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COMMONWEALTH TRANSPORTATION BOARD
SIX-YEAR IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM
WORKING DRAFT FINAL COMMENTS PUBLIC HEARING

ORAL COMMENTS

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 2, 2010

6:00 P.M. - 7:00 P.M.

CHESAPEAKE CONFERENCE CENTER
900 GREENBRIER CIRCLE
CHESAPEAKE, VIRGINIA

REPORTING SERVICES PERFORMED BY: SHEILA L. LOWE

1 SECRETARY CONNAUGHTON: Good evening,
2 everyone. I'd ask everyone to please take their seats. I'd
3 like to start by welcoming everyone to this hearing. This
4 is our third hearing on the state Six-Year Transportation
5 Improvement Plan. After -- I'm Secretary Sean Connaughton,
6 also chairman of the Commonwealth Transportation Board.
7 Before we start, I'd ask everyone, although we don't have a
8 flag here, I always like to start our public meetings with
9 the Pledge of Allegiance.

10

11 (Pledge of Allegiance recited.)

12

13 SECRETARY CONNAUGHTON: I knew I wore
14 this tie for a reason this morning. I didn't know what
15 reason, but again, I'm Sean Connaughton. I'm going to ask
16 each one of my members up here, the Commonwealth
17 Transportation Board members, as well as our staff to
18 introduce themselves, if you'll like to start.

19 MS. DRAKE: Thelma Drake, Director of
20 Department of Rail and Public Transportation.

21 MR. DICKENS: Dana Dickens, Commonwealth
22 Transportation Board member.

23 MR. HEUER: Dennis Heuer, District
24 Administrator for VDOT.

25 MR. WHIRLEY: Greg Whirley --

1 SECRETARY CONNAUGHTON: I got caught in
2 traffic on the way down here.

3 MR. WHIRLEY: Greg Whirley, I'm the
4 acting Commissioner.

5 MR. LANE: I'm Aubrey Lane. I'm the
6 Hampton Roads District Commonwealth Transportation Board
7 member.

8 SECRETARY CONNAUGHTON: Well, thank you
9 very much. Again, thank you-all for being here. We always
10 start out with the elected official from the host
11 jurisdiction. Tonight, we're in Chesapeake, so I'd like to
12 ask Mayor Alan Krasnoff, if you'd like to come up. Welcome.

13 MAYOR KRASNOFF: Good evening. It's
14 good to have all of you here today. In fact, we welcome
15 you-all to our wonderful city called Chesapeake. We
16 appreciate you, and we thank you so much for everything you
17 offer to our great Commonwealth, and we appreciate you very
18 much. In fact, if there's anything we can do for you to
19 serve you, if you need more water, Mr. Secretary, we'll be
20 more than happy to do that.

21 SECRETARY CONNAUGHTON: It's going to be
22 a long list, isn't it?

23 MAYOR KRASNOFF: But if I may say, I
24 won't take much time because you have a long list probably,
25 but at the outset, I want to welcome Secretary Connaughton,

1 Thelma Drake, Director of Department of Rail and Public
2 Transportation, thank you so much with the meeting this
3 afternoon with Kevin Page. We appreciate you so much,
4 members of the Commonwealth Transportation Board, acting
5 Commissioner Whirley, thank you so much, and it's good to
6 see my good friend Dennis here. How are you, Mr. Heuer?
7 And it's great to meet so many others. In fact, Rita
8 Busher, it's great to have met you, too, thank you for all
9 you're going to do this week for us.

10 SECRETARY CONNAUGHTON: Will you tell us
11 about this later?

12 MAYOR KRASNOFF: But since I last
13 appeared before this board, and recognizing these are
14 extraordinarily difficult times for any organization at any
15 level of government, we, in Chesapeake, have begun charting
16 a new course. We believe and I believe that the old ways of
17 building things and creating opportunities for our community
18 may be comfortable, but they aren't going to be much help as
19 we -- as we navigate an economic maze of unprecedented
20 dimensions. Instead, we need to use this time to turn
21 obstacles into opportunities. Candidly, I'm reasonably sure
22 that whenever or wherever you hold a meeting in Virginia,
23 you will immediately be challenged to approve a critically
24 needed project that if it isn't funded, would mean the end
25 of western civilization as we know it.

