhaps parts of the country.

We're doing a regional transit plan, and we feel this is a major step forward for what is still a small suburban and somewhat rural region, but we're taking that very, very seriously.

We're doing a regional bicycle and pedestrian plan. We have an enhanced public involvement program, and we're going to continue to grow that. And I know that Secretary Homer will be happy to know that in the Spring we'll have a multi-modal long range plan that has a needs plan and a constrained element to it. So, we'll have that for you.

We will expand the MPO to include Caroline and North King George County as it makes sense demographically.

Partnering, we're working with the private sector development community regionally. An example of this is a project that gained some press here in the last week, and that's a new access at the Welcome Center south of the Rappahannock River, connecting with the toll road that runs southwesterly several miles to Route 3, and in conjunction with the HOT lanes, it really serves as an alternate (inaudible) with the old (inaudible) Connector. That's an important project to us. We will do the IJR, the NEPA documents, and that will be the PPTA.

We're working with VDOT towards what's commonly called devolution, and I want to thank Commissioner Ekern and his staff, DRPT and others around the State and around the region for the retreat that was

just held for two days with an attendance of about fifty people. We felt that was a real success, and we'll build on that upon going forward.

We're working with our neighboring regions to the south and to the west and to the north. We certainly recognize that we have issues that span those regions. And it's pretty obvious that we have thousands of our residents -- thousands and thousands of our residents who commute north every day and help run the Government, and we know that's important.

Mark talked about the Stafford County bond funds. I'd just reiterate what he said -- that will we back. Spotsylvania already passed a bond issue of roughly of \$150 million dollars.

And we would also like to see the CTB as a partner, and we'd urge the CTB to remain flexible as to allocations of funds in order to be able to meet changing conditions and opportunities.

In terms of projects, we have smaller projects that are high priority locally: Fall Hill Avenue, Courthouse Road, new 208, Route 17 to the south where it crosses the interstate. These are relatively small projects for, you know, under \$10 million dollars.

Medium-sized projects: improvements on U.S. 1 to the north in Stafford County, particularly in association with BRAC, widening of Route 610, Mark's district, widening of Route 3, and one that's been around for a forty or probably at least fifty year tenure is the Falmouth intersection.

And finally the bigger projects: the Route 630 interchange was talked about; that's fifteen years old, and it needs to move forward; PE funds to begin an examination of a new interchange south of Massaponax in conjunction with the hospital and development there and the HOT lanes obviously.

In closing, thanks for the opportunity to speak. Again, I'd like to thank all of you, Commissioner Ekern, and again urge the CTB to remain flexible.

Thank you.

SECRETARY HOMER: Thank you, Mr. Robinson.

The next speaker is Paul Ferguson, to be followed by Kristen Umstatt.

Welcome, Mr. Chairman.

MR. FERGUSON: Thank you, Mr. Secretary.

I'm Paul Ferguson, Chairman of the Arlington County Board, and I'd like to thank each of you for listening to us. I know, having been in your position through numerous meetings throughout my career, it is very difficult to listen to numerous speakers, but clearly all of you are committed to the Commonwealth and committed to transportation.

A special welcome to Mary Lee Carter, who served local government for so long and so well in Spotsylvania County, and I had the honor and privilege to serve with her on the Board of Directors of the Virginia Association of Counties, and also our delegate from Arlington, Julie Connally.

But it is very fitting that the Governor saw fit to appoint people from local government like Mary Lee, so I'm glad you're with us.

We are excited, as many of the other speakers talked about, about the new transportation bill that passed, and we thank all of you for the role you played in that and all of those that are here in the region that banded together to have a -- if not a unified position, a position of, "We're willing to compromise to get the best bill possible", which I think we did.

Despite higher cost estimates for the projects that you're working on now in Arlington, specifically Arlington Boulevard at Courthouse Road and 10th Street, Washington Boulevard at Columbia Pike, and Glebe Road over Arlington Boulevard, you are continuing to fund these three.

I will repeat them once again: Arlington Boulevard at Courthouse Road and 10th Street, Washington Boulevard at Columbia Pike, and Glebe Road over Arlington Boulevard. These are all critical road projects to Arlington, and we appreciate your continued funding and attention to them.

I do have to express Arlington's disappointment that the most expensive project in Arlington is the I-66 spot improvements, which the Arlington Board does not support. Spending almost 70 million on the first two, quote, "spot improvements alone" does not seem to be an efficient use of funding.

An example of a true spot improvement would be the Glebe Road Bridge over Arlington Boulevard, which is scheduled in the plan for funding in the year 2012. At 14 million, this project would provide tangible results for Arlington residents at a fraction of the price and should be prioritized over I-66.

We appreciate and are encouraged by your letter, Mr. Secretary, pledging to conduct a multi-modal study of the I-66 corridor. We strongly believe that this study should be completed before any additional lane mileage is constructed.

We also encourage VDOT to partner with Arlington to provide a meaningful opportunity for public input on I-66, and I thank Dennis Morrison for the conversation that I had with him before the meeting, and I'm confident that we'll make that happen -- if not this summer, hopefully in early fall.

But that's very important to us in Arlington that we have that dialogue with you on what your plans are and what our options are.

On the I-95/395 HOT lanes, we appreciate the State working closely with local governments but urge the State to proceed cautiously to ensure that by allowing toll-paying motorists in low occupancy vehicles to use the express lanes that their ability to move people is not diminished.

Finally, we need to mention our transit priorities. In 2006 over sixty percent -- that's sixty percent -- of all of Northern Virginia transit trips started or ended in Arlington, so funding our transit capital project is critical, not just to Arlington but to the entire region.

Several of Arlington's priority projects include the Columbia Pike streetcar project, which also includes Fairfax County; Crystal City Potomac Yard transit way, which also includes the City of Alexandria; our Arlington Transit Bus Facility; the Rosslyn elevators, which have over 34,000 people using them each weekday; and the Ballston Metro Center west entrance, which has over 25,000 weekday boardings for those elevators. So, it's a real need for us to improve those elevators at both the Ballston and the Rosslyn station.

Thank you once again for listening to Arlington's testimony, and we have provided written comments, I believe, for you to look at too.

Thanks again.

SECRETARY HOMER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The next speaker is Kristen Umstattd, representing -- the elected Mayor of the Town of Leesburg --

Welcome, Mayor.

-- to be followed by Andres Domeyko.

MS. UMSTATTD: Thank you. Thank you very much, Secretary Homer.

Our written remarks don't do justice to the sentiment that we want to express to you tonight, which is tremendous appreciation and thanks for what you have just done for Leesburg.

Secretary Homer and Mr. Koelemay, you were both out in Leesburg today at the VDOT announcement of the Governor's grant of \$5 million dollars for the completion of our most critical section of Battlefield Parkway. And we were very happy to have you both out there.

But I want to also thank every member who's here tonight -- Ms. Carter, Ms. Connally, of course Commissioner Ekern, Mr. Hill, Mr. Schwartz and Mr. Koelemay -- for everything you've done to support Leesburg's requests in the past.

We also want to thank you from the bottom of our hearts for putting in the draft plan. Over \$12 million dollars for the Route 7/15 bypass widening, including the Sycolin flyover.

That is part and parcel of our plan to try to end the gridlock in Leesburg, which, as you've heard me say before, is caused by more vehicle trips a day than go through Winchester on Route 81.

We have commuters from Maryland coming down on 15, we have folks from West Virginia and Winchester, the Shenandoah Valley coming in on 9 and then 7 and hitting our bypass, so what you have done is something that we could never thank you enough for.

And so I would like that to be the tenor of my remarks. I'll leave the more detailed statement with your clerk. But it wouldn't have been possible without your diligent service and without the diligent service of Dennis Morrison, Bill Cutler, who is with us today, Susan Shaw, John Lynch, Dick Burke and, of course, Joe Morris, who did a great job as VDOT's public information officer.

So, that is what I would really like to say. We were ecstatic in Leesburg today. We thank you, Secretary Homer, and please extend our deepest thanks to Governor Kaine as well.

Thank you.

SECRETARY HOMER: Thank you, Mayor. The next speaker is Andres Domeyko --

Is that a correct pronunciation?

MR. DOMEYKO: That is correct.

SECRETARY HOMER: All right, thank you.

-- to be followed by Eleanor Anderson.

Welcome, Mr. Domeyko.

MR. DOMEYKO: Secretary Homer and Commissioner Ekern and CTB council members, thank you very much for this opportunity to speak on behalf of the Eisenhower Avenue Public/Private Partnership of Alexandria.

The Eisenhower Partnership, for those of you not familiar with it, represents the Eisenhower Valley area of Alexandria, and its purpose is to promote economic and community development in the Valley.

Last year the City of Alexandria requested two fund transfers from prior allocations dedicated to the Claremont Avenue project. These requests, totaling about \$11.2 million dollars, were designated to pay for the widening of Eisenhower Avenue and several other city projects not directly related to the Eisenhower Valley.

The original purpose of these dedicated state transportation funds was to improve access to Duke Street from Eisenhower Avenue as part of the state funding construction of the Eisenhower/Claremont interchange.

For the Partnership, improving north/south access has long been a top priority. We believe that if any funds are temporarily diverted from the Claremont Avenue dedicated funds, they should later be fully restored.

