

V I R G I N I A:

PUBLIC HEARING HOSTED BY THE COMMONWEALTH
TRANSPORTATION BOARD
-- SIX-YEAR IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM --

ORIGINAL

May 22, 2007
7:00 a.m.
Salem Civic Center
1001 Boulevard
Salem, VA 24153-0886

TRANSPORTATION BOARD MEMBERS:

JAMES LEE KEEN

JIM D. BOWIE

DAVID S. EKERN

PIERCE R. HOMER

DANA MARTIN

KEVIN PAGE

CENTRAL VIRGINIA REPORTERS
P.O. BOX 12628
ROANOKE, VA 24027
(540) 380-5017

1 (7:00 a.m.)
2

3 MR. HOMER: Good evening. My name is
4 Pierce Homer. I'm Governor Kaine's
5 secretary of transportation. I have the
6 pleasure of sharing the Commonwealth
7 Transportation Board. I would like to
8 welcome everyone here tonight for our public
9 hearing on the six-year program. And the
10 purpose of tonight's session is to receive
11 public comment on the draft six-year program
12 that is principally about interstate and
13 primary highways.

14 That does not prohibit you from
15 talking about anything that you want
16 tonight, as long as it's about
17 transportation. And we do welcome those
18 comments.

19 I would like to make a couple of
20 notes. First, if you're interested in a
21 local street, so an urban street or a
22 secondary highway, those decisions are made
23 by your local governing bodies, city
24 council, a town council or your board of

1 county supervisors, and probably advocacy
2 for or against projects in the second urban
3 system are probably left to the local level.

4 Second point I'd like to make is a
5 little bit of note of history where this
6 last session of the general assembly after
7 many years has agreed upon an enhanced
8 funding package. That does allow the
9 Commonwealth of Transportation Board as well
10 as the General Assembly to undertake some
11 new projects.

12 Quite frankly -- and I have been
13 involved in transportation in the state
14 level for five years -- we have perfected
15 the art of reducing the program, eliminating
16 projects and cutting, and this is the first
17 year that we have actually had to turn
18 around and start adding projects. And
19 that's a little bit of a new thing for us.
20 We've not had that experience in many years.
21 So forgive us if we make some mistakes.

22 In anticipation of that, one of the
23 things we did was to not fully allocate all
24 the money that was made available to us by

1 the General Assembly. So in tonight's
2 interstate and primary program there's about
3 500 million dollars state-wide that has not
4 yet been allocated, and I will tell you
5 there are some projects in communities that
6 have shown up in the plan in previous years
7 as maybe, kind of going to happen, and there
8 is not -- for example, in some those
9 projects, that money is not shown. And the
10 reason for that is we're in a historical
11 moment where we really have to make sure
12 where we can actually -- that we're picking
13 the right projects at the right time. So
14 this is a pause to make sure that things
15 that have been in the plan for some time
16 are, in fact, the right projects. So that
17 may be one of the reasons, if you look for a
18 project to see if it's being advanced and
19 you don't see that, understand that there is
20 a fairly significant sum of money which is
21 not allocated. That's one of the principal
22 decisions that the Commonwealth
23 Transportation Board will have to make.

24 With that, by way of introduction, I

1 would just like to acknowledge a couple of
2 folks at the dais with me. James Keen,
3 At-Large Rural. To his right is Mr. James
4 Bowie who represents the Bristol district.
5 To my immediate left is David Ekern. Dave
6 is the Commissioner of the Department of
7 Transportation. And I believe this is your
8 second now public session here in the Salem
9 District, so welcome.

10 To my right is your district
11 representative, Dana Martin, who has been on
12 the Commonwealth Transportation Board five
13 years now?

14 MR. MARTIN: Four.

15 MR. PIERCE: Four years. And really,
16 when you have an issue or problem, there are
17 two people you can come to. One is Dana.
18 And the other here is Richard Caywood.
19 Richard is your district administrator. And
20 I'm amiss also for Bristol District,
21 Mr. Bowie, if you're from the Bristol
22 District, you have a problem, you call
23 Mr. Bowie or Mr. Jim Givens who's the
24 district administrator for the Bristol

1 District, both in the front row. Their
2 phone number is very accessible. They love
3 those citizens' calls.

4 And finally, to my right is Kevin
5 Page. Kevin is the Deputy Director of the
6 Department of Rail and Transportation. He's
7 standing in for his boss, Mr. Matt Tucker
8 who's unable to be with us tonight. But we
9 do take comments about our rail and public
10 transportation program as well as primary
11 highways and interstate tonight.

12 Are there any other questions or
13 comments? If not, what I would like to just
14 say is we're going to limit commentary to
15 three minutes, and I'll hold up a little
16 yellow piece of paper if you start to run
17 over. We won't be too strict about that,
18 but we do ask that you respect other
19 people's times.

20 I would also like to acknowledge the
21 presence of a couple -- a special guest. I
22 know he's going to be testifying, but
23 Senator Roscoe Reynolds made the trip here.
24 Thank you so much, Senator, for being here.

1 From the Town of Abingdon, Mayor
2 Humphreys. Mayor, welcome. Former mayor,
3 now council member, French Moore. We also
4 have from Alleghany County, Mr. Rickey May.
5 And from Henry County, Mr. H. G. Vaughn.
6 Welcome all.

7 I'm going to jump right into the
8 public testimony. We're going to start with
9 Senator Reynolds. And thank you, Senator,
10 for making this trip. He's going to be
11 followed by Cheryl Daniels.

12 SENATOR REYNOLDS: Mr. Secretary,
13 thank you very much. Commissioner, members
14 of the transportation board, thank you for
15 this opportunity. I'm going to do the best
16 I can to convince you to spend all that
17 money in the 20th Senatorial District.
18 While it sounds unfair to some, it seems
19 perfectly fair and appropriate to me.

20 I-73, you know, briefly I'll tell you
21 that we continue to be devastated by the
22 further loss of textile and furnished jobs
23 in Southside, Southwest Virginia. It seems
24 not a day goes by that there's not some

1 announcement of a layoff or closing and the
2 devastating affect it's having on job
3 opportunities in Southside and Southwest.
4 It gets overwhelming. I-73 will be a big
5 step in reversing that trend.

6 I'm here tonight, as I said to you
7 last year about this time, the people of
8 Henry County and Martinsville believe that
9 I-73 is a key to their future, and they're
10 here tonight to ask you to please go forward
11 with the construction on I-73 as soon as
12 possible. If there's anything I can do as a
13 member of the General Assembly to make sure
14 that dream becomes a reality, starting
15 there, just east of Martinsville, to go down
16 towards North Carolina line, I would be
17 grateful and appreciate it.

18 It's hard to believe that it was
19 1987, when I was a member of the General
20 Assembly, the Route 58 legislation passed.
21 I appreciate more than I can say to the
22 leadership that Governor Kaine and Governor
23 Warner provided by including funding for the
24 Route 58 Bypass. That's absolutely

1 necessary for Hillsville, Carroll County,
2 and for the dream we have of connecting up
3 to I-77. The traffic there at various times
4 in the Town of Hillsville basically comes to
5 a stop because the main drag through there
6 is Route 58, and the bypass is absolutely
7 essential. As you know, Mr. Secretary, Mr.
8 Commissioner, some of the property was
9 bought quite some time ago, homes were
10 emptied, and people are looking forward to
11 that construction taking place. It's still
12 powerful and important to get 58 complete
13 between Hillsville and Stuart. If there's
14 anything I can do to help that in any way,
15 please let me know.

16 Likewise, I-81, you know, without me
17 saying very much about it, that complaints
18 continue to come in from citizens. One of
19 the great things about having a clear shot
20 on Route 58 from 77 to the coast is it will
21 take a lot of tractor trailer traffic off of
22 81 and 64.

23 Montgomery County, Patrick and Floyd
24 County, one of the primary concerns, of

1 course, is Route 8. Every locality that I
2 represent -- I know secondary routes might
3 not be the real issue here tonight. But if
4 there's anything that can be done to help
5 the localities with the secondary routes,
6 they are having just overwhelming problems
7 dealing with that. I get constant
8 complaints and requests from Wythe County,
9 Grayson County, Carroll County, Floyd
10 County, Patrick County, about the many, many
11 remaining miles of unpaved roads that have
12 high traffic count. Bridges, of course,
13 same thing. Every locality is saying
14 something has got to be done about the
15 bridges.

16 Consolidation of services, I beg of
17 you to keep in mind, when you're doing that,
18 please do it in such a way, if you have to
19 do it, that you maintain services to the
20 citizens. And finally, it's never fair for
21 me to talk about transportation means
22 without singing the praises of your
23 employees. Mr. Givens and Mr. Caywood are
24 just always very, very responsive to

1 citizens' needs, as are all of your
2 employees. You do a great job in providing
3 leadership for them.

4 You heard me say it before, but I
5 feel it very, very strongly, that when it
6 comes to providing services to the citizens,
7 the Department of Transportation goes out of
8 the way to try to help citizens, and I
9 appreciate more than I can say that
10 willingness to provide services to the
11 citizens.

12 If there are actions I can take as a
13 member of the General Assembly that will be
14 helpful to you and to them, I hope you will
15 let me know. Thank you for letting me have
16 this opportunity.

17 MR. PIERCE: Thank you so much,
18 Senator. If I -- if I may diverge from the
19 accepted order a little bit, I did want to
20 acknowledge Delegate Morgan Griffith here,
21 the host. If you want to come up and
22 welcome us to your district and hometown and
23 make any comments, we would love to here
24 from you, Mr. Griffith.

1 MR. GRIFFITH: Thank you, very much.
2 As always, I'm very pleased to have you-all
3 here. It is my hometown, my home area.
4 With the exception of the time I count my
5 years in exile while I was in college and
6 law school, I have lived within a mile of
7 this location, maybe a mile and a half, my
8 entire life. It's a great pleasure to have
9 you-all here. I hope you enjoy your stay,
10 and, you know, it doesn't get too long. In
11 effort to help that, let me make my comments
12 quickly. And before I do, I will say I
13 appreciate everything that you-all do.