1 That's a funny, Sean.

2 SECRETARY CONNAUGHTON: I'll hold it
3 there.

4 MAYOR KRASNOFF: Unfortunately, perhaps
5 as much as my city manager might like me to make that claim,
6 that wouldn't be honest on my part. What is true is that we
7 do look to you for much needed support for any number of
8 projects, not the least of which is Dominion Boulevard, but
9 we also realize that Chesapeake needs to take the
10 initiative. One example underway as we speak is the new
11 South Norfolk Jordan Bridge. The old bridge was closed in
12 November 2008, but by January 2009, we have found a workable
13 solution. That project cost Chesapeake taxpayers not one
14 dime, and it took what would have been a very expensive
15 replacement bridge off everyone's list of wants and needs.
16 We did it by developing community support, and as necessary,
17 twisting a few arms, but best of all, we got the job done in
18 record time.

19 Time, of course, is money or the loss of
20 it, which brings me to Chesapeake's most pressing project,
21 Dominion Boulevard, which also is the most heavily travelled
22 two-lane road bridge complex in Hampton Roads outside of the
23 Midtown Tunnel. When a replacement drawbridge -- when a
24 replacement for a drawbridge on a two-lane road was first
25 considered, the cost was \$100 million. At least 20 years

1 later, if we start tomorrow, the budget for that project
2 will be over \$370 million. To make the point of what's been
3 lost, just imagine how many teachers could have been
4 educating our children or how many police officers or
5 sheriff's deputies could have been patrolling our streets
6 and highways. Unfortunately, what's done is done, and we'll
7 never be able to recapture our time or money. What we can
8 do is change the course. As I have said at the outset, old
9 approaches going to build new roads aren't going to build
10 new roads. So what we, in Chesapeake, want is the
11 opportunity, the leeway to seize the initiative, break the
12 mold, and move ahead.

13 In 2008, design for this project was 30
14 percent complete. Today, it's 70 percent complete, and by
15 the end of the year, design for the project will be done.
16 Environmental concerns have been dealt with, and we have
17 clearances we need to proceed. Between federal, state, and
18 local funding, over \$43 million has already been committed
19 to the Dominion Boulevard project, and we're so serious
20 about the need that we are considering delay or cancellation
21 of projects to move this one ahead.

22 What we also need to remember is that
23 without your support for this project, there will never be a
24 complete Norfolk-Raleigh connector, which is vital to
25 commerce between both states, not to mention what would

1 happen if, God forbid, we ever need to use Dominion
2 Boulevard as a hurricane evacuation route. But to move this
3 forward, we need your support this year to allow us to begin
4 right of way acquisition.

5 Naturally, there are those who might
6 doubt our ability to get the job done. To them and you I
7 say this: We believe in ourselves, and we only ask that you
8 believe in us. We thank you for your time. We thank you
9 for your service, and God bless you-all. Have a pleasant
10 evening. Thank you so much for your service.

11 SECRETARY CONNAUGHTON: Thank you very
12 much. We appreciate very much, again, you hosting us this
13 evening.

14 I'd like to now have Delegate Glenn
15 Oder.

16 DELEGATE ODER: Thank you very much
17 members of the Commission, Mr. Secretary, Ms. Drake, thank
18 you for hosting -- for allowing us to come over and speak
19 today. I appreciate it. I won't take much of your time,
20 but I did want to say a few things to you. First, I wanted
21 to thank you for being here. Second, I wanted to say that
22 our Transportation Planning Organization in Hampton Roads
23 has made great strides in the last two years, and I'm very,
24 very pleased to be part of the Transportation Planning
25 Organization to see how well we've done.

1 A couple years ago, we actually received
2 a letter from the federal government saying that we had, I
3 believe, 27 different violations or recommendations for
4 improvements that they wanted us to make in our
5 Transportation Planning Organization. I was actually told
6 that we were the only organization in the nation that
7 received that many recommendations for improvement.

8 The Transportation Planning Organization
9 made great strides in setting up a reform committee that
10 then began to address those 27 requirements. One of the
11 requirements was to put legislators on the TPO. Never in my
12 wildest dreams would I think that actually having
13 legislators, if anything, would make it better, but for some
14 reason, it seems to have worked very, very well in our
15 Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization, and we
16 actually are now working across the state with those other
17 TPO's to add legislators.