We appreciate City Council's commitment to returning these funds to the Claremont Project fund; however, we would recommend a portion to be allocated for a purpose directly related to the Claremont Avenue fund. Therefore, we request at least an independent traffic and transportation study to determine the need for possible locations and potential effects of multiple access points to Eisenhower Avenue from the north.

The Eisenhower Valley is at a critical juncture. The corridor now has more than 5,000 residents, and projects are under construction that will accommodate another 4,000 residents.

A number of new commercial buildings are planned, and the entire area west of -- it continues -- the west end of the Valley continues to be Alexandria's untapped economic (inaudible).

In order to accommodate the present and future growth, it is essential that access to Eisenhower Avenue from the rest of Alexandria can improve.

We simply ask you to be mindful of the original purpose of these borrowed funds and encourage the City to restore the borrowed funds to the Claremont Avenue improvement fund as soon as possible.

Thank you for your time.

SECRETARY HOMER: Thank you, Mr. Domeyko.

The next speaker is Eleanor Anderson, to be followed by Dave Snyder.

Welcome, Ms. Anderson.

MS. ANDERSON: My name is Eleanor Anderson, and I'm here to represent the Great Falls Citizens Association. This association's membership lives in the northern Fairfax County community of Great Falls.

For nearly all of our road travel, Great Falls residents are dependent on access to Georgetown Pike and Route 7, Leesburg Pike.

I'm a member of the Citizens Association Transportation Committee, and I appreciate the opportunity that the Commonwealth Transportation Board is providing the citizens to comment on the Virginia Department of Transportation's proposed Six-Year Improvement Plan.

The Great Falls Citizens Association is very concerned that this plan fails to provide funding for the widening of Route 7 as originally proposed by VDOT in 2000. That plan would provide for the widening of Route 7 from Rolling Holly Drive on the west to Tyco Road in Tysons Corner on the east. It included construction of trails on both the north and south sides of a widened Route 7.

Seven years later and with thousands of more cars traveling per day on Route 7, plus a concurrent increase in traffic on Georgetown Pike, what we see in the proposed Six-Year Plan is a severely scaled-down project that addresses really only one of the problems that Great Falls residents encounter in attempting to travel in, around or out of our community, across or on a local road choked with commuter traffic.

While we support the provision of a reconfigured signalized intersection, particularly at Seneca Road and Georgetown Pike, which is adjacent to the intersection of Route 7 and Georgetown Pike, we believe that the remainder of the plan, which would widen Route 7 only to Old Reston Parkway on the east and include two left-turn lanes for eastbound Route 7 drivers to turn onto Georgetown Pike, may actually make traffic on Georgetown Pike more congested than it is now by creating choke points where Route 7 would narrow and on Georgetown Pike where the road narrows to a single lane traveling east.

Without the provision of a widened Route 7 all the way to Tysons, such congestion appears to be inevitable; and residents who must use Georgetown Pike as our community main street, as well as commuters and other travelers driving on Route 7 to destinations all along this extremely busy road, will face the consequences of

the entirely insufficient funding of Route 7 improvements in this part of Fairfax County.

Additionally, this proposed project would not include a trail on the north side of Route 7, thereby denying to Great Falls residents residing in neighborhoods north of the widened road between Rolling Holly and Seneca access to walking and biking modes of transportation.

While we appreciate the fact that a trail is planned for the south side of Route 7 in this area, the residents living on the north side will not benefit from a trail that lies across a six-lane road and to which access would be very limited due to the fact that signalized crossings would be few and far between.

We support Supervisor Joan DuBois' call for significantly increasing funding for Route 7 widening in this Six-Year Improvement Plan and urge that the project be accomplished in accordance with the original VDOT plans for trails on both sides of the widened road.

Thank you.

SECRETARY HOMER: Thank you, Ms. Anderson.

And the next speaker is Dave Snyder, NVTC

Chair --

Welcome, Mr. Chairman.

-- to be followed by Hunter McCleary.

MR. SNYDER: Thank you very much, Mr.

Secretary. I very much appreciate the opportunity to be here this evening. Serving on the other side of the dais frequently, I understand the demands and the issues that you have, so I'll try to be brief.

We have a written statement here, which I'll summarize, and I'll speak mostly as Chairman of NVTC and make a couple of comments as a member of the Falls Church City Council and former Mayor.

The first one is NVTC. Well, we're -- we've been around since the 1960s and we represent the Counties of Arlington, Fairfax and Loudoun and the Cities of Alexandria, Fairfax and Falls Church, covering about a 1,000 square miles with a 1.6 million population.

What we're really here to talk about is public transportation and the key role that it plays. Earlier today -- I serve on the region's Metropolitan Washington Air Quality Committee -- and we approved the State Implementation Plan that will go to three state-level jurisdictions, including Virginia.

One of the very interesting things that you see is that that plan will bring the Washington Metro Region into conformity by the year 2009 with Federal Clean Air Act requirements. VOCs go down, NOx goes down, but that which is not currently regulated, CO2, the stuff from

cars, goes way up over the course of the next few years.

Public transportation is absolutely essential, not only to meet our current requirements, but to deal with the other challenges that may in some ways be related to climate change.

So, that's the first thing that public transportation does. The second thing is that it's a key supporter of economic activity. Every job in Northern Virginia throws off about fifty percent more in state taxes than a job anywhere else, so it's absolutely critical to support economic activity in Northern Virginia because that in turn supports the rest of the State.

Public transportation is also fundamental for our security. As we know, during September 11th it was badly out of kilter and caused serious issues. We've worked very, very hard to bring cross-jurisdictional communication and coordination to a much better point. One could say that probably hundreds of lives were saved because of public transportation related planning from hurricane Isabel, which struck this area a few years later.

So, what we're talking about is something much more than transportation. We're talking about safety, security, clean air and other -- and economic activity.

Now, the system is performing extremely well here, and I think everyone certainly at this table and elsewhere deserves some credit for that.

Ridership growth in the area exceeds national trends. Three-quarters of statewide transit ridership in Virginia occurs in Northern Virginia. There's been a seventeen percent growth in the past five years, and that's in part because of state support but especially because of local support.

Let me give you an example there. Local sources provide about two-thirds of the public transit funding, and Northern Virginia's jurisdictions had a local effort of \$208 per person. The next closest area was Richmond at \$20 per person. \$208 per person, second \$20 per person.

Okay -- so what are the real issues here that we see? Well, there's the obvious financing issue. I mean, we've been through this, we appreciate the support we've received from many of you. It is a significant down-payment against the \$700 million dollars more in funding that's needed each year under the 2030 plan.

The needs are railcars, locomotives, more light rail, all the rest of that which is necessary to support a world class system.

And, by the way, the Washington Metro Region is increasingly competing, not just against American cities but increasingly competing worldwide, and if we don't maintain our transportation system, we'll pay the price in ways which none of us really want to pay for.

And what are the challenges? Well, the first is, of course, we've got the Fort Belvoir Engineering Proving Grounds issue and how we're going to serve those changes.

The issue of upgrading safety and security continues to be there. We're still far too vulnerable to natural and manmade catastrophes in this area, and our public transportation systems are still too vulnerable.

We need to enhance pedestrian access. We need to respond to the needs of our population. In some ways an aging population and in other ways an immigrant population relies heavily on transit.

The air quality and reducing the greenhouse gas admissions are things that I had mentioned before.

Okay -- getting to the bottom line here. What is it that we can -- that the Commonwealth Transportation Board can do to help?

Well, the first is to continue ensuring that Northern Virginia receives its fair share of transportation funding for all the data points that I mentioned before, and we note that in a draft FY 2008 program NVTC's share actually dipped from sixty-two percent to fifty-seven percent.

So, we'd like you to maintain the support from the State for public transportation systems for all the reasons that we've indicated. We would appreciate if you could facilitate the prompt issuance of state bonds at twenty percent which are for transit and urge DRPT to make available newly authorized transit funding as quickly as possible.

Third, we see that there's a possibility of federal legislation. Now, there seems to be a very real possibility -- bipartisan, the House, the Senate, Maryland and Virginia -- it's very important to maintain whatever level of funding is needed in order to get that critical federal match that will maintain the system and help it expand and meet new challenges.

We would appreciate continued statewide emphasis on a multi-modal approach recognizing things like telework, land use and transportation planning and public transportation and, finally, whatever new funding you can help us identify.

So, those are basically the needs from NVTC's standpoint. From the standpoint of Falls Church for a just a minute, we are very supportive of the key projects going on around us. We recognize that if we're not careful in terms of the rail to Dulles and other programs around Tysons Corner, we'll have a traffic jam starting at the Potomac River going up all the way out Route 7 to Tysons Corner.

And so, the mitigation plans we strongly support, and we urge your assistance for the City of Falls Church because we're right on the edge of that and will be very much affected by that. And we'll be coming before the various state agencies as well for improvements and reasonable transit improvements as far as a downtown renovation effort.

Let me really finish where I began. Although all the conversation tonight is about transportation, the reality -- and you know this very well -- transportation is about the most fundamental service the Government can provide.

It's an issue of security, it's an issue of economic activity, job support; it's an issue of raising enough revenue to support the rest of the State and its priorities, and it's a matter of clean air and the environment that we all live in.

So, I want to thank you very much for the opportunity to make a few comments this evening. I feel that our partnership has never been more effective, has never served the public better. And one major point is, let's just keep that up. We'll do everything we can.