14 With the additional funding that
15 hopefully will be coming on here in a few
16 months and years, we have needs as every
17 other district does, in the 8th Legislative
18 District, 11-460 west of Salem I think is
19 critical. I think it's critical for two
20 reasons. One because of the bottleneck
21 there. It's got a three-mile stretch where
22 it's two lanes. The rest of it is four
23 lanes. And it parallels I-81. Any work
24 that then needs to be done on I-81 in the

1 Salem to Montgomery County area, becomes
2 traffic on 11-460. If there's an accident,
3 it comes on the 11-460 west of Salem, and it
4 is caught in this bottleneck. Fixing that
5 bottleneck will be most helpful on 81, and
6 for the regular traffic that goes through
7 there on a daily basis. So I think that
8 probably will be the number one priority
9 that I would put down in the district.

10 Also in the district, 221, it's not
11 an easy -- as folks can tell you, it's not
12 an easy answer to 221, but particularly out
13 in the Roanoke County area of 221, there's a
14 lot of traffic. And that road also needs to
15 be expanded. You've got -- I noticed in the
16 audience, before I came up, there's some
17 folks from that area. They may be better at
18 helping you figure out what needs to be
19 done, but we all know that something needs
20 to be done on that particular corridor to
21 help the traffic problem. A lot
22 of subdivisions and others have been built.
23 There's a lot of traffic that backs up.
24 That area can be dangerous at times.

1 That being said, I also ask that you
2 take a strong look at the other needs in the
3 area, obviously I-81, all up and down the
4 corridor. There's needs on 581, which is
5 technically a sideline district. Probably
6 95 percent of the folks in the district will
7 use that during a period, given six months,
8 and so 581 is also important to the area.

9 And then we move to other things.
10 I-73, I don't know that it's as vital in the
11 short run as it would be for Senator
12 Reynolds in the Martinsville area, but I
13 believe long-term building that, and first
14 it should be from Roanoke to Martinsville
15 area, long-term building that through
16 Virginia along the path that has been on the
17 books for a long period of time is extremely
18 important to the Roanoke Valley. I think it
19 secures our position as -- as a
20 transportation hub.

21 And along those lines, I would also
22 say that the intermodal facility with
23 Norfolk Southern, whether it be Salem or
24 Elliston is extremely important to the

1 economic wellbeing of the Roanoke Valley,
2 and I stand here willing to take that
3 political risk and say that I support that
4 project at either location. And while
5 there's some concerns at the Salem location,
6 I support that.

7 I will tell you -- we haven't had a
8 chance to talk about this. There's some
9 concern about air quality and air pollution.
10 So as we're looking at it, we need to look
11 at ways to evade that, whether there's a
12 requirement that the trucks not sit idle
13 while they're waiting to reload, something
14 along those lines. That issue has come up.
15 I think it's a valid issue to be considered.

16 But as I've said on a number of
17 occasions in public speeches in the past,
18 one of the concerns that I have is that
19 while there are a lot of new tangled
20 businesses that come along, high tech, it's
21 great -- I'm very supportive of some of the
22 high-tech things, particularly -- I know
23 there's design-type research that goes on in
24 West Roanoke County. The efforts by

1 Carilion, I think those are all great.

2 But long-term, the meat and potatoes
3 of the economy in Roanoke County is going to
4 be transportation goods. It always has
5 been, and it always will be. And so I feel
6 very strongly this is something we need to
7 be supportive of, because I have fear that
8 if we don't do this, generations will look
9 back and they'll say, what happened? They
10 won't remember Morgan Griffith. They won't
11 remember who was on the Transportation
12 Board. They'll say, what happened to the
13 political leaders 50 years ago that they
14 couldn't see we were going to need to shore
15 up our infrastructure, move them by rail and
16 road? So those are the concerns that I
17 have.

18 I appreciate your time here this
19 evening. I hope I haven't talked too long.
20 But I think these are important issues, and
21 you-all have some important decisions to
22 make in the next few months. And I don't
23 envy you-all in making those decisions, but
24 I support you in your efforts to make things

1 better for transportation in Western
2 Virginia. Thank you.

3 MR. PIERCE: Thank you. Our next
4 speaker is Delegate Danny Marshall to be
5 followed by Cheryl Daniels. Welcome,
6 Delegate Marshall.

7 MR. MARSHAL: Good evening,
8 Secretary, honorable members of the
9 Commonwealth Transportation Board. I am
10 Delegate Danny Marshall of the 14th House.
11 I represent the City of Danville, parts of
12 Pittsylvania County and the eastern part of
13 Henry County. I come before you tonight to
14 talk about how you can help change the
15 economy.

16 The area that I have the privilege to
17 serve has the highest unemployment in the
18 State of Virginia. One month the Virginia
19 Employment Commission will report that
20 Martinsville has the highest unemployment.

21 The next month it will be the
22 Danville area. The Danville and
23 Martinsville areas have a lot in common.
24 Through no fault of its own, we -- the folk

1 are passing out. As Ross Perot said, we
2 would have had this giant sucking sound of
3 jobs that were being diverted. And that has
4 proved true.

5 Though many groups have tried to help
6 that, in state and federal, we are moving
7 forward. We are on our way to prosperity.
8 But we have a long way to go when our area
9 has unemployment rates sometimes three times
10 what the state average is.

11 The New College of Martinsville and
12 the Institute of Advanced Learning in
13 Danville have showed a vision for our area
14 of education and support for our long-term
15 term success. The transportation program
16 can be a major part of Henry County and
17 Southside Virginia's economic turnaround.

18 I-73 will bring much needed jobs to
19 our area. And I ask you to consider
20 starting construction of I-73 at the North
21 Carolina and Virginia line.

22 I received a report from a magazine
23 called Area Development about economic
24 development. This survey is decision-makers

1 that ask them why you locate or extend your
2 business in a certain area. The number four
3 on that list in the next -- of the past
4 several years is highway accessibility, with
5 89 percent of the survey rating this as
6 supported.

7 Let's look at what's happening here
8 in the State of Virginia. Well, reports are
9 expanding, as you well know. Ameris in
10 Newport News says they are going to take
11 3,000 trucks per day in and out of that
12 project. It's just mind boggling, the
13 amount of trucks that go in and out. If
14 those trucks are going -- coming or either
15 going to the west, how are they going to get
16 there? They're going to use I-64 and I-81
17 to get to and from those ports.

18 The State of Virginia has a
19 under-utilized asset in Route 58. I
20 attended a meeting that was held in
21 Martinsville back in the spring. And the --
22 with the North Carolina legislators. They
23 told us that I-73 was a priority for them
24 also, and they planned -- and they told us

1 that they planned to build I-73 to the North
2 Carolina line. Well, if we built I-73 to
3 the line first, then the traffic going from
4 the ports of Virginia will have access to
5 the west by using Route 58 to I-73, then
6 they drop down to use I-40 West.

7 The citizens of Virginia will get a
8 lot of bang for its buck. The citizens of
9 Virginia have spent millions of dollars on
10 Route 58, a four-lane divided highway that
11 travels across the southern part of
12 Virginia. This could take traffic off I-81
13 and I-64. Just think when America's ports
14 starts receiving trucks later this year
15 shipping 3,000 trucks per day extra on the
16 highways. How much extra traffic will
17 happen on 64 and 81?

18 By starting at 73 at the North
19 Carolina line, we accomplish several things
20 for Virginia. First of all, we help a high
21 unemployment area bring jobs to a much
22 needed area in Martinsville, all the way
23 east to the coast. We will use 58 and I-73
24 to take traffic off of I-81 and I-64 with

1 traffic going to the east.

2 And I want to close with the thought
3 houses are not always about moving people or
4 products. Highways in Northern Virginia is
5 about getting to your job. Highways in
6 Southern Virginia is about getting a job.
7 Thank you for your time.

8 MR. PIERCE: Thank you, Delegate
9 Marshall. Now Cheryl Martin -- Cheryl
10 Daniels, to be followed by J.E. Ping.
11 Welcome, Ms. Daniels.

12 MS. DANIELS: Thank you. I thank you
13 for this opportunity to be here today. I am
14 a citizen of Roanoke County, and I have been
15 using public transportation for the last
16 seven years. I have lived in areas smaller
17 than Roanoke. I have lived in areas larger
18 than Roanoke. I am frankly disappointed
19 somewhat in the Roanoke transportation
20 system.

21 A large number of people in the area,
22 including myself, work retail jobs. We will
23 not get off work until 9:00, 9:30, sometimes
24 later at night. Bus service ends at 8:45.

1 This leaves us with problems getting home.
2 I have known people in my area who spend
3 anywhere from \$100 to \$200 a month on cab
4 service, if you can get a cab. I frequently
5 have to walk home from work. This is a mile
6 and a half through not very good territory.

7 But the service just isn't there. We
8 desperately need more funding for public
9 transportation in this area. The money
10 people are spending on cabs can definitely
11 be better utilized in the area. People will
12 be able to get better jobs. People have to
13 look at how close a job is to their home.
14 They may not be able to get those
15 high-paying jobs that they're qualified for
16 and need because they cannot get the
17 transportation.

18 If we can get bus service extended
19 even a few hours, into Sundays -- we have no
20 service on Sundays -- this would benefit a
21 great number of people.

22 All I have to look at, the pollution
23 problem in the area. Gas prices are rising.
24 A lot of people simply cannot afford to own

1 and operate a vehicle. Some people such as
2 myself, I am concerned about the pollution.
3 I have asthma. I know what the air in this
4 area particularly during the summer does to
5 me. I try and do everything I possibly can
6 to cut emissions to help clear up the air in
7 the family. Part of that is using public
8 transportation. Even if I were capable of
9 driving a vehicle right now, having the
10 financial know-how and ability to do so, I
11 would choose to use public transportation
12 simply as a matter of being a good,
13 conscientious citizen. But again, the
14 problem is we do not have the service that
15 we need.