18 As a legislator, I have great hope that
19 by adding members of the legislature to the Transportation
20 Planning Organizations that there will be a complete
21 connection between the planning process and the funding that
22 is required for those projects, and that there will actually
23 be an opportunity for legislators and members of TPO's
24 around the state to actually now coalesce about items of
25 congestion and so forth that are important to the state and

1 beyond or just our region.

2 The second thing I wanted to mention to
3 you is, as I look at the Hampton Roads area, and I look at
4 our transportation projects, probably the number one thing,
5 I would say absolutely the number one thing we need to work
6 on in Hampton Roads is the prioritization of our projects.
7 For many years, we've had six projects that we thought were
8 the most important projects we wanted to fund in the Hampton
9 Roads region. We haven't been able to decide which one of
10 those is the most important project. I, along other
11 legislators and citizens, have advocated that we need to
12 expand that list to include a seventh project, and that
13 would be to include the Hampton Roads Bridge Tunnel. I
14 believe that we have successfully advocated that point now,
15 and that rarely a discussion occurs regarding projects in
16 Hampton Roads that doesn't include the Hampton Roads Bridge
17 Tunnel.

18 Well, we need to go a step further and
19 that step further is we actually need to prioritize the
20 projects and say, If we could only build one road, what road
21 would give us the biggest bang for our buck? We have two
22 studies that are taking place right now. One of them is the
23 Virginia Modeling and Simulation Center. We have the other
24 one that the Transportation Planning Organization has
25 undertaken. Those two studies are running on parallel

1 tracks. They will mirror each other, and they will
2 complement each other when they come forward, and it's my
3 hope that very soon, as we approach the end of summer and
4 onto the fall, that those projects will be completed and
5 we'll be able to prioritize our projects and really focus
6 our attention as a region on that.

7 We have critically unfunded projects in
8 the region. As we prioritize these projects, that's great
9 to say what's the most important. At some point it's going
10 to say, How are we going to be able to fund those projects?
11 The Hampton Roads Bridge Tunnel, as I said, must be part of
12 that consideration. A conversation does not take place in
13 my community that we don't talk about expanding the Hampton
14 Roads Bridge Tunnel, and how important that is to our
15 region. I hope these studies demonstrate that.

16 And finally, one study I have seen
17 that's beginning to approach its completion, it's very
18 obvious that if we do not improve I-64 on the Peninsula from
19 Newport News towards Richmond, that everything on the
20 Peninsula will go red; that while 64 will become so
21 congested that it is immovable, then the local traffic will
22 get driven into routes, and there's Route 60 and Jefferson
23 Avenue and Mercury Boulevard and Route 17 and all of those
24 roads will also go red in the diagram. We've got to improve
25 our 64. I understand that the environmental studies have

1 been initiated for that, and I'm very, very grateful for
2 that. The McDonald administration did that soon after they
3 were sworn in. It was a great first step and I hope to see
4 that process continue.

5 Thank you for your hard work. I know
6 none of this is easy, and I appreciate the opportunity to
7 speak today.

8 SECRETARY CONNAUGHTON: Thank you very
9 much. I appreciate you being here.

10 Delegate John Cosgrove.

11 DELEGATE ODER: He gave me his time. He
12 really wanted to mention the Hampton Roads Bridge Tunnel.

13 SECRETARY CONNAUGHTON: Delegate Paula
14 Miller.

15 DELEGATE MILLER: I'm all ears today,
16 thanks.

17 SECRETARY CONNAUGHTON: Mayor Frank of
18 Newport News.

19 MAYOR FRANK: Good evening. Thank
20 you-all for being here. Thank you for the hard work that
21 you do for all of us. I have a project in Newport News I
22 want to talk about a bit later, but I really came, this is
23 my last opportunity to speak to the Commonwealth
24 Transportation Board, and I wanted to take a few minutes of
25 your time to talk about the criticality of transportation

1 funding, and the needs here in Hampton Roads.