Thanks very much. If there's any questions, please let me know.

SECRETARY HOMER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. SNYDER: Thank you, Mr. Secretary.

SECRETARY HOMER: The next speaker is Hunter McCleary, to be followed by Sharon Pandak.

Welcome, Mr. McCleary.

MR. MCCLEARY: Thanks for giving me a chance to speak tonight. My name is Hunter McCleary, and I represent Fairfax Advocates for Better Bicycling.

Three years ago VDOT issued a "Policy for Integrating Bicycle and Pedestrian Accommodations." This document gave us hope that Virginia was finally going to do some catching-up.

The policy states, "The Virginia Department of Transportation will initiate all highway construction projects with the presumption that the project shall accommodate bicycling and walking."

As you know, however, little progress has been made in implementing this policy. Fairfax County still has only ten miles of bike lanes in an area of 400 square miles and thousands of miles of roads, and many miles of shoulders have gone unpaved even when the road itself has been resurfaced.

We're decades behind what other jurisdictions are doing, and on the back of my testimony which I've given out is an annotated list of the bike projects that are on the drawing board.

Now, we realize that a lot of this comes down to money, but there is also the issue of accepting that bicycle accommodations are worth the investment.

In Europe and in a growing number of cities in the U.S., bicycling is converting five, ten and even twenty-five percent of car traffic to bike ridership. Such an investment also pays dividends in reducing obesity and generating thousands of pounds less per year of greenhouse gases.

We offer the following recommendations: routinely pave road shoulders. This is a relatively inexpensive option and one that will make roads markedly safer for bicycle and cars.

We would also like you to commit to adding a specific number of bike lanes each year, and we'd like to see you embrace fully the concept of Complete Streets.

Thanks for considering my input and for your support of a sustainable transportation future.

SECRETARY HOMER: Thank you, Mr. McCleary.

The next speaker is Sharon Pandak, and then we'll suspend for a minute, Mr. Chairman, for your welcoming comments. Thank you for joining us.

Ms. Pandak, welcome.

MS. PANDAK: Thank you, Mr. Secretary, and thank you, members of the Commonwealth Transportation Board, for being here.

My name is Sharon Pandak. I'm a resident of Woodbridge, Virginia, Prince William County. I'm former County Attorney, and in my legal practice I represent local governments that often have to address the very difficult issues of land use and transportation.

Some of you may remember that personally I talked to you last year as a relatively recent wife who had a husband who traded a seven-minute commute from this very area to come down to Woodbridge to live with me, sometime at an hour and a half commute or an hour and forty-five minutes. So, there's a very personal aspect of this for me, as many of the residents of Prince William have.

I support the priorities that Mr. Nohe spoke to you about as Vice Chairman of the Prince William County Board. There is no question that those projects are necessary in order to try to improve and address the gridlock that exist in Prince William on many of the different major roads and that is dramatically affecting the quality of life.

But I might say that in many ways, when you get closer to the light at the end of the tunnel, it will be more trains, it will be more transit, and we urge you to look and continue your approaches to improving multi-modal transportation across the Commonwealth.

But particularly in Northern Virginia and in Prince William County, where if we extend train and we extend multi-modal out to areas like Gainesville, Haymarket, farther west and down to our local counties in the southern part of the State -- Stafford and Spotsylvania -- we have the opportunities to remove people who otherwise will simply be driving through Prince William, not taking advantage of the many benefits the County has to offer, twice a day. And we will offer them relief, and we will offer our local citizens relief as well.

Increasingly, also, demand management will help us address, we think, issues with respect to transportation that simply building more lanes may only result in making larger parking lots.

I appreciate and we urge the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority as it works towards the challenges that you have helped create in a positive way in supporting House Bill 3202.

And there are challenges there, both with respect to generating the funds and distributing them, but I remain very optimistic that that's an opportunity we otherwise wouldn't have.

I encourage the CTB to support other creative efforts which will be needed over time in order to get to the funding we need to ultimately resolve our transportation issues.

3202 is incremental. It's critical, but it's incremental and we need to go further. And so, I appreciate the support that you have given to fully funding all of the transportation needs so we can deal both with quality-of-life issues and with the other substantive public-safety issues that affect citizens every day.

Thank you.

SECRETARY HOMER: Thank you, Ms. Pandak. Mr. Chairman, welcome, and we appreciate your

hosting us here this evening. We know you have many things to say on behalf of the County, and we look forward to your opening comments.

MR. CONNOLLY: Thank you very much, Secretary Homer. My apologies for not being here to greet you when you began. I was the keynote speaker at another event and had to keep that commitment as well.

But welcome, belatedly, to yourself and Assistant Director Corey Hill and members of the CTB. Mary Lee, it's great to see you again -- and of course Doug and Julie, who is not related to me.

I want to thank you all for being here and taking the time to hear from the public. It's been little difficult to prepare the comments I'm about to deliver because the Draft Program was only released a week ago. But I understand some of the limitations and am trying to figure out how much money we're all going to have after it passes the Transportation Board amended by the Governor. Obviously, in the future, trying to get that a little earlier would be a little easier for all of us.

On October 23rd of last year, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors reviewed and approved the County's recommended priorities for the FY 2008 through 13 Six-Year Program.

These were provided to the CTB and the Department in testimony and written form on November 1st of last year. The priorities are consistent with and help implement the new Northern Virginia 2030 Transportation Plan.

Notwithstanding the recent General Assembly's action to authorize a new transportation funding bill which provides Northern Virginia a new infusion of funds, we will still fall far short of the funds needed to provide funding for all the projects requested in the program.

The 2030 Plan identified a short fall of about \$700 million dollars. As you know, our best estimate of the basket of new revenues that could be generated by the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority is somewhere around \$300 million dollars. A good chunk of new investment doesn't take care of everything.

The Board would -- our Board would like to express its appreciation to you all for funding several projects previously requested in the FY 2007 through 2012 Six-Year Program.

These include the continuation of funding for the Dulles Corridor Express Bus Service at \$6.6 million dollars per year throughout the Program; restoring and accruing partial funding for the I-66/I-495 Interchange Reconstruction Project, one of the most dangerous parts of 66 and the Beltway; completing full funding for the I-95 Fourth Lane Project from Route 7100 to Route 123, and for Phases 7 and 8 of the Springfield Mixing Bowl Interchange, and last, adding new safety improvement projects throughout our county.

Here are some of our concerns. There are three projects that are part of the Board of Supervisors' Four Year Transportation Plan, approved unanimously by our board back in February of '04 and subsequently approved in part by the voters -- overwhelming -- seventy-eight percent of the voters approving our transportation bond referendum that November.

Since the Board approved this program, County staff has met on numerous occasions with VDOT to develop a joint plan to implement this capital program as quickly as possible.

The first project is the request for State assistance for the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority's Infrastructure Renewal Program, known as Metro Matters.

The Board appreciates the General Assembly's recent action which provided \$20 million dollars for Metrorail rolling stock as part of the State's budget and urges the CTB and the Department of Rail and Public Transportation to transfer these funds to Northern Virginia expeditiously. In addition, we need more capacity on Metro.

In addition, the Board is grateful that the General Assembly provided the opportunity for the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority to raise new regional transportation fees to provide \$50 million dollars per year in dedicated capital funding for Metro as a critical part of a federal effort, matching a federal effort of \$1.5 billion dollars in dedicated funding over the next ten years.

These funds, if ultimately adopted by us at NVTVA and combined with federal funds and funds from Maryland and D.C., will close a significant gap in Metro's long-term funding capital requirements.

However, it is also important to note that Virginia's share in the current Metro Matters Funding Agreement is \$252 million dollars through FY 2010. It is being borne primarily by local jurisdictions, candidly. Additional state assistance in meeting this funding requirement would be appreciated.

The second project -- by the way in Maryland that's how it works. The State funds most of that. Just thought I'd mention it, Mr. Secretary.

The second project from the Board's Four-Year Transportation Program is the Richmond Highway Public Transportation Initiative. In the past we've been receiving \$824,000 annually for operating cost for new and expanded bus service in this corridor in state funds.

In FY 2007, these funds were provided as federal CMAQ funds. Typically, CMAQ funds are not used for operating expenses. No funds were provided in the Draft Program. We request that the CTB reconsider this and reinstate the \$824,000 in the Final Program using state funds.

In addition to the operating costs component, the capital improvements costs for this initiative are estimated at \$55 million dollars. So far, the County has identified \$28 million of that, with \$27 million obviously still needed to implement these improvements.

Our federal delegation is working hard to try to secure federal money, and the good news about this initiative is it's already working. We have expanded transit capacity on the Richmond Highway corridor, which is now more critical than ever after the BRAC decision in Fort Belvoir that's going to add 22,500 employees to Belvoir.

When that happens, Belvoir will have as many employees as the entire Pentagon. Think about the transportation network that serves the Pentagon and think about what does not serve Belvoir.

This is a critical link. It's more important than ever. And the good news is, when we expanded the bus service and created REX, the Richmond Highway Express Bus Service, we expanded ridership by well over thirty percent.

The third thing I want to bring out -- and I know Mr. Morrison is waiting for this one -- the Route 29/Gallows Road project. This intersection project -- it's the perennial project; it's been around for decades. I'd like to see it finished in my lifetime, and I know you would too, Mr. Secretary.