16 The area has grown up. Valley View
17 Mall in particular has grown tremendously.
18 However, service has not changed in the last
19 seven to eight years. The routes are still
20 the same. Traffic has increased. Buses
21 frequently are not able to meet their timed
22 appointments. Passengers are stranded quite
23 often. We need the money to expand the
24 service, to improve the service so that

1 people who have been down and out such as
2 myself have a better chance to get ourselves
3 pulled up and not have to depend on the
4 government to help us with food and housing.
5 And we can actually become responsible
6 citizens who are taking care of ourselves.
7 Thank you for your time. I hope that you
8 will consider more funding.

9 MR. PIERCE: Thank you. The next
10 speaker is J.E. Ping, followed by Ira Doom.

11 MR. PING: Thank you. My name is
12 J.E. Ping. I'm from Martinsville, Henry
13 County. I'm a resident of Henry County, a
14 land owner. And I also am a heavy-duty
15 equipment dealer. I've been a John Deere
16 dealer for over 50 years. I have been here
17 since the bypass in Martinsville in Henry
18 County now. I'm on the opposite side of the
19 new proposal of I-73.

20 I would like to speak to the
21 committee to consider the new proposal that
22 we have just given you a handout for. And
23 we have prepared a statement that I would
24 like to read, to be able to get through to

1 my three minutes, if you would allow me to
2 speak a little longer.

3 The roads need to connect people with
4 jobs and recreational areas and places to
5 lead them -- the current groups I feel could
6 be better explained, for Henry County east
7 to be the heart of Virginia for
8 manufacturing.

9 We have seen the manufacturing
10 dissipate over the last 12 years due to the
11 global trade. We lost many companies that
12 employed thousands of workers. With great
13 effort and expenses we are slowly replacing
14 them with smaller companies of 200 in size
15 or less employees. Much of these roads have
16 been in the Patriot Center, whose
17 approximately 30 businesses with collective
18 investment of approximately 400 million
19 dollars are located, also many dollars
20 invested by the State for roads and
21 upgrading the Jones Creek intersection.

22 Henry County supervisors is investing
23 in land and in shell buildings. The EDC is
24 spending about \$800,000 a year, trying to

1 promote the Patriot Center and the other
2 sites in Henry County. The Henry County
3 board of supervisors has an option to buy
4 1,200 acres of adjacent land through the
5 Patriot Center that could help the
6 acquisition of interstate right-of-way.
7 This would more than quadruple the size of
8 the initial Patriot Center. This is where
9 we need an intersection, in the heart of the
10 Patriot Center, in the heart of Henry
11 County, in the heart of Southside, Virginia.

12 To put an interchange in the Patriot
13 Center, and need that interstate,
14 approximately one to one half miles west
15 will again bring jobs and development
16 potential to this region. We feel it will
17 save them approximately 200 million dollars
18 to connect to the 58 bypass and save years
19 of acquisition and construction time.

20 Gentlemen, you have the power to help
21 more than ever by adopting this plan. Our
22 area needs the access to develop its
23 potential. Of course we all want the best
24 route for our area. The other route does

1 not have water or sewer at any of the
2 proposed interchanges. It has a road. And
3 I should say no access to the industrial
4 center, especially the Patriot Center. It
5 bypasses potential intermodal sites. It
6 bypasses the speedway. It bypasses the new
7 soccer complex. It bypasses multiple water
8 access ports. It bypasses Bassett, Fieldale
9 and Stanleytown which has existing rail
10 sides and buildings. It bypasses
11 restaurants, gas stations and shopping
12 centers. It puts interchanges where
13 restaurants and gas stations and shopping
14 centers would take years to reestablish,
15 rebuild. We need as soon as possible to
16 take advantage of our road -- lower than
17 North Carolina fuel tax and lower than North
18 Carolina retail tax. This is revenue for
19 the State that could be had very soon.

20 Do not let this opportunity slip
21 away. We suggest the proposal that you
22 would consider, and this proposal is a
23 proposal that -- we have it by Max Kendall,
24 and I have endorsed it, and also other

1 citizens of Henry County. Thank you very
2 much.

3 MR. PIERCE: Thank you very much.
4 The next speaker is Ira Doom, to be followed
5 by Skip Russell. Welcome, Mr. Doom.

6 MR. DOOM: Thank you, sir. I'm
7 Howard Doom, TDX rail board. The chairman,
8 French Moore, is here. So it would be more
9 proper for him to address some of the
10 issues. The only thing that I would like to
11 say is that I hope that you can look at this
12 positively in terms of getting funds
13 released to service, help get started. That
14 would be from Bristol to Roanoke to Richmond
15 and so forth. Anything else I think it
16 would be proper for the chairman to address.
17 Thank you, sir.

18 MR. PIERCE: Thank you, Mr. Doom.
19 The next speaker is Skip Russell, to be
20 followed by Benjamin Tripp.

21 MR. RUSSELL: My name is Skip
22 Russell. I'm from Henry County. And to
23 borrow a phrase from Mr. Homer, the right
24 project is I-73 starting in Henry County.

1 But I have an idea that it would help the
2 State of Virginia more if we started in the
3 Patriot Center and worked our way, way down
4 to bypass 58 in Laurel Park. As Mr. Ping
5 just said, there's so much investment we put
6 into the Patriot Center and into Henry
7 County, trying to lure jobs back there, that
8 if we bypass the Patriot Center and don't
9 put an interchange for those people that are
10 investing in that industrial park, to be
11 able to get the interstate, and the way the
12 route is now, it would be a treacherous on
13 -- treacherous to get to the interstate,
14 either up 108 to Franklin County line or
15 else go down across Terries Mount Road (ph)
16 to where the fire department is, where the
17 interchange is playing out. We desperately
18 need the jobs, the meat and potatoes
19 Mr. Griffith was talking about is just not
20 in Henry County right now.

21 We propose that using the five miles
22 of the existing bypass could possibly save
23 200 million dollars. That's 16 million
24 dollars a mile for five miles. Plus there's

1 five major bridges that are already in
2 place, this land that's already acquired and
3 also completed. So we hopefully save five
4 years in time. We desperately feel like
5 I-73 is needed, but we'd like to put it in
6 the right spot. We need it going through
7 Henry County. We're not like Northern
8 Virginia. We don't want them to bypass us.
9 We need them to stop in Henry County to give
10 us some business. Thank you.

11 MR. PIERCE: Thank you, Mr. Russell.
12 The next speaker is Benjamin Tripp, to be
13 followed by Robert Grimsey. Welcome,
14 Mr. Tripp.

15 MR. TRIPP: Thank you, sir. Short.
16 I'll try to be brief. I seem to be here to
17 speak about a somewhat different subject
18 from most of the other speakers tonight.
19 First I'd like to thank the members of
20 legislator, Mr. Homer, Mr. Page, and the
21 other members of the Commonwealth
22 Transportation Board. I have two comments
23 I'd like to make tonight.

24 The first is I'd like to thank you

1 for considering our application submitted
2 March 5 for funding on behalf of New
3 Millenium Steel. It's a multimillion dollar
4 project involving both Salem and Roanoke
5 County. And we believe it really will be a
6 great asset to our region. They're a good
7 company and a really nice bunch of folks to
8 work with.

9 My second comment has to do with the
10 Roanoke Valley Greenway, and I'd like to
11 thank you for your continued support of that
12 project both within Salem and the Valley as
13 a whole. The Greenway Commission, a panel
14 appointed by the member localities, I myself
15 am a member, has just completed updating the
16 Regional Greenway plan, funded in part by
17 VDOT. It is our goal to finish the Roanoke
18 River Greenway within the next five years.
19 Hopefully that can happen. It's a project
20 that has a lot of support in our community
21 and we all feel it is very important in the
22 overall quality of life in our area. With
23 that, I'll get out of your way and let
24 everyone else speak. I thank you for your

1 time, and I hope you guys have a productive
2 and enjoyable stay in Salem. Thank you very
3 much.

4 MR. PIERCE: Thank you, Mr. Tripp.
5 The next speaker is Robert Grimsey to be
6 follow by T.J. Childress. Welcome, Mr.
7 Grimsey.

8 MR. GRIMSEY: It's Grimesey.
9 Grimsey works. I appreciate the opportunity
10 to address you all this evening, members of
11 the board as well. I'm grateful for the
12 opportunity to speak to you, although we're
13 neighbors actually. We're in the New Market
14 District. We appreciate this opportunity to
15 stay on the record, because culturally, from
16 the economics standpoint, greater Roanoke
17 area is the area which we have our greatest
18 connection.

19 In a letter to a parent of a Clifton
20 middle school student dated January 30,
21 2006, Secretary Homer had explained
22 correctly at that time at the time
23 improvement project for I-64 in the Island
24 Ford Bridge to the Clifton Forge interchange

1 was scheduled for 2009. In a recent meeting
2 with VDOT officials, he learned that the
3 project had been pushed back to 2013, and by
4 our presence here this evening, it's obvious
5 that we're concerned about continued
6 postponement of that particular project.

7 Meanwhile, traffic congestion
8 continues to grow even around the local
9 interchange at Exit 21. This congestion is
10 most apparent during the early mornings and
11 late afternoons with heavy traffic
12 associated with Wachovia, Alleghany Regional
13 Hospital, Clifton Middle School, Mountain
14 View Elementary School, Alleghany High
15 School, as well as the county and school
16 board administrative offices.