2 We have listed a number of projects that
3 are critically important through the TPO process with lots
4 of public input and so forth, but if every dollar for those
5 projects were available today, it would be 15 years before
6 the public could drive on any one of them. That's how long
7 it takes to arrange the financing and the right of way
8 acquisition and the design and the engineering and awarding
9 contracts and doing the construction. So whether that can
10 be done and whether there will be a day when that kind of
11 funding and that enormous amount of money is ever available,
12 you-all won't be around to define my want, but there is a
13 serious problem here in Hampton Roads about transportation.

14 We live on two sides of the water, the
15 Southside and the Peninsula, and the waters divide us.
16 Congestion is increasing with every day. Mobility is a
17 critical piece of prosperity. Jobs depend on it.
18 Businesses locating here, staying here, those are issues
19 that are affected by transportation or the lack of an
20 effective, efficient transportation system. We are at risk.
21 The military is already under pressure to move a carrier,
22 perhaps more, to Florida. Businesses that depend on goods
23 and services and people moving back and forth across the
24 water who can't do it in a timely, efficient way are at risk
25 of continuing their operations here in Hampton Roads.

1 Competing ports tell shippers that transportation in Hampton
2 Roads is difficult, if not impossible, and they should ship
3 their goods through other ports along the East Coast.

4 Competition is severe.

5 If you look at a huge employer like the
6 shipyard, and five percent of the population that works
7 there shows up late in the morning because of congestion,
8 that informs and impacts on the work of the other 95 percent
9 of the workers. Productivity, efficiency, effectiveness
10 suffer. For those businesses who can make decisions about
11 whether they stay here or whether they move, transportation
12 may be, in large measure, how they answer that question for
13 themselves.

14 The connectivity of the military here in
15 Hampton Roads is incredible with jointness and all the new
16 joint operations that the military is committed to and
17 required to do involves more and more integration, more and
18 more communication and transportation of people between
19 posts here in the region and between here and the Washington
20 area.

21 If a business has a warehouse on one
22 side of the water and a store on the other, like a furniture
23 operator or something, and they could formerly take one
24 truck with one union driver and move it back and forth four
25 or five times a day, they'd do that. If it takes five

1 trucks with five union drivers because they can't get back
2 and forth, that they have to have more trucks to get the
3 products across the water, they become less effective, less
4 cost efficient, and less profitable, and so they make new
5 decisions.

6 If people live on one side of the water
7 and work on the other, and if they can't get to work on
8 time, they make decisions about where they're going to live,
9 where they're going stay in the region.

10 Hampton Roads provides a huge part of
11 Virginia's total economic engine, and without mobility,
12 without convenience and access, the days ahead are becoming
13 more and more difficult in terms of the mobility. There
14 aren't pots of money, and I know that and you know that. I
15 don't tell you anything you don't know, but there are some
16 inequities, and they are that Northern Virginia is getting
17 more than a lion's share of the small pot that's available,
18 and I suggest to you that issue needs to be revisited; that
19 Hampton Roads is a large generator of Virginia's economic
20 wealth, and it generates taxes and jobs, and we've been
21 creating jobs in the region for decades now that really do
22 need transportation systems that work and that are
23 effective.

24 And so as you look at how you move
25 forward and deal with the Six-Year Plan and what we're

1 really here to talk about tonight, it seems to me that you
2 really do need to revisit the allocation process.
3 Fundamental fairness, I think, should give Hampton Roads a
4 larger piece of the pie than we're currently getting. Now,
5 I know you will tell me, Well, that's this year; it's next
6 year, but in the out years, things look better and they
7 start shifting and Hampton Roads gets a little bit bigger
8 slice of the pie. And that's what the plan is, but the
9 truth is, the only money we got to talk about is what we got
10 now and today, and what happens in two years or three years
11 or four years in the world we now live in, I think, is
12 terribly unpredictable.

13 So I ask you to take a hard look at
14 whatever resources you have and determine what is
15 fundamentally fair for Hampton Roads to move forward, to
16 continue to generate the economic benefits that it brings to
17 not just keeping the region together and having the region
18 succeed and prosper, but what impact it makes on the
19 Commonwealth because to the extent that you value that
20 impact to the Commonwealth, you will understand why
21 improving the transportation system we have here is so
22 critically important. I could go on and on, but I know I
23 don't need to. I know you-all understand the issues.