VDOT is committed to help keep this project on schedule. Although the costs continue to rise and are covered in the draft program, the Board reiterates its request that you retain and expedite funding to avoid any further lapses. The longer we wait in this project, the more the costs skyrocket.

I remember a time when the cost was somewhere under \$40 million. I believe the current cost estimate is \$96 million dollars, so -- and that's because of the -- especially the Land Act costs. Merrifield is expensive and getting more so.

Other major projects of concern include the Dulles Corridor Rapid Transit Project, our number one transportation priority. The Commonwealth, the FTA, MWAA and the local governments need to move this project through as expeditiously as possible in order to produce the most cost-effective and efficient project possible. We still hope it's a tunnel, Mr. Secretary.

In June of 2006, VDOT made the statement to the CTB that they were going to focus on potential BRAC impacts. We urge the CTB to ensure that this commitment is addressed in the Six Year Program, as I've already mentioned.

Funding in the estimated amount of at least \$1.2 billion is needed for projects such as upgraded interchanges, new bus service and transfer centers, improvements to the Fairfax County Parkway, completion of that parkway, widening Route 1 through Fort Belvoir and other improvements.

We obviously are going to be working very hard to try to secure federal money as well -- and I know, Mr. Secretary, that has your support as well.

The Route 7 interim widening project from Rolling Holly Drive to Reston Avenue is currently funded and on schedule. However, the remaining portions of this widening project, from Reston Avenue to Tyco Road, need to be recognized.

Currently there is no consensus as to how far the next segment should be built from Reston Avenue, and funding has not been shown in the draft program to continue this project.

Second, there is a note in the Six-Year Program indicating that funds currently accrued for the project are recommended to be converted to federal funds. We strongly object to this because we already have a substantial amount of NVTB bonds in this project, almost \$17 million worth, and to now federalize the project would add years to it because of new requirements which would have to be addressed.

The Board requests strongly that these funds be reinstated in the final program to complete at least the portion of the project from Reston Avenue to Reston Parkway and that the recommendation to convert all funds to federal funds be rescinded. The federal government is not always our friend.

The Route 29 widening from Shirley Gate to Old Centreville Road, preliminary engineering and accrual of funds for construction. This entire project, including \$3.4 million in revenue-sharing funds previously allocated, was removed from the program.

We would respectfully ask that it be restored in the final program in recognition of the fact that this project remains actively under design by the County using previously allocated funds.

The FY 2008-2009 state budget adopted by the General Assembly contains \$305 million for several projects around the state, including the Beltway HOT Lanes and Route 50 west of 28. It does not appear that these funds have been allocated to these projects in the proposed program. We would ask that these funds be identified and allocated before the final program adoption.

The Virginia Railway Express Burke Center Station EZ Bus Shuttle Service received no additional funding in this program. We're requesting \$1.2 million for this service in FY 2008.

This is particularly critical to addressing increasing VRE ridership demands at this station and to help mitigate the impact of displaced Burke Center VRE patrons while the new garage is being built. We're adding capacity at that station.

The Board has requested for several years that the CTB undertake a transit corridor study as part of the Richmond Highway Location Study for Fairfax and Prince William counties. While the state previously identified funds to the study over a year ago, the study has not been initiated. The Board would request respectfully that this study be commenced as quickly as possible.

With regard to the General Assembly's actions this year and the Governor's amendments, the Board requests the CTB to ensure that Northern Virginia receives at least the share of the \$3 billion dollars in statewide transportation bonds approved in HB 3202 that it would otherwise receive by using the existing formulas, since the money will be distributed by you.

As you know, the Washington metropolitan area exceeds the federal air quality standards for ground-level ozone and particulate matter. In addition, the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments and the local jurisdictions have recently initiated an effort to reduce greenhouse gases generated in the region.

Here in Fairfax County we've initiated something called Cool Counties, which will be unveiled, we hope, in Richmond at the Annual Convention of the National Association of Counties.

In order to ensure that the region meets federal ozone and particulate matter standards and reduces carbon dioxide, we need the CTB's help in funding projects that reduce congestion and encourage transit and teleworking.

Thank you so much for taking the time to listen to us today. Thank you for your service to your community and to our state.

Thank you.

SECRETARY HOMER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for taking the time to be with us.

We'll resume with the testimony now. Hap Connors is next, to be followed by Tony Newkirk.

Welcome, Mr. Connors.

MR. CONNORS: Thank you, Secretary, Mr. Commissioner. Thank you all for being here, and I thank you all for holding this hearing and for allowing me to address you. I am speaking as a member of the George Washington Regional Commission and a member of the MPO, as well a member of the Board of Supervisors in Spotsylvania County.

As you heard from Lloyd Robinson, who we just hired to help us manage our transportation needs in the region, we have leaders; and as you heard from Mark Dudenhefer, we do have leaders now in the region in the county who understand the importance of tackling transportation.

Some of us do not think -- although we have our moments, we don't think it's necessary to complain about the state transportation in the Commonwealth. We instead have chosen to tackle this problem on our own -- with the help from you all, of course.

At the regional level, we have reorganized, as you heard from Lloyd Robinson -- we've reorganized our planning district and our MPOs where we can better tackle and better manage land use and transportation.

We've hired a competent staff to help us manage that process, and we've engaged in partnerships with the private sector to help us, actually to build

these projects. In fact, over \$600 million dollars of road projects currently in the region are being paid for by the private sector, which underscores the importance of public/private partnerships, especially in our region.

At the County level we're doing much the same thing. In 2005 the voters overwhelmingly approved over \$144 million dollars in a bond referendum for fifty-two road projects and a VRE station.

We have since then hired a general engineering consultant to help us manage this process, we've hired competent staff, and we've also engaged in a Public/Private Transportation Act initiative with the Clark Shirley team. And next month we will pull the trigger on several of those projects, and we're ready to move ahead.

At the same time, we're also engaged in a transportation management plan that will help us manage some -- what we thought initially, although it hasn't become the case -- relatively inexpensive and quick project solutions, but we're still pursuing that. And we are also pursuing a modeling exercise to help us better manage our planning efforts.

In summary, we are playing catch-up in a lot of ways with those projects that have been long delayed by the inaction in Richmond, and I'm glad to say that. I also want to thank you all for coming up with a package that at least moves us forward and takes some good, positive first steps in solving that problem.

But we're playing catch-up mostly while we're trying to plan ahead and trying to do a better job of planning for the future, and we need a partner in the Commonwealth Transportation Board to help us carry out our projects as expeditiously as possible.

And we want to thank you too, Mr. Secretary. You've been helpful to us in Spotsylvania County.

Mr. Ekern, you've been helpful at the regional level, and we want to continue that partnership as we all try to better manage these transportation challenges.

And as Lloyd Robinson stated, we want you to be flexible as we take advantage of the opportunities that are coming our way. We would ask that you consider giving us also our fair share of revenues, including a fair share of the new state bonds, including revenue sharing funds, and we would also support moving forward on the HOT Lanes South project.

Specifically to Spotsylvania County, the Board of Supervisors passed a resolution earlier this month outlining our priorities. They are, number one, I-95 interchanges. We have short-term and long-term challenges there.

Short-term, we're looking for dual access ramps for a Route 3 Bypass at the Virginia Welcome Center south of the river. We are also looking at the I-95/Spotsylvania Interchange, Exit 126, a four-lane southbound off-ramp and an additional southbound free-flow right-turning lane.

Long-term improvements include a new interchange located just south of U.S. Route 17 that will serve the new regional hospital in our Jackson Gateway.

Other priorities include the construction funding of Route 17/I-95 Bridge replacement and widening. We have already a million dollars proffered from a previous commercial development, and we're looking for some assistance from you all to help us move that forward.

Thanks to Dave Ogle and his staff, we are moving ahead on our Route 208 Courthouse Area Bypass, Phase I, and we're looking for construction funding for Phase II. And Ms. Carter has been very helpful in that project as well.

Other priorities include our primary roads -- Routes 1, 3 and 2 -- widening projects, and lastly, we would ask that you would include acquisition and construction funding for some bridge improvements at the Spotswood Furnace Road and Mount Olive Road.

And those are our priorities, and I can submit these to the reporter for the record.

I would hope to -- I wish I could talk to you about transit in Spotsylvania County; however, that might have to wait until after this year's elections, and maybe next year we can have a serious discussion about that. So, thank you, and thank you for all you do.

SECRETARY HOMER: Thank you, Mr. Connors. We'll look forward to that conversation.

The next speaker is Tony Newkirk, to be followed by Peter Harnik.

Welcome, Mr. Newkirk.

MR. NEWKIRK: Good evening. I'm a citizen of Loudoun County, and I have a problem that I think a lot of us are all aware of, and that is that it takes me an hour and a half to an hour and three-quarters sometimes to get down to Washington D.C. and do business transactions there.

About a year ago, several Loudoun County neighbors of mine and I got together and started to wonder what could be done to help solve this problem. And we did some research in advanced transportation concepts.

I just wanted to let you know that this may not be the proper meeting because it's very project-oriented by communities, but there are efforts in the research and development arena in Europe, in Korea.

British Airlines is looking at some of those concepts where there would be a network-centric, elevated, extremely ultra-light rail that's fully automated and takes you from Point A to Point B without stopping, very light. Capital costs typically are in the 10 to 15 million dollars per mile range, as opposed to heavy rail, which tends to be 150 to 200 million a mile, with very substantial capacities.