17 Recently VDOT had commissioned a
18 study of transportation analysis of that
19 exit, which we're very grateful. Our most
20 significant safety concern remains the
21 proximity of interstate traffic including
22 the tractor trailers to high volumes of
23 local traffic along Winterberry Avenue,
24 Urban Irvine Road and roads that run

1 parallel to the interstate. With the many
2 state-mandated safety drills that we're
3 required to conduct in public schools where
4 I serve as superintendent, by the way -- I
5 should have added that. I know of no more
6 immediate threat to the safety of students
7 in -- than that unprotected bottleneck of
8 I-64, and the roads that run parallel to it
9 for a mile east and west of Exit 21.

10 I also noticed in the Salem area plan
11 the notation for the widening of 220
12 northern Botetourt County and Alleghany
13 County, I'm sure the City of Covington would
14 agree, are all for that as well. So we'd
15 like to thank you for the inclusion of that.
16 We appreciate the opportunity to address you
17 on these matters this evening and thank you
18 for your consideration.

19 MR. PIERCE: Thank you, Mr. Grimesey.
20 The next speaker is T.J. Childress, to be
21 followed by Stacy Bryant. Welcome,
22 Mr. Childress.

23 MR. CHILDRESS: Thank you, sir. I am
24 T.J. Childress, and I am from Henry County,

1 Martinsville. I have been a Virginian all
2 my life, born and bred. I was kind enough
3 to be here -- you know, I'm a pretty old man
4 right now. Why haven't I been to these
5 meetings before? And it came to me the
6 reason I hadn't is because we have always
7 had in Virginia, from the governor down, in
8 my district we always had capable men who
9 did a good job, that I didn't disagree with.
10 They always came through. Even the state
11 highway department read -- what was the --
12 anyway, anyway, he brought me in 1980 --
13 1952 as a field grazer for the highway
14 department. And I have always thought the
15 highway department has very competent, very
16 good people. And so that was the reason I
17 never had to come here, because this job was
18 taken care of, and I didn't have anything to
19 say that was any different than what they
20 had.

21 The reason I'm over here today,
22 though, is because when I was at VBI, I had
23 a professor that said this nation was built
24 and the foundation is industry. If you

1 create a product, you create wealth. And it
2 supports the lawyer, doctor and Indian
3 chief. And I never did forget that. So
4 when the industry in Henry County started
5 slipping away, I thought about that. What
6 is that going do to us?

7 Well, we had very capable of people
8 in Henry County who had diligently tried to
9 turn that thing around. But, you know, as
10 you get in the river and the water is
11 flowing pretty fast, it's hard to stop it.
12 And that's what happened with the
13 industries. They started flowing pretty
14 fast out of the country. And it's
15 devastating. You know it is.

16 You say, well, what's your point? My
17 point is this. When -- I don't know when
18 Seth Weiss(ph) was on the committee, the
19 highway department, and I thought -- I told
20 him so. I thought they should put 80 -- 95
21 down the east and put 85 through Lynchburg
22 out close to Martinsville, Danville and run
23 it down and then go back. That devastated
24 us. We didn't realize how much important it

1 was for the interstate.

2 Now, I come here because I have felt
3 like there's something that I need to
4 impress on you people now. And that is that
5 this interstate, I want you -- you all look
6 like young, intelligent people to me. So
7 I'm leaving it up to you --

8 MR. PIERCE: Ringing us over.

9 MR. CHILDRESS: But I want to make
10 sure that that interstate -- I'm a
11 conservative. Save all the money you can,
12 and I think -- I don't care whose property
13 it's at. I hope everybody gets rich off of
14 it. But -- but I think you need to get to
15 where we can service the Patriot Center, the
16 college, everything that's -- we're
17 depending on that stuff right now, that
18 industry, what we got there. I want you to
19 take it under consideration, and save all
20 the money you can. It looks like with the
21 assisting roads, you can save a lot of
22 money, because they're not being totally
23 used, that bypass in particular.

24 But I want you gentlemen to just take

1 time and think this over, because I know
2 you've got good heads, and you think things
3 through. We want to save our industry.
4 We've got to save what little we got. And
5 I'm telling you, the State of Virginia needs
6 it, too. I hate to have your job, because
7 the gasoline that's going to be sold is
8 going to -- the volume is going down, and
9 you are going to have a lot less money
10 before long.

11 MR. PIERCE: Thank you,
12 Mr. Childress. On that note, I did want to
13 acknowledge, and you indicated your prior
14 career with VDOT, I understand that Dan
15 Marston, a former VDOT administrator, is
16 with us. Danny, you still here? Did he
17 leave? Okay. And I did also want to
18 acknowledge Dale Grigg who's here as the
19 acting district administrator for the
20 Lynchburg District. Stacy Bryant, our next
21 speaker, to be followed by Lee-Ann Gray.

22 Welcome, Ms. Bryant.

23 MS. BRYANT: I'm Stacy Bryant. I'm
24 here from Alleghany County. We're here to

1 talk about the barrier to be placed on I-64
2 at Mountain View Elementary School and
3 Clifton Middle School. Back on January 29
4 of this past year I attended a PTA lobby day
5 in Richmond with two other members of
6 Alleghany County, and I was able to meet
7 with Delegate Jim Shuler, we addressed our
8 problem to him, and he was very aware of our
9 area. He knew exactly what the location was
10 in which we were referencing.

11 Initially, it's been due to funding,
12 there that there's no other reason, they
13 can't put the barrier up to protect our
14 children going to school every morning at
15 the interstate. The original year was 2009.
16 Now it's been pushed up to 2013. My
17 six-year-old daughter in the year 2012 will
18 be attending that school. And I would hope
19 that before then that we can have a barrier
20 to protect our children and protect the
21 children that are there now. Thank you for
22 your time.

23 MR. PIERCE: Thank you, Ms. Bryant.
24 Now, the next speaker is Lee-Ann Gray, to be

1 followed by Rickey May. Welcome, Ms. Gray.

2 MS. GRAY: Well, soccer month
3 continues. Thank you. My name is Lee-Ann
4 Gray. I traveled here tonight to speak to
5 you on behalf of the approximately 1,300
6 students and their families plus faculty and
7 staff and bus drivers who travel to and from
8 school each day under conditions that we
9 feel are currently very dangerous. I'm
10 referring to the need for a concrete barrier
11 to separate the access road leading to
12 Mountain View Elementary and Clifton Middle
13 School located at Exit 21 off of Interstate
14 64, between Covington and Clifton Forge.

15 In its present state, the access road
16 to the interstate is separated by nothing
17 more than a chicken wire fence. Flying
18 truck tires, debris and out-of-control
19 vehicles have virtually nothing standing in
20 the way of collision with our school
21 traffic.

22 It's our understanding that the
23 construction of a concrete barrier at this
24 exit has been considered by the Department

1 of Transportation and has been deemed
2 warranted. However, the date of
3 construction continues to be pushed back as
4 far as 2013 as it stands currently.

5 While we realize there are many
6 transportation needs and more populated
7 areas of the commonwealth, and that funding
8 for transportation has become an important
9 political issue in the past year, our
10 strenuous concern is that there is too much
11 of a direct threat to our school population
12 to postpone this project. We feel strongly
13 that the construction of a concrete barrier
14 or at least a temporary barrier needs to
15 commence immediately to avoid the threats of
16 injuries or fatalities during the work and
17 school commute.

18 I have photographs there of two
19 accidents that have occurred during school
20 hours on that access road in the past two
21 years. We're fortunate that injuries were
22 minimal on those occasions, but we may not
23 be so fortunate the next time.

24 I want to thank you in advance for

1 your assistance in making our children's
2 community to school a safer one. And we do
3 look forward to a swift resolution to this
4 safety threat. Also included in that is
5 some -- another letter from the Clifton
6 Middle School PTO president. Thank you very
7 much.

8 MR. PIERCE: Thank you, Ms. Gray.
9 The next speaker is Rickey May, to be
10 followed by H. G. Vaughn. Welcome, Mr. May.

11 MR. MAY: Thank you, sir, board
12 members. I am Rickey May, vice chairman,
13 Alleghany County Board of Supervisors. I'm
14 here representing the board of supervisors
15 to respectfully request that you consider
16 two items that I have on hand.

17 Alleghany County respectfully
18 requests that the Virginia Department of
19 Transportation continue its efforts to
20 upgrade U.S. Route 220 from Botetourt County
21 to I-64 in the Clifton Forge area. Any
22 endeavors to continue the four main roads to
23 Clifton Forge or to the town of Iron Gate
24 with a bypass around the town to a location

1 on or near I-64 would be greatly
2 appreciated.

3 The county feels that these
4 improvement will give Alleghany and Highland
5 a much needed and safer access to the
6 Roanoke Valley as well as to the southern
7 part of I-81. The upgrade of Route 220 to
8 this area would also give the Roanoke Valley
9 a quicker and safer access to I-64 west and
10 to recreational opportunities in Alleghany
11 and Highland. Therefore, an approved
12 economic development relationship could be
13 gained between this area and the Roanoke
14 Valley.

15 That is something that I come before
16 you basically saying that the condition of
17 what the county is in in that region right
18 now with the loss of jobs and all, economic
19 development is very important to what we're
20 trying to get there. The upgrade to 220 is
21 a vital part along with the I-64 west
22 corridor.

23 The second part, you have heard the
24 school board. I'll touch on that. The I-64

1 safety improvement project, this project
2 consists of a million -- on frontage road
3 barrier, construction along a
4 seven-and-a-half-mile section of I-64,
5 Winterberry Avenue and Gleason Farm Road(ph)
6 from Milepost 24-and-a-half to Milepost 17.
7 The project is currently projected in the
8 six-year improvement plan to be constructed
9 in 2013.

10 It is our recommendation, along with
11 the consultation from VDOT district and
12 residency staff, that the project be
13 accelerated and advertised for construction
14 in 2011. The current estimated cost of the
15 project is 31.4 million. This figure is
16 inflated to estimate construction costs in
17 2013.