24 I want to just, before I sit down, talk
25 about the Newport News project that I feel some

1 responsibility to mention to you and that's Middle Ground
2 Boulevard. It's one of the few projects that has funding,
3 and I want to be sure it keeps its funding, and I appreciate
4 Dennis's hard work in working with us to make that happen as
5 well as members of the CTB. That project is critically
6 important to us.

7 We were able or successful in getting
8 Canon to make a \$700 million investment in Newport News for
9 a new factory that employs 1,300 new people. This road
10 gives better access to the factory site, better access to
11 our City Center at Oyster Point. It takes a lot of traffic
12 off J. Clyde Morris Boulevard and Oyster Point Road, which
13 are two main crossways between Jefferson Avenue and Warwick
14 Boulevard, our main north-south thruways, and it is
15 critically needed in terms of traffic management in our
16 city.

17 It's been on our books well over 20
18 years, and we finally got the commitment to have it go
19 forward, and I just ask, beg, plead or you pick your word,
20 that you maintain that. The city really does need it. It
21 is important to our economic well-being. It will support
22 hospitals and the Mariner's Museum, Christopher Newport
23 University, all of which are in that center area of the city
24 which this will benefit from.

25 So before I sit down, one more time, I'd

1 just like to say that Hampton Roads is a dynamic, growing,
2 successful region in this Commonwealth. It has some really
3 wonderful leadership, people that care. People that are
4 concerned. People that are committed. Transportation is
5 the albatross. It's the one thing that can hold us back,
6 and if we can't find ways to solve our transportation
7 problems, I fear for the future and future success and
8 ability of the region to continue to grow and prosper and be
9 an important economic part of the Commonwealth. So I know
10 you have enormous challenges every day in every way, and
11 I'll just add this one to your list. Thank you very much.

12 SECRETARY CONNAUGHTON: Mr. Mayor, thank
13 you. Mayor Frank, is today your last full day? Is today --

14 MAYOR FRANK: June 30 I'm closing out.
15 You want to know how long, ask my wife.

16 SECRETARY CONNAUGHTON: Mr. Mayor, thank
17 you very much for being here. Thank you very much for all
18 you've done for the Commonwealth, and I just want to say,
19 it's been great working with you, both in my prior life and
20 this life. I appreciate it.

21 Next is Ken Chandler, who is City
22 Manager for Portsmouth representing Portsmouth.

23 MR. CHANDLER: Good afternoon. Thank
24 you, Mr. Secretary, of course, members of the Commonwealth
25 Transportation Board. We sincerely appreciate your time

1 being in Hampton Roads, and I'll only take up a minute of
2 your time. First of all, we sincerely appreciate everything
3 you do for us. It is our Commonwealth, the only
4 Commonwealth we have, and thank God for the Commonwealth.

5 However, as we talk about Portsmouth and
6 we recognize our population, we realize that we are a
7 central core part of Hampton Roads, and we really aspire to
8 talk about things like tolls that will come up in those
9 conversations that we hope for additional transparency on
10 those. In addition to that, urban allocation funding, as we
11 still work through trying to handle some of the
12 transportation issues that go through our area, and even as
13 we talk about high speed rail, recognizing the advent of the
14 new TCC campus that's open in Portsmouth for Tidewater
15 Community College, with a new population of 11,000 that adds
16 to our population of 100,000, which also puts the burden of
17 transportation on us, to really figure out a solution that
18 is comprehensive and also inclusive. Thank you.

19 SECRETARY CONNAUGHTON: Thank you very
20 much.

21 Randy Wheeler, who's representing the
22 City of Poquoson.

23 MR. WHEELER: Thank you, sir. Thank you
24 for being here. Thank you to those I know well,
25 Mr. Dickens, Mr. Lane, I appreciate your help. I'm here to

1 speak only on one project. It is the Wythe Creek Road
2 Expansion project in the City of Poquoson. It actually has
3 two parts. The second part is the City of Hampton. We look
4 forward in the coming months with working with VDOT, working
5 with the TPO and our friends in Hampton to find a way to get
6 this project moving, possibly through re-scoping the project
7 termini. There is sufficient money contained in the plan to
8 move forward, we believe, with the lion's share, if not all
9 of the first part of that project. We say thank you for
10 that, and we hope it will continue to stay here.