And I'm just here to let you know that there are things going on in the world of advanced technologies that are having breakthroughs, last year and this year, in switching technologies automation and drop-off that make this a very attractive thing over the next couple of years that I would love to see Virginia take the lead in.

Right now there's more going on in Silicon Valley, in Sweden and in London than here in our congested gridlock area, so I just wanted to not make a pitch so much as to encourage some eyes being opened to those opportunities and some funding to keep abreast of it, to take advantage of it and to seize opportunities at the early stage, which would mitigate a lot of the other solutions that are being proposed.

Thank you very much.

SECRETARY HOMER: Thank you, Mr. Newkirk. Thank you for taking the time to be with us tonight.

The next speaker is Peter Harnik, to be followed by Charles Windle.

Welcome, Mr. Harnik.

MR. HARNIK: Thank you, Mr. Secretary, Mr. Commissioner, members of the Board. I'm Peter Harnik. I represent the Maywood Community Association in Arlington. We're here to speak against the widening of I-66 within the Beltway.

We reject the term 'spot improvements' for two reasons. First of all, it's not a spot. It appears to be pretty much of a full-fledged widening for most of the route between -- near D.C. all the way out to the Beltway.

And secondly, we don't feel that it is an improvement. We feel that I-66 is an extremely well-designed, well-built, safe, outstanding roadway and that the kinds of changes that are being proposed and talked about would actually make it less safe, considerably less safe.

In fact, if you think about some of the unpleasant driving experiences you may have had in New York City or on the Anacostia Freeway, or places without shoulders where multiple lanes of traffic are speeding by, no place to breakdown -- or even portions of I-66 outside the Beltway, we feel that the type of widening that is being proposed is actually going to make this a much more dangerous situation.

And also, one reason that there's so many traffic jams in New York City is because all of those roads that don't have any breakdown lanes -- when somebody does breakdown it causes a massive traffic jam as opposed to a little traffic jam. So, we think there are numerous problems with this.

And we don't use the words 'spot improvement', we're talking about widening. We feel that this widening is being promoted largely by Congressman Frank Wolf, who doesn't represent the district. He's been pumping money in year after year from the Federal Government into this widening. He's created kind of a frenzy both in Virginia and through the COV to get going on this thing in a process that we call "ready, fire, aim." We feel like they're trying to pull the trigger, as was said earlier, before any of the aiming has been done.

We do want to thank you, Mr. Secretary, for your recent decision to put some money into a full multi-modal corridor study, which we think is definitely necessary for this.

Arlington County is touted as one of the smart-growth centers of the country, and part of the reason for that is actually doing some advanced planning. And we feel that the corridor that includes the subway and buses and correlating development with roadway construction is something that Arlingtonians are proud of and want to see the entire Northern Virginia community buy into and adopt.

So, we do support this multi-modal study. I hope you know that Congressman Moran last week sent a letter in contradiction to the letters that you've been probably getting from Congressman Wolf, saying that he wants to see a study as well.

And, to be honest, our outrage about the way this process has been evolving has not been ameliorated by the Idea-66 Study, which we really have a lot of qualms about. We feel that it was basically a phony study, because a lot of things were learned through that Idea-66 Study and they were completely ignored and rejected.

And those of us who went to the most recent hearing, meeting, whatever you want to call, at Washington & Lee High School, were told basically, "Okay, you've got some good points; we're just going to quickly widen this thing with these spot improvements and then we're going to study it."

Well, the widening is once and forever. The study might lead to some better solutions that aren't going to compromise the safety and will actually move more people on the road.

So, we thank you for funding this study. We are anxious for the study to move forward, and we ask that you remove the spot improvement widening from the Six-Year Plan until the study is finished. And if the study shows that it should be widened, we can put it on again next year. But we don't think it's appropriate to have it on the plan right now.

Thank you.

SECRETARY HOMER: Thank you, Mr. Harnik.

The next speaker is Charles Windle, to be followed by Roger Diedrich.

Welcome, Mr. Windle.

MR. WINDLE: Thank you.

Like Mr. Newkirk, I'm a resident of Loudoun County, just a citizen, much like him. Never met him and still haven't met him, but I saw him earlier and I share some of the same frustrations that Mr. Newkirk shares.

While I just am standing here representing myself, I don't represent any group, I think I probably represent the tens of thousands of people who are commuting everyday from west of the City to the job centers in Fairfax County, eastern Loudoun.

And there's just -- we have a lot opportunity; we've had it for a long time. And I was glad to hear earlier today from Ms. Umstattd's comments that you've been in Leesburg and we've got some flyover work that's going to be done.

If you took a little trip past there though, there's a road, Sycolin Road, where the flyover is, and it's unpaved road. And I don't know what the traffic counts are, but I've got to guess that it's the most heavily-traveled unpaved road in Virginia, if not one of the top two or three.

And that's been on a list of things to be done for a long time, and I haven't ever seen it done, and that's one of the roads that really, I think, concerns a lot of people in that area. And I don't know if this is something that you all hear about through channels.

A few other things -- the widening of Route 659 from Route 7 to the Dulles Greenway. It's a little two-lane road and full of traffic again, and it's been on plans for a long time and it's another one that I really hope with this money we can find a way to get this done.

I live in western Loudoun County, and there's a few out there. The interchange at 690 in Purcellville, 690 and Route 7. And there's real opportunities there; there's only one way to get to Purcellville, and it's gridlocked on Saturdays, Sundays, Mondays, Tuesdays.

And then finally, for a lot of the commuters, especially the ones going to West Virginia, the widening Route 7 from Leesburg to Route 9. And that's another one that I know there have been studies and people say there's not a problem, but I'd love to see everybody here commute there everyday, because it's sometimes a forty-five minute ride that should be ten minutes.

So I'm elated, like a lot of people, that there's some money coming to Northern Virginia -- and it's exciting. And I sure hope -- I haven't seen a lot of this plan in Loudoun County, and I know Fairfax is very important and I know Prince William's important, but I sure hope that some of the small projects that are real opportunities here in western Loudoun County and Loudoun County get a nod here.

Thank you.

SECRETARY HOMER: Thank you, Mr. Windle. We appreciate your taking the time to come visit with us.

The next speaker is Roger Diedrich, to be followed by G.R. Farley.

Welcome, Mr. Diedrich.

MR. DIEDRICH: Thank you, Mr. Secretary and members of the Board. I'm Roger Diedrich; I represent the Virginia chapter of the Sierra Club.

I'm pleased to be able to address you again on these most important environmental issues in the Commonwealth. In addition to its effect on influencing growth, we have lately become sensitized to transportation's role in global warming.

And we finally have seen -- briefly, because it's a lot like ones we've seen previously, and while we thought we had big changes in the last General Assembly, this plan seems to reflect -- does not seem to reflect much of that change.

While preparing my statement, I thought about bringing up the need to do more demand management planning, for steps that can assure that each proposed expenditure reflects a genuine physical need.

I was reminded then that to get serious about demand management, it has to be planned around the bus transit system, so that brings us back to what you often hear from us, environmentalists, that we need a larger allocation for transit.

We do want that, and that may be one area where there was some movement in the General Assembly, but I don't think -- I think it was insufficient.

I have been led to believe there was over \$500 million dollars to be allocated from the general fund and above what was going to be available for Northern Virginia and Hampton Roads, but then I was most recently was told by Mr. Morrison, last night at a meeting, that 305 million of that 500 has already been allocated for six other road projects throughout the State. So, now we've got a lot less to work with.

I'd ask you to take a hard look at how money is allocated to the various categories of spending, especially spending for these projects. You need to base these decisions on a more useful set of performance criteria, ones that can provide a greater degree of public benefit.

This has to include longer-term benefits like controlling global warming, and you don't do that by continually adding lane miles.

Yesterday the Governor joined the Climate Registry, which will track Virginia's progress in reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and if they have a way to capture it, our transportation system will show up as a big negative. It's your responsibility to fix that.

For example, how can you allow the consideration of constructing an additional four lanes of truckway the entire length of Virginia on I-81, when there's more energy-efficient and more cost-effective options on the table?

Why do you retain projects, like the Tri-County Parkway, which would continue to precipitate sprawl on the outer counties? Why do you do spot improvements on I-66 when many alternative, more cost-effective options have not been fully evaluated?

A proper set of evaluation criteria would knock these projects out in favor of more transit and projects like the Route 50 traffic calming and more bike and pedestrian-serving facilities.

Among the interferences to better transportation decision-making is the Public/Private Transportation Act, in my opinion. You should be more discriminating when you accept PPTA proposals.

At a recent meeting on HOT Lanes, Mr. Morrison

told us that the PPTA provides us with a way to get projects done faster, but in my estimation that's simply a reflection of the ability to cut corners under that process. There's no opportunity to have public input, and when questions are raised, as they are often, the answers fall flat.

In the case of several big PPTA projects in Northern Virginia, i.e. the Dulles Rail, the two HOT Lanes projects as well as the I-81, the public is in the dark as to what we are getting.

We were told last night that when a final contract is negotiated, the Secretary of Transportation, quote, "will decide when we have a good deal for Virginia," unquote. I have no confidence whatsoever in the outcome of such a process.

You know, the PPTA, as it is set up, doesn't require you to have public hearings, but it doesn't prevent you from having public hearings. Maybe you can just do that on your own volition.