18 If the project were to be constructed
19 at the accelerated date of 2011, a cost of
20 two and a half million could possibly be
21 achieved, resulting in a 2011 construction
22 of 28.88 million. The subject segment of
23 I-64 does not meet safety standards for the
24 interstate system.

1 East and westbound lanes are
2 separated by grass medians that are less
3 than 10 feet in width in places. The same
4 holds true between Front End Road(ph),
5 Winterberry Avenue and Gleason Farm Road and
6 westbound side of I-64.

7 Once again, I would like to
8 respectfully request that you consider
9 those, and I thank you for your time.

10 MR. PIERCE: Thank you, Mr. May. The
11 next speaker is H.G. Vaughn to be followed
12 by David Foster. Welcome, Mr. Vaughn.

13 MR. VAUGHN: Thank you, sir. Many
14 years ago, when I got involved in politics,
15 I found it good to have your comments in
16 writing. So I brought the copies for all of
17 you. Either that or carry a tape-recorder
18 around.

19 Mr. Secretary, Mr. Commissioner,
20 members of the board, I thank you for this
21 opportunity to be here. I am H. G. Vaughn,
22 and I am chairman of the Henry County Board
23 of Supervisors. On behalf of the board,
24 thanks again for the time tonight.

1 I am here to talk to you about the
2 impact on Interstate 73 will have on Henry
3 County and Martinsville localities. The
4 development of I-73 is among the most
5 significant components of our economic
6 development efforts in the area. I-73 will
7 provide our employers with improved access
8 to major markets. It will enhance stores
9 and opportunities for improvement access to
10 our area, and it will significantly improve
11 corporate improvement efforts. Many
12 industries and business prospects simply
13 will not consider localities without
14 interstate excess. We need to remove this
15 barrier to business improvement in our area
16 of Virginia.

17 As you know, the recent decision on
18 I-73 was a long way, positive step in what
19 already is more than a decade of work. We
20 know there will be years of additional work
21 to ultimately get cars actually driving on
22 pavement. We in Henry County are willing to
23 put in that work, and we hope that the
24 Commonwealth of Transportation Board and the

1 Department of Transportation are as well.
2 We look forward to continuing our
3 partnership with you.

4 As we have in the past, we continue
5 to ask that you start the construction of
6 Interstate 73 in Henry County. We would
7 like to see construction begun at the
8 Virginia North Carolina line and move north.

9 Henry County recently purchased 600
10 acres of potential industrial parkland near
11 the state line, and it would be beneficial
12 to have I-73 in place near that land as soon
13 as possible. Henry County also has
14 previously asked that an interchange be
15 located in Henry County, county's major
16 business and industrial park, Patriot
17 Center. More than 4,000 people currently
18 work in the Patriot Center or an adjacent
19 private business park as well as nearby
20 Patrick Henry Community College. Henry
21 County also purchased more than 1,200 acres
22 of additional land adjacent to the Patriot
23 Center for more industrial development. An
24 interchange from I-73 to this area makes

1 sense, and we hope it will be incorporated
2 into the final design.

3 Before I close, I want to bring up
4 another issue with you. As you may be
5 aware, a citizen initiated effort in Henry
6 County is advocating a route for
7 I-73 different from the route previously
8 stated and endorsed.

9 It is my understanding that a map of
10 this alternative route has been provided to
11 the Department of Transportation. On behalf
12 of the board of supervisors, I am asking
13 that VDOT and the Commonwealth
14 Transportation Board look at this proposed
15 alternative route and determine the
16 following information: One, would this new
17 route save time and more money in the design
18 and construction phase? Two, will
19 investigating this new route delay the
20 overall project and/or would it add expenses
21 such as requiring a new environmental impact
22 state? Three, the new route incorporates a
23 portion of what we call Route 220/Route 58
24 bypass. Will incorporation of this current

1 road be possible for I-73? Does any portion
2 of this bypass meet interstate standards,
3 and if not, what changes would be required?
4 I ask that this information be gathered and
5 assimilated to Henry County Board of
6 Supervisors as soon as possible.

7 In closing, let me reiterate that we
8 remain excited about Interstate 73, and we
9 remain committed to doing whatever is asked
10 of us to see it come to fruition. I thank
11 you for your time, and I eagerly anticipate
12 your response tonight, as I have mentioned.

13 MR. PIERCE: Thank you, Mr. Vaughn.
14 The next speaker is David Foster, to be
15 followed by Gordon Saul. Welcome,
16 Mr. Foster.

17 MR. FOSTER: Thank you, Secretary,
18 Commissioner Ekern and members of the CTB.
19 I am going to comment briefly on two things
20 tonight, accepting your invitation to
21 comment on things other than road projects
22 in the Six-year Plan. I am executive
23 director of Rail Solution which is a
24 grassroots citizens advocacy group with

1 about 1,400 participants in the I-81
2 corridor of Virginia and Northeast
3 Tennessee.

4 We are concerned about the process by
5 which transportation decisions get made. I
6 want to visit that point briefly tonight.
7 In the draft environmental impact statement
8 for I-81, there was a hearing process, and
9 five public hearings, I believe, were held
10 up and down the I-81 corridor. Thousands of
11 people showed up at those hearings and many
12 more sent in written comments. The widest
13 comment to be made was 80 percent of the
14 people who spoke opposed tolls. The next
15 largest comment was 78 percent, and the 78
16 percent of the people who commented either
17 at hearings or had written comments, was in
18 favor -- the next highest group was in favor
19 of rail, in some fashion to be considered as
20 part of the I-81 planning process.

21 When the final environmental impact
22 statement was issued just last month, we
23 found out that what is now favored is a
24 multilane toll road and no rail at all in

1 either tier one or tier two of the process.

2 I think this makes a mockery of the
3 planning process. There's no reason to have
4 people come out and tell people -- tell
5 their leaders, tell their government what
6 they prefer if the government is just then
7 going to ignore them totally and go and do
8 what it wants to anyway. I think we need
9 revisit how the decisions are made. And if
10 you tell people that there's going to be
11 hearings and their views need to be made
12 known, then they need to be taken into
13 account. The other point I'd like to visit
14 briefly with you about is oil. We don't
15 hear much about oil, but we all know oil is
16 becoming scarcer and scarcer.

17 I'm concerned with some of the
18 long-range road plans that are going to take
19 decades to complete. And of course, the
20 rebuilding of I-81 all across the 225 miles
21 of Western Virginia certainly falls in that
22 category. I think some of these projects
23 are going to be obsolete by the time they're
24 finished.

1 We had a speaker earlier telling you
2 about the difficulties she faced in just
3 commuting to work. When we start running
4 out of oil, and before it actually runs out,
5 it will become unbelievably expensive.
6 We're going to have trouble just moving
7 around the Commonwealth of Virginia because
8 people won't be able to afford to drive.

9 Earlier, Morgan Griffith suggested
10 that we won't be remembered by who we are or
11 what role we held on the CTVO or as
12 citizens, but rather on the infrastructure
13 decisions we've made with regard to highway
14 and rail. And I fully agree with that.
15 It's time to start thinking about how we
16 prepare, not only the Commonwealth of
17 Virginia, but the nation as well, to survive
18 and keep our economy from becoming totally
19 unglued when oil first becomes prohibitively
20 expensive and then runs out. We need to
21 worry about that. Even though it's perhaps
22 three or four decades ahead of us, we need
23 to be thinking about it now and getting our
24 transportation infrastructure attuned for

1 that condition. Thank you, gentlemen.

2 MR. PIERCE: Thank you, Mr. Foster.
3 The next speaker is Gordon Saul, to be
4 followed by Steve Jacum. Welcome, Mr. Saw.

5 MR. SAUL: Mr. Secretary, members of
6 the board, I'm Gordon Saul. I'm a member
7 of the Back Civic League, and there are a
8 number of our members that are present here
9 this evening. But in the interest of time,
10 I believe I am the only one that will speak.

11 I am here to express our sincere
12 appreciation for learning in the Roanoke
13 Times today that -- the widening of U.S. 221
14 in Southwest Roanoke County -- we have
15 learned that the mills of the gods grind
16 slowly, but ever so finely.

17 I remember it was some 20 years ago
18 that Mr. Sensabough from the Salem District
19 and Mr. Altizer came out and instructed we
20 members of the community on what we needed
21 to do to support construction and
22 improvement to 221, and they told us that
23 the time that it took to acquire
24 right-of-way and do the engineering and

1 design and build a road was a very long and
2 difficult process. And I don't think that
3 we truly appreciated it at that time, the
4 truth that they were speaking to us.

5 It has indeed been 20 years. And the
6 also hazardous conditions on 221 that were
7 our primary concern in petitioning to get
8 that roadwork done. The traffic continues
9 to increase.

10 We presently have a situation where
11 the accident rate on 221 is three times the
12 state average. The fatality rate is six
13 times the state-wide average. And with all
14 of the housing developments and increased
15 traffic that we're going to have on that
16 roadway, it's destined to become worse. So
17 our plea to you after all is, please, if
18 there is any way to accelerate that project
19 in the Six-year Plan, please do so. We're
20 very appreciative of the fact that it is
21 there. We know the priorities, competing
22 priorities, about that work needs to be
23 done. Thank you so much.

24 MR. PIERCE: Thank you, Mr. Saul. We

1 appreciate both your brevity and your
2 patience. The next speaker is Mr. Steve
3 Chapin to be followed by Carl Espy.

4 Welcome, Mr. Chapin.

5 MR. CHAPIN: Good evening, Secretary,
6 gentlemen of the panel. Thank you for being
7 here tonight. Thank you for the job you do
8 all year long. I'm Steve Chapin, Roanoke
9 County resident, and this evening I
10 represent the Roanoke Regional Chamber of
11 Commerce. We are over 1,400 members,
12 businesses in the Roanoke Valley area.

13 I would like to start off with
14 acknowledging the efforts of Governor Kaine
15 and the general assembly who crafted the
16 transportation bill to benefit all of the
17 Commonwealth. I would also like to
18 acknowledge the dedicated men and women of
19 VDOT who do an excellent job and the
20 leadership of Mr. Caywood and Givens.