11 I would just add one closing note, as
12 Mayor Krasnoff said, the world will not come to end if any
13 of these projects are not funded, but to put this one in
14 perspective for the City of Poquoson, in severe weather in
15 our little city on the coast, we have one way in and one way
16 out of the city because this second roadway, this causeway
17 and bridge going to the City of Hampton goes underwater and
18 is unusable. So anything that you can do will have the
19 added benefit of providing us and our city a relief valve
20 if, for whatever reason, Victory Boulevard is closed down or
21 incapacitated during an evacuation or severe weather, what
22 have you. We thank you for all you've done and look forward
23 to continue working with you.

24 SECRETARY CONNAUGHTON: Thank you very
25 much.

1 Sherry Earley representing City of
2 Suffolk.

3 MS. EARLEY: Thank you and good evening.
4 Thank you, Mr. Secretary, members of the board. First of
5 all, I'd like to pass along our mayor's regrets that she
6 couldn't join you here tonight. As Mr. Dickens probably
7 knows, tonight's council meeting in the City of Suffolk, so
8 she is at the city council meeting tonight and unable to
9 attend.

10 However, on behalf of the City of
11 Suffolk, I would like to express our thanks to the board and
12 to the Virginia Department of Transportation for their
13 assistance to our staff throughout the years and this year,
14 as we've made some very challenging decisions regarding our
15 urban program. We have had an opportunity to review the
16 proposed Six-Year Plan, and sincerely request your further
17 consideration of funding for the following projects. I do
18 have a short list.

19 The Nansemond Parkway project in the
20 City of Suffolk has been recognized for a number of years as
21 our number one priority project. Due to funding
22 constraints, that project has been phased into two phases.
23 Phase 1, which is the intersection improvements of Nansemond
24 and Shoulders Hill Road, the engineering and right of way
25 has been completed on that project. We are currently

1 working to get private utilities relocated and are heading,
2 hopefully, into construction in the fall with that project;
3 however, there is a \$2 million funding gap that is currently
4 shown in the Six-Year Plan on that project because of
5 escalating construction costs over the, gosh, probably been
6 on the books for 12 years now, and continues to escalate
7 each year. So we would certainly ask your consideration in
8 assisting us in trying to recognize some options for that
9 funding gap.

10 Along with that is our Phase 2 project
11 which is tied to the Chesapeake larger -- or Portsmouth
12 project. This would get us from the intersection to the
13 city line at City of Chesapeake. That project has been on
14 the books for a while. In the last Six-Year Plan, prior to
15 the revisions of last year, was fully funded, but funding
16 was removed from the project last year. We would ask that
17 that funding, in some way, be replaced so that project can
18 move forward on schedule with the City of Chesapeake's
19 projects as well.

20 The rest of our list that I've been
21 asked to put before you tonight would include replacing the
22 funding of the railroad crossing projects that were in the
23 Six-Year Plan previously. This is, at one time, known as
24 the Finney Avenue flyover. This was funds that were placed
25 in the Six-Year Plan to assist the City of Suffolk in making

1 railroad improvements to address the increased train traffic
2 that we'll be seeing in our city and already are seeing in
3 the City of Suffolk.

4 We would also ask for any assistance
5 with funding for the Route 58 widening project. You're
6 probably familiar with the fact that we did apply for TIGER
7 grant funding for that project this year and we will be
8 reapplying again for a second round, but again, any funding
9 assistance for Route 58, that would be the widening from the
10 Suffolk bypass for a three-mile corridor leading up to a
11 couple distribution development projects in Suffolk, which,
12 we feel, is a very vital link to the Port of Hampton Roads.
13 Route 58 is also a major evacuation route for the Hampton
14 Roads region.

15 And finally, last but not least, I have
16 to mention the Kings Highway Bridge Replacement/Realignment
17 project. Again, any consideration that you could give these
18 requests is very much appreciated, and I appreciate your
19 time. Thank you.