That's my public comment. Thank you.

SECRETARY HOMER: Thank you, Mr. Diedrich.

The next speaker is G.R. Farley, to be followed by Bob Chase.

Welcome, Mr. Farley.

MR. FARLEY: Sorry about my hasty handwriting there. It's C.R. Farley.

SECRETARY HOMER: C.R., excuse me, I'm sorry.

MR. FARLEY: Everybody calls me Rupert, so you can do that if you'd like.

I was born and raised in Fredericksburg, Virginia, and I don't like the Six-Year Plan. That's why I decided to come and put my two-cents-worth in.

The problem with the Six-Year Plan is it's too much like the last Six-Year Plan and the Six-Year Plan before that. They've all done nothing but get us deeper and deeper into the mess that we're in today. None of them are making any progress in getting us efficient, safe transportation.

It just adds to gridlock, you know, and it adds to pollution, you know -- the surfaces that are paved over. It's time to start putting out money more in the transits and less in roads.

I feel like Virginia has been on a binge for the last six decades or so, putting away more road, beltways, all automobile-oriented projects; and, as a result, it's like we've gotten a couple hundred pounds overweight, to use that analogy, and I feel like it's time to go on a diet.

Instead of putting one percent of our money behind transit, like we're planning on doing in this Six-Year Plan -- and previous Six-Year Plans -- I'd like to see it turned around. Let's put ninety-nine percent into transit and one percent towards the roads.

I'm not being serious of course; you can't do that. But, you know, you get my drift. Because if we don't start putting more money into transit and getting every city in this State up to Service Level A, you know, we're not going to be able to provide any alternatives when we finally do see the light.

You know, we've got to start putting our money into transit, not just local transit systems, but I mean transits between cities, so that there's always an alternative to the car.

Right now you've been pursuing a course that gives us no alternative to the car at all, you know. It is a dead-end, unsustainable, fiscally irresponsible, unhealthy situation. I mean, you know all that; you've heard it from other guests here about the benefits of transit and the harm caused by an auto-dependent transportation system, so I won't repeat all that.

What I would like you to do, even though you can't turn it around and start doing ninety-nine percent transit and one percent auto, is kind of start thinking in that direction anyway. You know, one of these days when we finally do make that turn, the people that were responsible for it, I think, will be appreciated by the citizens of the future.

Right now, the citizens of the future will look back at the twentieth century and the twenty-first century and say, "What were they thinking about back then?" You know, "They had the capability of putting in the world's best transit system -- the world's greatest country should have the world's greatest transit system -- but what did they do with all that money? They squandered it on roads. They put in a system that encouraged us -- forced us to use gasoline wastefully, they put in a system that forced us to pave over valuable farm land and they put in a system that polluted our bays. What were they thinking back in 2007?" -- instead of "Thanks."

I hope they'll look back at 2007 and say, "The CTB in 2007 finally took the right step in the right direction to get us out of this hole that we're in."

It makes me think of a little saying from my old grandpappy, you know. If you find you're in too deep, stop digging. So, that's what I'm asking you.

Thank you very much.

SECRETARY HOMER: Thank you, Mr. Farley.

The next speaker is Bob Chase, to be followed by Michael Horwatt.

Welcome, Mr. Chase.

MR. CHASE: Thank you, Mr. Secretary. We've been at one or two of these before, I think, in the past.

The Draft Six-Year Transportation Program includes much good news for the people of Northern Virginia. Initiatives that the Northern Virginia Transportation Alliance applauds include full funding of Route 28 Phase 3 interchange improvements, a fourth I-95 lane in each direction between Newington and Route 123, the Woodrow Wilson Bridge and the Springfield interchange, two westbound I-66 inside-the-beltway spot improvements that are urgently and obviously needed, and the I-66/Route 29 Gainesville interchange.

The Alliance also approves funding being made available to restart the I-66 outside-the-beltway EIS, finance regional HOT lanes, Metrorail and VRE capital improvements and six-laning Route 50 in Loudoun County.

Other Alliance recommended improvements include EIS studies and right-of-way acquisitions for new regional parkways and Potomac River crossings, as well as for parallel secondary road networks in the Route 28 and other corridors and the relocation of portions of Routes 9 and 15 in Loudoun County.

The Alliance also asks that the Route 234 Extension from Prince William to Loudoun County's Route 659 relocated be named something other than the Tri-County Parkway, since, among other reasons, it neither serves the Tri-County's original purpose and need or connects three counties.

The Alliance asks the CTB also to get behind an effort to create an actual performance-based statewide regional plan focused on corridors of statewide significance.

The authority to raise additional regional funds is good news for this region, yet does not supplant or diminish the CTB's role in ensuring that transportation infrastructure essential to the Commonwealth's interests are advanced, funded and built.

The CTB should work closely with our regional authority to develop performance standards to ensure investments and projects that best enhance the regional and state's transportation network and interest.

These and other Alliance recommended initiatives are directed at the big picture in benefitting the mobility and quality of lives of all Northern Virginians. In that spirit, the Alliance urges you to reject the advice of elitist, self-centered organizations that ask you to divert funds from projects that benefit the needs of the many.

The Alliance and many area residents recognize that public transit, sidewalks and bike paths are part of the transportation equation. However, as a percentage of daily trips, the total usage of these forms barely exceeds ten percent.

This is not to say -- and I would emphasize that this is not to say that investments in these areas should not exceed ten percent. That's not what we're saying. What we are saying is only that taxpayer dollars must be invested in proportion to usage and benefits derived.

Northern Virginia is an important part of a great Commonwealth. Keeping it that way requires that the CTB focus the greatest amount of resources on the greater picture in advancing the greatest good.

As Supervisor Marty Nohe observed earlier this evening, HB 3202 creates an opportunity for great things to happen in this area. But, I would add, that will also require a tremendous amount of good faith effort and hard work on the part of this body and local elected officials to maximize that opportunity.

Thank you.

SECRETARY HOMER: Thank you, Mr. Chase.

The next speaker is Michael Horwatt, to be followed by Stewart Schwartz.

Welcome, Mr. Horwatt.

MR. HORWATT: Good evening, Mr. Secretary and members of the Board. I was sitting here listening to all of this tonight, and I was feeling blessed that I didn't have your job. It's a challenge.

I am here tonight on behalf of a developer that has an interest in transportation-oriented development and to ask that in reaching priority decisions that you consider the fact that Fairfax County has decided to try to channel its future growth into transportation-oriented development.

And that simply cannot occur unless there is a real focus on how future improvements can be made in some kind of synchronization with future transit stations, and that kind of investment is critical to this County's being able to accommodate its growth. And the new revenues that we have, the new institutions that we have, will help bring that about.

But we are entering a different age. We do not have the same discretion that we had in the past, either in terms of the environment, in terms of our mobility, in terms of our economy. We cannot think the same way anymore -- it's over -- if we are to really make the kinds of adjustments that need to be made.

And for those that recognize that that needs to be done in the private sector, who will have to contribute to those improvements and should contribute to those improvements to mitigate the problems, the possibilities of partnerships of private and public participation in making transit-oriented development a reality is critical.

And I would use the Eisenhower Station as an example, the Van Dorn Street Station, where the bottlenecks there are very serious. And unless there is attention paid to the interchange at Van Dorn and 495, then it's not going to be feasible to spawn this kind of transportation-oriented development.

And there are many other places like that, and I hope that in your thinking and analysis that you will incorporate that kind of perspective in the decisions that you make. Thank you.

SECRETARY HOMER: Thank you, Mr. Horwatt.

The next speaker is Stewart Schwartz, to be followed by Audrey Clement.

Welcome, Mr. Schwartz.

MR. SCHWARTZ: Thank you, Mr. Secretary and members of the CTB, VDOT and VDRPT. I'm Stewart Schwartz, the Executive Director of the Coalition for Smarter Growth. I want to start by thanking the agency for the reforms that it has supported over the last couple of years, including the traffic study requirements, the subdivision street rethinking that we're going to be doing, access management and the commitment for more dollars for transit as well the commitment to link land use and transportation.

With that said, of course there's a 'but' and I have some significant concerns. I think, first of all, I'm going to echo what you just heard from a developer's attorney, that we have a changed world. We have a world of higher energy prices that we're guaranteed to expect over the coming decades.

We have a world in which we have to reduce our carbon emissions to deal with global warming. Thirty-some percent of our emissions come from transportation, and forty-some percent from our buildings.

We're going to have fewer dollars no matter what we do. We're an over-extended empire, we've got Homeland Security, Medicare, Social Security, you name it. We have to make the right decisions with the money that we start spending as soon as this year so that we're buying the right transportation system for the future.

If we spend it overwhelmingly on large highways and mobility, as Mr. Chase wants it -- you know, sort of a long-distance, "I can go miles and miles", at a time when energy prices are rising, we will be a less competitive state.

Certainly the investments in freight rail that the State is making is going to be the right way to go. You need to have performance standards and goals that will help you reduce your carbon emissions, reduce our energy consumption, reduce per-capita vehicle miles traveled and total vehicle miles traveled.

Scientists tell us we need to reduce carbon emissions by eighty percent by 2050. That's using all sectors. That's about two percent a year. Transportation will have to do its part. Shifting more dollars to transit, (inaudible) and secondary roads, the global interconnected streets, is going to be a very important part of what we do.