21 A common theme in our request this
22 evening is the -- is requesting a more
23 efficient and effective transportation
24 system, which means a safer transportation

1 network, a better quality of life for all of
2 our citizens, and a more positive impact on
3 Virginia's economic health.

4 Our specific request starts with
5 Interstate 81. It's our number one safety
6 concern. You gentlemen know that it has
7 been our number one concern for the last 10
8 to 15 years now. We ask for your efforts to
9 move forward with improvements on Interstate
10 81 for the entire 325-mile segment.

11 Our next request is Interstate 73.
12 Hopefully the recent record of decision will
13 allow work to commence as soon as possible.
14 It is much needed for Southwest and
15 Southside Virginia. Also request
16 improvements to Route 220. From Roanoke
17 south to the North Carolina State line, we
18 ask for local improvements in addition to
19 Interstate 73, and from Roanoke north
20 through Botetourt County, connecting to
21 Interstate 64, we ask for improvements,
22 upgrade from two lanes to four lanes, where
23 appropriate.

24 We ask for your support for Route 58,

1 completion through Southside to Southwest
2 Virginia. We ask for your support for Route
3 11 and 460. We ask for Roanoke County. As
4 it was mentioned earlier, it was just a
5 short three-mile segment, but when there's
6 an incident on 81, it's a very critical
7 segment to the regional transportation
8 network.

9 And finally, we ask for your
10 continued support of rail throughout the
11 Commonwealth, and specifically for support
12 of the Heartland Rail Corridor and
13 intermodal facility here in Roanoke Valley.

14 In closing, I would just like to
15 reiterate our number one safety concern for
16 the last decade is Interstate 81. We ask
17 for your support to move that project
18 forward as soon as possible for the benefit
19 of all the Commonwealth.

20 Again, on behalf Roanoke Regional
21 Chamber of Commerce, I thank you for your
22 time this evening. Thank you.

23 MR. PIERCE: Thank you, Mr. Chapin.
24 The next speaker is Carl Espy, to be

1 followed by George Lesters. Welcome,
2 Mr. Espy.

3 MR. ESPY: Good evening. Thank you,
4 Secretary Homer and Commissioner Ekern,
5 members of the Commonwealth Transportation
6 Board. I'm Carl Espy, town manager of
7 Halifax. I appreciate the opportunity to
8 travel cross the mountains, coming to this
9 district on what I thought were scenic and
10 relatively uncongested, safe transportation
11 network.

12 I'm here primarily to deliver a
13 resolution of support for the Banister
14 Bridge replacement project, and to also
15 include the transportation segment of the
16 Town Comprehensive Plan which we're in the
17 process of adopting.

18 The Town and the County of Halifax
19 are appreciative of the support that the
20 residents in the Lynchburg District have
21 shown for Virginia's 360 which is a state
22 scenic byway, and the need to replace the
23 aging iron truss bridge which is rapidly
24 deteriorating. I know that the

1 transportation board has accelerated that
2 schedule which was only a few years ago only
3 a candidate project.

4 My understanding is it's going to be
5 a design/build on a temporary structure.
6 When the time comes to start a more
7 comprehensive design for the new bridge, we
8 ask that the -- the VDOT consider the
9 Federal Highway Administration guidelines
10 for contextual design, and there are a
11 number pedestrian amenities that we think
12 need to be incorporated into that project.

13 We're looking at multimodal
14 transportation solutions in our 20/25 plan.
15 Even though we're a rural community of only
16 about 1,300, we think it's important to
17 begin to adapt to the changing economic
18 environment. We look for sustainable
19 development in finding solutions for South,
20 Southside and Southwest Virginia.

21 The other component of this bridge
22 project we would ask to be considered,
23 especially if there's funding opportunities
24 in very close proximity to the intersection

1 of U.S. Highway 501 and Virginia 360 is in
2 need of improvement. I think the 501
3 coalition indicated that in the study
4 several years ago. And through our
5 comprehensive plan process, we have worked
6 with engineers who see that that is an
7 excellent candidate for a modern roundabout,
8 and there are other reasons for supporting
9 that project that are in the resolution and
10 the plan which I will distribute to the
11 board.

12 Also I want to take this opportunity
13 to thank the board for its continued
14 enhancement funding over the years,
15 receiving a plan grant for downtown
16 revitalization of 2002. We have got that
17 project completed, even though that was
18 housing community development dollars. It
19 had gone through that project area only
20 recently. We do think that the central
21 business district is an important place to
22 focus our economic development, pedestrian,
23 in friendly and sustainable manner.

24 We also look to the upcoming T21

1 funding for downtown Roanoke. Hopefully the
2 results of the County's submittal on the
3 courthouse square renovation project, again
4 enhancement project, I think that it's been
5 funded once and the request has come
6 through.

7 Mr. Secretary, I will leave you the
8 excerpts of our 20/25 comp plan that pertain
9 to transportation. It's interesting to see
10 that how many special projects that we
11 notice in the implementation plan are
12 transportation-oriented. It is our hope
13 that we can work together over the next
14 years to make this sustainable vision a
15 reality.

16 I will also have the copies of our
17 resolution the town council passed on May 8,
18 and ask finally that it be considered the
19 U.S. 501 corridor study. I think there are
20 some needed improvements in that corridor.
21 There's a lot of commercial carriers,
22 industry that depends a great deal on that
23 corridor. I think there can be some
24 long-term solutions sought there.

1 So thank you again for this
2 opportunity.

3 MR. PIERCE: Thank you, Mr. Espy.
4 The next speaker is George Lester, to be
5 followed by Barbara Derk.

6 MR. LESTER: Secretary, Commissioner.

7 MR. PIERCE: Welcome, Mr. Lester.

8 MR. LESTER: I am George Lester,
9 chairman of JobLink, a community of leaders
10 from Piedmont Region of Virginia and North
11 Carolina who have advocated construction of
12 Interstate 73 for the past 14 years. We are
13 delighted the Federal Highway Administration
14 has signed the record of decision for I-73.
15 This is a giant step. The record of
16 decision means the route environmental
17 impact study are approved and that VDOT will
18 proceed with the project. On behalf of
19 JobLink, I extend our appreciation to VDOT
20 for producing an outstanding location and
21 design study.

22 They have spent many hearings, many
23 thousands of people, a lot of hours in the
24 field, analyzing five or six different

1 routes.

2 Some money has been allocated to the
3 final engineering and land acquisition in
4 both Henry and Roanoke counties. This
5 federal mandates funds, earmarked funds. If
6 I have calculated correctly, there is nearly
7 7 million dollars available for Henry
8 County. If you received at the nearly 3
9 million proposed for fiscal year 2009, we
10 would have funds to complete the first
11 phase. We ask you to begin that design
12 phase now.

13 However, there are not sufficient
14 funds to complete the engineering and land
15 acquisition for the entire I-73 project. I
16 urge you to allocate more resources so these
17 essential tasks can continue without
18 interruption.

19 Finally, I request additional design
20 of Interstate 73 to begin at the
21 Virginia-North Carolina line. Henry County
22 needs the benefits of I-73 for both safety
23 and economic reasons. We recommend the
24 first segment to begin at state line and

1 continue to what I believe is about five
2 miles to the proposed interchange with U.S.
3 58 near Laurel Park. The benefit of having
4 the first segment at that site will be
5 reduced traffic on U.S. 220 in an area which
6 has been the scene of many accidents and
7 some fatalities.

8 The other benefit -- we need to get
9 Martinsville-Henry County area in the
10 interstate system. We are working hard and
11 using our own resources to improve our
12 economy, but we need your support to make
13 I-73 a priority so our efforts will pay off.
14 Our neighbors in North Carolina and South
15 Carolina, as well as West Virginia are
16 making significant progress in building
17 I-73, and we need to demonstrate Virginia's
18 commitment with more funds.

19 Compared to the rest of Virginia, the
20 Martinsville-Henry County area is in a
21 challenging position. Unemployment is 5.9
22 percent in Martinsville-Henry County. The
23 state average is 3.1 percent. Per capita
24 income is slightly more than \$17,000 in

1 Martinsville-Henry County. The state
2 average is nearly \$24,000. The number of
3 residents living below the poverty line in
4 Martinsville is 19.2 percent and 11.7
5 percent in Henry County. The state average
6 is 9.5. So you can see we are economically
7 challenged.

8 These cities are numbers. The real
9 story is the picture that I see locally in
10 the faces of our people who are struggling
11 to feed and clothe their children, who have
12 lost their dignity and are just barely
13 holding on until the next unemployment or
14 state welfare check to keep their family
15 together.

16 I-73 will give the Martinsville-Henry
17 County area renewed hope for a brighter
18 future. We need to begin the work as soon
19 as possible. Thank you.

20 MR. PIERCE: Thank you, Mr. Lester.
21 The next speaker is Barbara Derk.

22 MS. DERK: Mr. Secretary,
23 Mr. Commissioner, Mr. Page and my district
24 engineer, Mr. Haywood, I want to thank you

1 very much for allowing me to speak to you
2 and members of the Commonwealth of
3 Transportation Board tonight. The
4 Commonwealth of Virginia is very fortunate
5 to have two U.S. bicycle routes. In
6 Virginia, we have U.S. Bike Route 76 and
7 U.S. Bike Route 1.

8 I want to thank Mr. Bowie for making
9 possible the bicycle plan and Virginia map.
10 It came out, and I thank you very much for
11 this, Mr. Bowie. And what I ask is the next
12 time we publish this map, that you actually
13 put the routes for U.S. Bike Route 76 and
14 Route U.S. Bike Route 1 on the map, so
15 people can use this map to actually follow
16 the route in Virginia.

