

MOTION:

SECOND:

RE: APPROVE THE 2020 VIRGINIA RAILWAY EXPRESS LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

ACTION:

WHEREAS, the Virginia Railway Express (VRE) is an essential part of a regional transportation network for the Northern Virginia and DC Metropolitan region; and

WHEREAS, VRE serves residents throughout the Commonwealth to provide a meaningful public transportation option; and

WHEREAS, it is essential for VRE to educate and advocate for desired legislative and regulatory outcomes with members of Congress and their staff, with staff of federal entities, in the Virginia General Assembly, and with the governor and his administration; and

WHEREAS, VRE has coordinated its Legislative Agenda with the staffs of the Commissions and member jurisdictions; and

WHEREAS, the VRE Operations Board recommends the following action.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Potomac and Rappahannock Transportation Commission does hereby approve the 2020 VRE Legislative Agenda and authorizes the Acting Chief Executive Officer to actively pursue the elements set forth in the attached 2020 VRE Legislative Agenda.

Votes:

Ayes:

Nays:

Abstain:

Absent from Vote:

Alternate Present Not Voting:

Absent from Meeting:

State Legislative Issues:

Protect Commuter Rail Operating and Capital (C-ROC) funding levels.

Continue to keep legislators and administration apprised of how we are allocating/spending the C-ROC funds.

Support Secretary of Transportation/Department of Rail and Public Transportation on a coordinated funding plan using state and federal funds for Long Bridge expansion project and the DC to RVA rail expansion project.

Support actions by Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTA) and others to restore funding for NVTA.

Defend against legislative proposals that would decrease funding for VRE.

Watchlist Issues

Advocate for increasing overall state transit operating and capital funds to “increase the pie” to allow for greater support to commuter rail and transit.

Monitor the Virginia Transit Association and others’ proposals to increase funding for public transportation and create programs that will increase ridership.

Monitor proposals to create transportation authorities that would include VRE jurisdictions.



VRE Contacts:

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Federal Legislative and Regulatory Issues:

Federal Grant Programs

Work with USDOT, U.S. Congressional delegation, relevant U.S. Congressional Committees, and regional stakeholders to educate and secure Administration and Congressional support for discretionary grant applications submitted by VRE.

FAST Act Reauthorization

VRE will partner with other stakeholders to advocate for appropriate funding levels and policies to support commuter rail and mass transit.

Surface Transportation Board (STB) Authority

Educate Congress and the Administration on the imperative of preserving STB's jurisdiction over VRE, and other common carrier commuter railroads.

Monitor industry, Congressional and Administration efforts affecting the ability of VRE, and similar commuter railroads, to seek relief from the STB when negotiating with Amtrak.

Amtrak On-Time-Performance (OTP)

Amtrak is working with the Federal Railroad Administration on developing OTP metrics and measurements which will then be enforced by the STB.

Watchlist Issues

USDOT Rulemaking

On August 15, 2017, the President signed an Executive Order on "Establishing Discipline and Accountability in the Environmental Review and Permitting Process for Infrastructure." VRE will track and comment on proposed guidance, rulemakings, or requests for comment from USDOT helping to advance regulatory reforms applicable to VRE's operations and Capital Improvement Program.



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