Taking advantage right now with the law that we do have on the federal books of flexing more dollars to other modes beyond interstate and primary will be also important. I don't think we use flex nearly enough in terms of our dollars.

Over the years, we have found, we believe it to be true that our CMAQ dollars and Urban STP dollars have been underfunded. Over the years we have gotten more money authorized by the feds that we didn't spend in those categories, we didn't obligate in those categories, and we think we can make up the difference. I don't know what the current numbers are from looking at this yet.

We are opposed and join others in opposing I-66 widening inside the beltway -- we're simply moving the bottleneck -- and are most concerned about the failure to do the full alternative analysis up front, as everyone has requested. Now there's a commitment to do an alternative analysis. Let's do it before we do any of the widening.

95 and 395 HOT lanes, beltway HOT lanes -- they're plagued again by a failure to do enough of an alternatives analysis, particularly of a transit and land use scenario that would make a difference.

On 95/395, we should also be looking at -- if we're going to add that third lane, which was always planned for HOV, why not test a three-lane HOV? I think we're going to test with a bus lane; that's a positive; but we had in the PPTA a prejudgment on outcome; we have lack of transparency.

I'm not sure that we're getting the best deal, we can't know if we're getting the best deal, but these are long-term concessions; and the transit dollars that right now are being promised, I think, fall far short of what these companies would be capable of giving us in this effort.

We're strongly opposed to the Tri-County Parkway. You see there's PE in this for this. I can't imagine a less important road at this point, given the other congestion problems we have.

Certainly, it's terrific that you're reviving the Route 66 outside-the-beltway environmental study, that should have gone forward much earlier, because when we looked at the tri-county traffic numbers, the study for the whole study area, all the traffic is moving radial, east/west; that's where it's suffering on Route 50, on 66; those are the things that need to be addressed. The VRE extension to Haymarket will help with that.

But, otherwise, what this road does is simply open up rural areas to development in places that both Prince William and Loudoun say they do not want development.

We are concerned about I-81, and I'll send you our comments on that. We're concerned about Route 460. Why is that important to Northern Virginia? Because it could potentially cost a billion dollars of State money for a road -- and I think this is important for Northern Virginians to hear -- which the current road, which in 2030 will be Level Service A outside of the towns -- only the traffic lights reduce the level of service -- I can't imagine a less important project to be spending money on, particularly when the freight issue is being addressed with Heartland Corridor rail updates.

For Dulles Rail, again, we feel we're missing an opportunity to link transportation and land use in Tysons Corner, that the competitive bid will allow us to consider the tunnel, which is much better for urban design, particularly when you have the example of the Rosslyn/Ballston corridor just down the tracks where we've done it right.

Our concern about the elevated is magnified by what we learned at the Tysons Task Force just the other night -- and I just sent a letter to Commissioner Ekern this week after we heard about this -- is that Route 7 is conceived of as a major 8-1-8 lane high-speed road. Utility-movement decisions are being made, which could foreclose it becoming a pedestrian-friendly and urban boulevard, much like, say, a K Street or some other roads that we have around the country that work very well as boulevards.

We urge you to focus, not on just capacity expansion, but on demand management and traffic reduction, on land-use TOD and other solutions. We urge you to make complete streets out of your road projects that you do and your interchange projects, which too often exclude pedestrians and bicyclists.

And lastly, we request a lot more information about this, because out of the \$425 million in this document (indicating), only \$9 million goes to transit. We know there's other money out there, but we ought to be able to see that in here.

And I understand that most of that that's in here is CMAQ and RSTP, but we're missing all the other millions of dollars and other transit projects. That's important to us because it should shift significant funding to transit.

Thank you.

SECRETARY HOMER: Thank you, Mr. Schwartz.

The next speaker is Audrey Clement, to be followed by All Francese.

Welcome, Ms. Clement.

MS. CLEMENT: And welcome CTB members and Secretary. My name is Audrey Clement, and I'm here on behalf of the Green Party of Virginia to express my opposition to widening I-66 inside the Beltway, a/k/a "Spot Improvements".

In the project description form that accompanied VDOT's recently approved request to include spot improvements in the TPB's CLRP, VDOT declared that the project does not preclude a third Metrorail track, stating, quote, "The proposed spot improvement is not within the median but on the outside of the westbound lanes. The proposed spot improvements on westbound I-66 thus do not preclude the Metrorail extension to Tyson's, a third Metrorail track and/or any express bus operations." End of quote.

I think this argument is misleading.

According to Chapter 5 of the Idea-66 report published by VDOT in March, 2005, sixteen additional feet are required to construct another automobile lane, and fourteen additional feet are needed for a third Metrorail track.

According to other information in that report, the I-66 right-of-way inside the Beltway isn't wide enough to construct both an additional Metrorail track and an additional automobile lane over most of its length.

In fact, design exceptions consisting of both narrowed shoulders and narrowed travel lanes would be required if VDOT were to use its existing right-of-way to widen the entire stretch of I-66 inside the Beltway.

Thus, on I-66, one construction option precludes the other. If VDOT proceeds with spot improvements, it will preempt the use of the corridor for Metrorail construction. Certainly VDOT can construct additional merge lanes now and later realign the roadway to accommodate the third Metrorail track.

But why spend \$75 million dollars to build merge lanes that later have to be scrapped? This makes no sense from either a budgetary or a planning standpoint, especially since VDOT has already been mandated by the TPB to come up with a long-range transportation plan for the I-66 corridor that actually works.

If VDOT and WMATA can't come up with the money to build the additional Metrorail tracks that they know they will need to meet increased demand from the Dulles Rail Extension, why not go with a no-cost solution of extending HOV-2 restrictions until they can get the money? With HOV-2 in place, WMATA can then introduce express bus service on I-66, reducing congestion and global warming pollution at the same time.

Of the three major causes of CO2 emissions, homes, industry and automobiles, automobile emissions are the easiest to eliminate. All you have to do to reduce them is to get the cars off the road, and all you have to do to accomplish that is to provide convenient mass transit. The imperative to do so has never been greater, and the time to do so is now.

Why? Reducing other forms of CO2 emissions is going to require retooling industry, and that will take years. But metropolitan areas like Washington already have most of the infrastructure needed to expand mass transit. They also have the money, provided that the funds are not siphoned off into wasteful road-building projects.

In testimony recently submitted to TPB, hundreds of Arlington residents expressed their opposition to widening I-66. Chief among their concerns was the fact that because widening will simply induce more traffic it will not alleviate congestion in the long run. Also, by inducing more traffic, widening will increase global warming emissions that the U.S. government's own climatologists claim will cause both environmental and economic disaster if not immediately curtailed.

Under these circumstances, it's baffling that VDOT would promote a road-building project on a key transportation corridor whose median strip already provides the ultimate solution to both congestion and global warming.

I urge the CTB to reconsider its decision to proceed with ill-advised I-66 spot improvements and plan for express Metrorail service in the I-66 corridor instead. Thank you.

SECRETARY HOMER: Thank you, Ms. Clement.

The next speaker is Al Francese -- if that's correctly pronounced -- to be followed by Allen Muchnick and then, after that, anyone else who would care to speak.

Delegate Watts, welcome. We'd love to have you as a closer if you have the time and the inclination.

Welcome, Mr. Francese.

MR. FRANCESE: Thank you, Mr. Secretary and Commissioner. Al Francese is my name. I'm a trustee and Vice President of Little Rocky Run Homeowners' Association in Clifton/Centreville and the organizer of the Centreville Carpooler Coalition.

My basic concern is that the proposed plan would jeopardize the multi-modal vision that was created some years ago and the major investment study that's been out for quite awhile.

The major investment study has a basic component, HOV, and it's time to do some cheerleading for HOV because they seem -- the HOV concept seems to be under attack in certain corridors with a possible (inaudible) between HOV and the HOT lanes.

From my perspective, as a thirty-year carpooler, HOV is essentially a way of cutting your gasoline expenses and getting you to work without the inconvenience of other forms of mass transit.

It's probably the cheapest and most cost-effective form of mass transit, yet carpooling in some corners seem to be frowned upon. In certain areas the carpool lane seems to actually be in trouble.

The sheer volume of cars when I get on I-66 outside of the Beltway at Stringfellow Road every morning seems to get noticeably worse and worse. The backups in the HOV lane start at that point, and it's certainly the western flow of traffic coming in from Winchester, Warrenton and Gainesville. Our land use decisions make this traffic flow possible.

Also, the Hybrid car is a one-man carpool. It's legal, it gets extended every year, but it does create a competitive relationship with other cars that have more than one person in it.

A big problem that weighs down on the utility and the value of the carpool lane right now is the increasing level of violation of the carpool restrictions. I think that if we could increase our level of enforcement of HOV restrictions, we could recapture the carpool lane and give it back to the carpoolers, who are the basic intended beneficiaries of the HOV lane.

And I see some steps in the right direction. In that regard, the Draft Plan does include, I believe, \$1.5 million dollars for increased HOV enforcement in Northern Virginia.

However, if that money is to be spent over interstate 66, I-95 and 395, that's a relatively small pot of money to be divided in three corridors over six years. Looking at I-66 alone, \$500,000 over six years, \$83,000 a year. I'm not sure what the point of that money would be, whether it's to buy additional state troopers' time, additional assets, trooper cars dedicated to the inspection of I-66 and the peoples' conduct. But it sounds like a very paltry amount of money.