17 I just finished my eight-day 570-mile
18 trip on U.S. Bike Route 76 through Virginia.
19 The route goes from New York town to Oregon.
20 I stopped at breaks in the state park, that
21 at least eight people each day were seen
22 fully loaded with panniers, travelling
23 across the highways of Virginia. Most of
24 them were from the Netherlands, England,

1 Germany, Switzerland, Australia. So we're
2 hosting these international guests on our
3 road bikes.

4 The Trans-America trail that is
5 currently mapped by the Cycling Association
6 differs in places from the 76 Bike
7 Centennial Route, that black and white sign
8 that has a bicycle and a 76 on it. So I'm
9 asking us to figure out a way to either
10 remark the 76 Route or put up the signs
11 differently or else differentiate between
12 the Trans-America route that the cyclers are
13 currently using to get through Virginia.

14 I know we have some fantastic crooked
15 road signs up now, and we have birding
16 signs. We have civil war signs. The
17 Trans-America 76 Route is -- has been up
18 there for 31 years, and it just needs to be
19 updated. The Richmond Construction District
20 has done something about that, and I'd like
21 for other construction districts to address
22 that also.

23 We have roadmaps and we have the
24 scenic roadmap. And that -- on those maps,

1 we have the Appalachian Trail. We have the
2 New River Trail. Well, they're not really
3 roads, but at least by having conceptional
4 there, you have an idea what they were
5 doing. So I would like for the 76 Route,
6 the new Route 1 to be conceptionally put on
7 the U.S. bike -- U.S. roadmap and the U.S.
8 scenic map, so people can have an idea that
9 they come through their neighborhood.

10 Bicycle Magazine, May issue, big
11 medallion, big medallion right on the front
12 cover says, "The Best Road in America."
13 What do you think it is? The Blue Ridge
14 Parkway.

15 So you turn to the heavenly blues,
16 the ten pages of cover about the Blue Ridge
17 Parkway, they don't mention Roanoke, the
18 largest metropolitan area along the route.
19 Not even Roanoke in print anywhere. And I
20 think a lot of the reason for that is
21 because if you try to access Roanoke from
22 the Blue Ridge Parkway on 220, you pretty
23 much are taking your life in your own hands.

24 Michael Gray, who is from the Salem

1 District, is working on this. And I -- I
2 decided well, I'm just going to see about
3 this for myself. So I rode the Blue Ridge
4 Parkway, and I came down 220. I got halfway
5 to Wal-Mart and got so scared, I pulled over
6 and called him on my cell phone. I said,
7 "Michael, I'm out here on 220." Well, I
8 couldn't turn back. I couldn't go back. So
9 I thought -- because it's two-lanes, it's
10 four-lane divided highway, tractor trailers
11 in both lanes, and I was on the paved
12 shoulder, and they were coming about a foot
13 and a half from me. And I was getting the
14 wind knocked over. And I thought, "What am
15 I going to do?"

16 So I took a deep breath, said a huge
17 prayer, and with my cycling vest that says,
18 "Bible Bicycles May Take the Full Lane," I
19 got out there in traffic again, and I made
20 it all the way to Wal-Mart where I could
21 rest.

22 But I want you to know that -- that
23 the people that are riding the Blue Ridge
24 Parkway are tourists that don't know better

1 not to get on 220, that they need -- that
2 the road is very, very dangerous. And you
3 may think that -- that paved shoulders are
4 an option, but for a bicyclist who is out
5 there trying to make their way to their
6 hotel for the night or for the restaurant
7 that they're planning to eat in, that it's
8 -- there's no way to get around it. There's
9 no other roads. So 220 definitely needs to
10 be made safe for bicyclists.

11 On-road bicycle accommodations are
12 for motorists' convenience. A motor vehicle
13 can continue in the direction of travel that
14 they're headed without having to slow down
15 or swerve for a bicycle. VDOT should not
16 discriminate planning against the young, the
17 old and lower income citizens who do not
18 drive motor vehicles.

19 Please use complete street planning
20 guidelines, include walking a bicycle and
21 accommodations and road projects, build safe
22 roads for the all the users of the highways
23 in the Commonwealth of Virginia. Thank you.

24 MR. PIERCE: Thank you. The next

1 speaker is Claire Collins, to be followed by
2 Monty Vernon.

3 MS. COLLINS: Good evening. I'm
4 Claire Collins. I'm the city manager of
5 Covington, Virginia. With me this evening
6 is Mayor Harrison Scott and Councilman Bill
7 Zimmermann. On behalf of the City, we
8 appreciate having the opportunity to address
9 the Commonwealth of Transportation Board, to
10 comment on specific interstate and primary
11 transportation program improvements that
12 need to be considered and addressed in the
13 Six-Year Improvement Program.

14 We also extend our gratitude for the
15 outstanding working relationship we have
16 with the Department of Transportation and
17 for the improvement program funding and
18 projects completed over the years through
19 partnership with VDOT and federal
20 enhancement funding.

21 One of those projects that was just
22 completed was the Hawthorne Street Bridge
23 rehabilitation in partnership with VDOT,
24 Virginia Tech and the University of

1 Virginia. We invite you to come and see
2 that project that recently was awarded and
3 recognized with the Model For Better
4 Development by the Valley of Conservation
5 Council.

6 With transportation, whether it be on
7 roads or rail, we all are interconnected
8 throughout Virginia. That interconnection
9 comes by using modes of transportation to
10 community for worker enjoyment. As such, we
11 not only support all the speakers here this
12 evening, we support our fellow -- fellow
13 locality, Alleghany County and all their
14 pleas for assistance along Interstate 64,
15 and for the safety barriers and the
16 interchange that they discussed as well as
17 Route 220, through Botetourt, through
18 Alleghany County and hopefully to
19 interconnect sometime to the city. There
20 has been discussion over the years for that
21 and we are in fully support of it.

22 Also, the interchange at Interstate
23 64 and Durant Road needs evaluation for both
24 safety and development concerns to be

1 considered for a possible reconfiguration
2 being that the mountain bluff on the
3 southwest side of Interstate 64 is situated
4 for potential business and commercial
5 development. And with development will come
6 more traffic, and we would like that to be
7 studied and to be considered.

8 We need that economic engine as all
9 Virginia needs economic engines, and we
10 understand that. We don't want the
11 Commonwealth of Transportation Board to put
12 one locality over another. We understand
13 that when it comes to transportation.

14 One of the things that we also would
15 like to discuss, because we feel it's
16 another safety concern is U.S. 60 and Route
17 220 through the city. That encompasses a
18 road segment of 1.91 miles to be -- to
19 actually be widened and reconstructed to an
20 urban four-lane standard highway to
21 accommodate the traffic volume, particularly
22 for truck traffic.

23 Back last summer we had a severe
24 accident on Interstate 64 that caused all

1 the three exits along the interstate that go
2 into the city to be congested with
3 predominantly truck traffic and tourism
4 traffic. We then recognized what travels on
5 Interstate 64, because every single road
6 throughout the city was bumper-to-bumper
7 traffic. So we can actually commiserate
8 with those in Northern Virginia and
9 Tidewater. It was quite an ordeal for our
10 staff, but we handled it and we had the
11 coordination and cooperation from the
12 County.

13 The City continues to work with VDOT
14 to address the new urban construction
15 program projects that we had. And I would
16 like to call those to your attention,
17 because those are safety issues, too,
18 because they involve CSX Railroad and also
19 near the interchange and Interstate 64. One
20 is the Chestnut Street Bridge underpass and
21 underpasses of the CSX Railroad which goes
22 over there. We recently had a train
23 derailment not far from that underpass. We
24 want to make sure that that is safe for all

1 concerned.

2 The other one is along Durant Road
3 and West Jackson Street. We have a rock
4 wall that is very unsafe. Rocks are always
5 falling down. That's not too far from the
6 mountain bluff near the interstate
7 interchange. We would appreciate that being
8 looked at.

9 In closing, we want to thank you for
10 your time this evening and the opportunity
11 to comment. And we are always willing to
12 work in partnership with VDOT and your
13 adjoining localities. Thank you.

14 MR. PIERCE: Thank you, Ms. Collins.
15 The next speaker is Monty Vernon -- welcome,
16 Mr. Vernon -- to be followed by Chris Craft.

17 MR. VERNON: Mr. Secretary,
18 Commissioner, members of the panel. I'm
19 Monty Vernon, public work director for the
20 Town of Abingdon. I travelled here this
21 evening with Mayor Humphries as you noted
22 earlier, and council member Dr. French
23 Moore. And I stand before you tonight to
24 represent the mayor, the council, county

1 manager and citizens of the Town of
2 Abingdon.

3 The sheet that I've handed out to you
4 has to do with Exit 17 on Interstate 81 in
5 Abingdon. That's what we're here to talk
6 with you about this evening. And behind
7 that sheet is a resolution that was adopted
8 by our town council on January 17 of this
9 year. After they had met with members of
10 Mr. Givens and his staff.

11 The front sheet, the table is just a
12 little bit of a history I went back and
13 looked at on Exit 17 just for my own
14 enlightenment and hopefully for yours.

15 I noticed that in 1992 it was when
16 the conceptional study for the I-81 project
17 was approved by the Commonwealth
18 Transportation Board. Then in the middle
19 years there, from about '97 to 2000, it
20 seemed to have progressed. There was a
21 citizens' information meeting held in
22 February of '97 and several things happened
23 after that. I-81 improvement study that was
24 prepared for the VDOT by Michael Baker,

1 Incorporated was completed. And then there
2 was a value engineering study done in April
3 of 2000. And then after that, it seemed to
4 be caught up in the whole huge I-81 project,
5 and Exit 17 and the project in narrowing to
6 the state, just seemed to be abandoned or
7 forgotten. We noticed that it is still in
8 the Six-year Plan, but one more thing is
9 badly needed, and that's money.