Also, the concept of spot improvements within the Beltway on I-66, that raises other questions. I'm certainly not an opponent of increased capacity, though I think we do need to study the effect of it in other corridors.

The distinction between I-66 inside the Beltway versus I-66 outside the Beltway -- once you pump up capacity inside, the volume has got to flow outside the beltway, and that would tend to create the need for more capacity outside the Beltway, potentially precluding other options that will be studied in this new study that the Draft Plan proposes for environmental review of the I-66 corridor outside the Beltway.

So, I guess my advice would be to try to keep all these options open and don't do anything in terms of construction of facilities that would preclude better and longer-term solutions for the region.

Thank you.

SECRETARY HOMER: Thank you, Mr. Francese.

The next speaker is Allen Muchnick. Welcome, Mr. Muchnick.

MR. MUCHNICK: Thank you. Good evening. Here are my written remarks. There's two sets there.

Good evening, Secretary Homer, Commissioner Ekern and members of the Board. I'm Allen Muchnick and I'm speaking on behalf of two organizations today, the Virginia Bicycling Federation and the Arlington Coalition for Sensible Transportation, so I'm going to speak for about ninety seconds on each.

Since 1999, the Arlington Coalition for Sensible Transportation has advocated expedient and permanent solutions to traffic congestion on I-66 inside the Beltway via better traffic demand management and public transportation options.

We commend Secretary Homer for committing to fund a comprehensive alternative study for the I-66 multi-modal corridor with the active involvement of the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority, WMATA and the District of Columbia.

We ask that this multi-modal study and stakeholder involvement be initiated immediately and include meaningful external oversight of VDOT's current spot improvement study.

The current spot widening proposal is unnecessary, counterproductive and not warranted by any fair and transparent study. Virginia still can't afford to waste highway expansion dollars on a project that would create new I-66 bottlenecks, narrow safety shoulders and travel lanes, worsen traffic congestion overall, reduce carpooling and Metrorail ridership, on both the orange line and the future Dulles rail line, and desecrate the landmark USDOT Record of Decision that established the I-66 multi-modal corridor.

Since the proposed spot improvements have been rationalized as relieving traffic congestion and facilitating emergency evacuations, we ask that VDOT conduct a full, fair and peer-reviewed traffic modeling to ensure that this project won't worsen traffic congestion on eastbound I-66, on the freeways linked to westbound I-66 and in nearby Arlington and Fairfax County intersections, as well as on westbound I-66 during both the months of construction and at the two new westbound bottlenecks that will be created at Glebe Road and Sycamore Street.

We also ask that VDOT study and report on a spot improvement alternative of providing a continuous wide inside shoulder on I-66 for emergency evacuations, for improved police enforcement, incident management and motorist safety, and for the potential use as a busway when the I-66 travel lanes are congested.

The Virginia Bicycling Federation certainly appreciates VDOT's continuing progress towards making bicycling and walking integral components of Virginia's transportation effort.

I'm distributing with my comments the Virginia Bicycling Federation's current proposals for effective VDOT bicycle and pedestrian programs at both the statewide and district level. Some of these proposals are currently being addressed; others aren't. In particular, I direct your attention to the first five recommendations on the white paper.

David Patton was an effective statewide bicycle and pedestrian coordinator, and we look forward to working with his replacement. We again urge VDOT to proactively and synergistically engage local and regional transportation agencies and bicycling and pedestrian communities to improve non-motorized travel in Virginia by establishing strong statewide and regional bicycle and

pedestrian advisory committees.

VDOT's statewide Bicycle Advisory Committee has not met in nearly five years -- I guess it doesn't exist anymore -- whereas a Northern Virginia bicycle advisory committee has been sorely needed for much longer.

Complete streets, context-sensitive highway designs and context-sensitive solutions must become vital VDOT policies and programs, not mere slogans.

VDOT Is still designing arterial roads in urbanized areas primarily as utilities for high speed traffic, rather than as welcoming public spaces that foster travel by all modes.

Thank you for your consideration.

SECRETARY HOMER: Thank you, Mr. Muchnick.

Does anybody else want to address the Board this evening?

Delegate Watts, thank you so much for coming with us, and we look forward to your comments.

MS. WATTS: I commend you for your courageous invitation, and I take the microphone. I had not necessarily intended to speak; I just came to hear what we've heard. But let me make a couple of overview comments, Mr. Secretary, Mr. Commissioner and members of the Board.

I guess my first thing that I will say -- it could be first or it could be last -- I owe you an apology. You do not have anywhere near the resources that you need, and despite a lot of sound and fury of the last couple of years, your resources aren't there. And I can only pledge that we will keep on trying to get an understanding of this aspect of the business of government. I look forward to continuing to work with you for that information, which each one of you in your own way were very forthcoming as I turned to you during this last session.

But our work is still very much cut out for us, so I would make this request: that as you go forward, you are it, and if that message doesn't get across to the press and to the public that this element of government, this business that government is engaged in, is not adequately funded, that we cannot produce something out of nothing.

So, each one of the studies that I have heard -- please make sure that those, as well as the cost efficiency, the number of people moved, the alternatives that are out there, those dollar figures are out there in however graphic, however understandable way is necessary so that the idea that conceptually all we need to do is talk about it, put it on a plan, that somehow it's going to happen, again continues to be a great frustration to me.

When I look at all these plans and I look at the very near future, short -- that whatever we've done in its peak year, within eight years we'll have virtually -- we'll be at least back to where we were, if not even worse, because we will have so much debt service that we will have to accommodate.

When I look at what is ahead of us, any of these plans that you're doing, if they can't be -- if they can't go forward with them, I have to wonder at the amount of money put into them if it's not one of the reasons being to prove the need, to prove the actual cost of the need, to prove the transportation network component that is necessary for going forward with it.

Otherwise, all of this planning then becomes something that becomes rapidly dated, and whether I'm here or somebody else is here five years from now, ten years from now, we'll be right back to all of that money not really being well spent at that time.

I also urge you -- one of my frustrations in this dialogue that we have had -- as we move forward towards Northern Virginia's role and how it shall play out that role, was that undercurrent that I heard again and again -- and sometimes it wasn't particularly an undercurrent -- that VDOT cannot do the job, it's just structurally incompetent to do the job.

My concern is, if not VDOT, then whom -- will go forward with this funding?

Please have those broad shoulders, engage in the dialogue of how we can have accountability for these monies being spent, professionalism as we develop the projects, professionalism as we go out to bid and definitely professionalism in the oversight of how these projects in fact are being carried out and whether or not the contract bid is indeed reducing as the deliverables as promised up to the standards that need be promised.

The other aspect that I would also address is this. I've heard it in several different ways and find -- was relieved, but I'm just going to underscore. I am a strong, strong supporter of transit. I take with great pride that this area is second in the nation in our transit ridership.

But I would just underscore that transit in this area, because we are not a flat, neat and tidy grid network, because we have built along our stream valleys -- and I would hope that we will always continue to honor those stream valleys, not only because of the environmental damage and the Chesapeake Bay preservation issues that are there, but also because of just the cost and we're not going to willy-nilly put down such a grid network -- that transit continue to be interpreted as the right kind of collector parking that must be supported.

Yes, the HOV's; yes, the express buses and all of those elements that go along with it, so that the concept of transit, while we desperately need greater capacity on fixed rail and it's something that has to be invested in, it is not however the focal effort, but that the total network continue to be that focus of how transit is brought forward in the most efficiency.

I think that's probably all I should -- or productively should say. I look forward, again, unfortunately -- well, I look forward to working with you because I really do respect you. I don't look forward to continuing to work with you because our job is just so far from what we should have done to address the -- and I'll finish with my figures -- to address the fact that in the last twenty years, the most recent figures that I have, the fact that we've only increased our capacity by seven percent as far as construction is concerned.

We've increased our ridership fifty-eight percent in transit -- good, good news -- but that still is a very small percentage of that ridership. We've seen vehicle miles traveled go up to over seventy-five percent, three times what we've seen the growth in population, and that growth in population was three times what we saw the increase in capacity.

Meanwhile, we've done absolutely nothing to deal with the fact that when I filled up my tank yesterday, yes, I paid over \$3 a gallon for the gas, but I didn't pay a penny more in gas tax than I did twenty years ago despite the fact that there was a ninety percent increase in the cost of providing the infrastructure that we have talked about.

SECRETARY HOMER: Thank you, Delegate Watts. Does anybody else want to address the Board?

(No affirmative response)

If not, thank you for taking time of your schedule to convey your thoughts, and we will be active in our duty to finalize the Six-Year Program.

Thank you. The meeting is adjourned.

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(Whereupon, at approximately 9:15 o'clock p.m. the public hearing was concluded.)

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CERTIFICATE OF COURT REPORTER

I, KATHLEEN M. ELIAS, a Certified Verbatim Reporter, do hereby certify that I took the stenographic notes of the foregoing proceedings, which I thereafter reduced to typewriting; that the foregoing is a true record of said proceedings; that I am neither counsel for, related to, nor employed by any of the parties to the action in which these proceedings were held; and, further, that I am not a relative or employee of any attorney or counsel employed by the parties thereto, nor financially or otherwise interested in the outcome of the action.

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Court Reporter

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