10 And Mr. Givens and his staff have
11 been very helpful with us and very
12 forthright, letting us know that it's not
13 moving anywhere because it just doesn't have
14 money on it to move it. And we're here in
15 2007, and it looks like it's been 15 years
16 since this started. And we'd like to think
17 that in the Six-year Plan that there would
18 be actually enough money to accomplish the
19 project.

20 So I'm going to take a risk and make
21 a suggestion, and I realize that you-all
22 have 500 million dollars to work with. So
23 20 million dollars, if we keep that figure
24 in mind, apply that to this project, that

1 leaves 480 million dollars for everything
2 else. So keep this project in mind. And
3 we'd appreciate it if we see some action on
4 this, and get something purchased in 2009
5 the way it says in the Six-year Plan. Thank
6 you.

7 MR. PIERCE: Thank you so much. And
8 thank you, Mayor, Dr. Moore, for making the
9 long trip here. Our next speaker is Chris
10 Craft, to be followed by James Rozar.
11 Welcome, Mr. Craft.

12 MR. CRAFT: Good evening. I'm going
13 to make this short and sweet because an old
14 friend of mine, Delegate Dick Thomas, told
15 me when you tell it stories short and sweet
16 you get things done.

17 I'm here to thank you, first of all,
18 for your fully funding of the 13th Street
19 Bridge here in the city, Norfolk Southern
20 railroad tracks. I hope that that will
21 become a reality soon.

22 I come to you to ask that you look
23 into finishing the project that VDOT started
24 years ago, and that's over 581 at Valley

1 View Mall. They start -- they had a one-way
2 bridge over that over 581 which needs to be
3 completed, because as one of the speakers
4 said, Valley View Mall is growing, getting
5 new stores, and it's getting harder and
6 harder to get in and out of there putting
7 more traffic on Hershberger, and it's really
8 causing a major headache.

9 I also come and ask for more funding
10 for Valley Metro. I know that gas is going
11 up. Pricing is going up on everything. And
12 they have tried to avoid it, but they're
13 considering going up a quarter on their
14 fare. That still won't help with the
15 quality of their bus service, being able to
16 run different routes, run on Sundays and run
17 later at night which is needed greatly in
18 this section of the State of Virginia.

19 I ask that you look and see what you
20 can do about helping to support better
21 public transportation, because most of
22 you-all probably don't know our Valley Metro
23 buses now have bike racks on the front so
24 people can ride their bikes and catch the

1 city bus, too, to their destination.

2 But there's parts of the city and
3 county the bus cannot get to because they
4 don't have the funding to pay for the
5 routes.

6 I ask you to look at improving Route
7 460, Orange Avenue. I live off 406 and
8 Orange Avenue here in the city, and it's a
9 total nightmare. There's one section at
10 11th Street in front of the raceway where
11 there's three lanes of traffic on each side.
12 One side grows to two lanes. There's plenty
13 of traffic accidents over the years. We
14 need to find a way to make 460 safer without
15 widening it, because widening it would cause
16 stretches in bridges, have to provide
17 right-of-ways and put a lot of businesses
18 out of business.

19 And I could ask you to consider
20 speeding up your plans, whatever plans there
21 are, for the Allen Avenue Exit off 581 at
22 Elm Avenue and 581. That is really a major
23 thoroughfare morning and night. People -- I
24 don't know how many people get off there,

1 but traffic backs up under the interstate
2 either way in the morning and evening. We
3 need to find a way to make that a more
4 faster running but safer intersection.

5 I want to thank you for your time,
6 and let you know that you-all have a great
7 staff at VDOT including one that you took
8 back from the City of Roanoke, and that's
9 Ken King. I appreciate your time.

10 MR. PIERCE: The next speaker is
11 James Rozar, to be followed by David
12 Harrison.

13 PUBLIC SPEAKER: Mr. Rozar will be
14 right back. David Harrison is going to
15 submit his comments by e-mail. So Mr. Rozar
16 does want to make comments.

17 MR. PIERCE: Okay. In that case,
18 let's go to Mr. Bob Benston.

19 MR. BENSTON: Good evening,
20 Mr. Secretary, members of the board, I am
21 Bob Benston. I have the privilege of
22 serving the City of Roanoke as its public
23 works director. First let me thank you for
24 the opportunity to provide these remarks,

1 and, more importantly, to let me share with
2 you appreciative the City of Roanoke is to
3 see the increased funding proposed in the
4 draft plan.

5 We have stressed to you in the past
6 years the importance to the City of
7 addressing needs along the Interstate 581
8 and Route 20 corridor.

9 Two years ago VDOT in conjunction
10 with the City initiated the Central Roanoke
11 Mobility Study. This study was completed
12 earlier this year, and we've already begun
13 to discover some of the improvements
14 recommended by this study such as the Elm
15 Avenue interchange, well known as a
16 congested traffic area not only for
17 residents of the city, but for the entire
18 region.

19 In fact, this interchange was
20 identified in a state-wide study as the most
21 congested location in this part of the
22 state. The proposed Six-year Plan provides
23 10 million dollars from interstate funding
24 toward this improvement, and this is a well

1 allocation for which we're most
2 appreciative.

3 The City has committed also up to 4
4 million dollars of its urban allocation
5 toward this project which is critical to
6 improving the traffic flow and safety in our
7 downtown. To get those funds will permit
8 the implementation of short-term solution
9 that will address some of the more critical
10 and immediate needs at this interchange, and
11 will set the stage for the ultimate
12 solution, which will clearly be a far more
13 complex and costly endeavor.

14 Additionally, the proposed Six-year
15 Plan provides a significant amount of
16 funding toward the completion of the Valley
17 View Boulevard interchange. Again, the city
18 in our main roadway network to the Valley
19 View area are most pleased to learn of this
20 proposed allocation. Originally built with
21 local funds, this 581 interchange in Valley
22 View provides access to the mall retail
23 area, major contributor -- which is a major
24 contributor in allowing the City of Roanoke

1 to boast the second highest per capita
2 retail sales in the state.

3 Access to and from that retail center
4 as well as Town Square Mall, Crossroads
5 Mall, Roanoke Regional Airport and other
6 business centers in that geographic area are
7 critical in maintaining our retail and sales
8 tax base. Completing the partial
9 interchange at this location will enhance
10 mobility and accessibility in this busy area
11 of the city and will help to ensure
12 continued viability to the retailers in the
13 area.

14 The passage of House Bill 3202 has
15 also resulted in a significant boost to
16 projected urban funding for the city. We
17 applaud the hard work that went into this
18 legislation and look forward to moving other
19 projects toward construction.

20 In summary, I want to thank the
21 department for its efforts. I urge you to
22 continue to dedicate funding for Interstate
23 581 as mobility for residents and visitors
24 alike. It's critical for the Roanoke

1 Valley's success in maintaining and
2 improving our economy and in further
3 enhancing our quality of life. Thank you
4 for your consideration.

5 MR. PIERCE: Thank you, Mr. Benston.
6 Our final signed-up speaker is Mr. James
7 Rozar. If there's anybody else who would
8 like to speak, please come up behind
9 Mr. Rozar. Welcome.

10 MR. ROZAR: Thank you very much. I
11 appreciate your patience and don't mean to
12 berate you with repeated references to
13 cycling, but seeing that it is an economical
14 and helpful and wholesome means of
15 transportation, it is certainly a means to a
16 healthier future for all the citizens around
17 Virginia, a good portion of the world.

18 I look forward to being able to see
19 more development and reconstruction done
20 with bicycles in mind. I understand that
21 that's already a portion of your program,
22 but certainly it is the upcoming perception
23 of the bicycling community that the wider
24 right lane is a better way of going where

1 the roadway that bicycles and the vehicles
2 share is constantly cleansed by the passage
3 of cars and that, you know, having a
4 right -- the right lane out of approximately
5 15 feet wide certainly makes sense,
6 especially for ascending section of the
7 roadways.

8 I certainly agree that the -- the
9 advent of increased rail emphasis makes
10 better sense for our long-term future. I
11 would think that cycling works in that
12 direction as well. Our resources are
13 limited. We hope to be able to have
14 sustainable fuels in the future, but, you
15 know, not everyone is going to be able to
16 avail themselves of those.

17 I also would like to advocate that
18 besides wider right lanes, that, you know,
19 not creating so much in the way of
20 separation for bicycles, you know,
21 separation is not necessarily an
22 accommodation. I'm hoping to see that it
23 makes more sense to -- you know, I want to
24 be predictable on a roadway.

1 I go out there, you know, with my
2 passion for cycling, but realize I am
3 putting my life on the line every time that
4 I ride, and it is actually on that white
5 line, that I position myself so that I am
6 predictable because I know that that white
7 line is the continuity, legal continuity of
8 the roadway. If it is a wider lane there,
9 is more room for the road to be shared.

10 That's about as much as I have to say
11 and thank you very much.

12 MR. PIERCE: Thank you, Mr. Rozar.
13 Anybody else who want to address the board
14 this evening? On behalf of the Commonwealth
15 of Transportation Board and the Governor, I
16 want to thank you for taking the time out of
17 your busy schedules to share your thoughts.

18 This is the second of five public
19 comment sessions. We are looking to
20 conclude those and make some very hard
21 decisions. Thank you and good night.

22
23 (8:45 p.m.)
24

C E R T I F I C A T E

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

COUNTY OF ROANOKE

I, Frank R. Austin, Notary Public in and for the Commonwealth of Virginia, at Large, do hereby that the hearing was by me reduced to machine shorthand in the presence of the witness, afterwards transcribed by me by means of computer, and that to the best of my ability the foregoing is a true and correct transcript of the public hearing so given.

I further certify that this hearing was taken at the time and place specified in the foregoing caption.

I further certify that I am not a relative, counsel or attorney for any party or otherwise interested in the outcome of this action.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand at Roanoke, Virginia on the 13th day of June, 2007.

FRANK R. AUSTIN
NOTARY PUBLIC

My Commission expires December 31, 2010.