20 SECRETARY CONNAUGHTON: Thank you very
21 much.

22 Carita Richardson, Town of Windsor.

23 MS. RICHARDSON: Hi. I bring you
24 greetings from the Town of Windsor. I am the mayor-elect,
25 so this is my first time speaking to you, but you are all

1 familiar with Mayor Crocker who comes every year to speak to
2 you. I know yours is a very difficult job with the lack of
3 funding now, and we do appreciate you taking this time to
4 listen to our concerns and needs, which are many throughout
5 the area. I'll be very brief.

6 The Town of Windsor definitely supports
7 the construction of the Route 460 bypass. We feel that it
8 is of utmost importance to the entire Hampton Roads area as
9 well as for our town. Our town is experiencing an ever
10 increasing amount of truck traffic that comes from the ports
11 as well automobile traffic. Most of our town has no center
12 left lane turns, and it's becoming very, very dangerous
13 there.

14 And the other thing for the region is
15 that if we are hit by a major hurricane, we're going to have
16 problems with Route 460 as an evacuation route because right
17 outside of Windsor in Zuni, we have major flooding when we
18 have heavy rains, and it could be monumental loss of life.
19 So that is the thing that I hope that you will consider when
20 you're looking at the funds that you have available, and we
21 do appreciate everything that you do. Thank you very much.

22 SECRETARY CONNAUGHTON: Thank you very
23 much and congratulations.

24 MS. RICHARDSON: Thank you.

25 SECRETARY CONNAUGHTON: So Captain

1 Johnson, Commanding Officer of the Navy, did you want to say
2 anything?

3 CAPTAIN JOHNSON: No, sir, I have no
4 public comments.

5 SECRETARY CONNAUGHTON: I appreciate you
6 being here. Is there anyone else representing any of the
7 local jurisdictions? Okay. We'll hit the citizens. Oh,
8 I'm sorry, Dwight Farmer is representing the Hampton
9 Roads District.

10 MR. FARMER: I'm not sure I had a lot of
11 anything to do with it. I have presents for you. I'm not
12 going to read all of this.

13 SECRETARY CONNAUGHTON: It's not a
14 subpoena, is it?

15 MR. FARMER: No, Secretary Connaughton.
16 No, they are letters from staff to both VDOT and to the CTB.
17 To keep this as short as possible, but keep it up. I know
18 you're probably not used to hearing complimentary things
19 from the HRTPO staff, but Sean, we are -- we do, in both of
20 those letters, have some great big thank you's for some
21 fully funded projects. I'll start with VDOT for fully
22 funding the Gilmerton Bridge, the Intermodal Connector,
23 Hampton Boulevard, Middle Ground as Mayor Frank just
24 mentioned, the Denbigh Boulevard Bridge Replacement,
25 Military Highway widening, the Commander Shepard and

1 I-64/Norview. So we were pleasantly pleased to see fully
2 funding for those projects.

3 Additionally, we're grateful to see you
4 helping out Mayor Krasnoff with \$11-and-a-half million
5 toward right of way purchase for Dominion Boulevard, and
6 hopefully, the phone calls will continue to keep coming to
7 you and I and get more money.

8 SECRETARY CONNAUGHTON: At my home
9 phone, no less.

10 MR. FARMER: I really didn't want to
11 ask. And also, \$8 million in two fiscal years for the 64
12 and 264 interchange, and 166 million for the Midtown Tunnel,
13 which was a project we've been needing a long, long time.
14 So again, we thank you for that.

15 While -- in the letter, it will say,
16 While we see in 2011 the district received one percent more
17 funding, which we were surprised to see compared to FY10, I
18 think we still have to say that \$97-and-a-half million a
19 year given the total list that we've got is still on the
20 inadequate side. We understand it's a revenue problem of
21 huge proportions, but we also, I want to bring up that
22 principal that, at least for the last couple few years of
23 funding, only funding projects currently underway, we're
24 still concerned that that does not allow some of our
25 critically needed projects to get kicked off, but we

1 certainly understand how you come to that principle. We'd
2 still like you to reconsider that, if you will, to save some
3 time in the out years. Hopefully, funding will come to bear
4 here.

5 And finally, on the VDOT side, I still
6 want to bring up critically needed regional projects that
7 still need significant funding. Delegate Oder's Hampton
8 Roads Bridge Tunnel or as I would call it, the Hampton Roads
9 Crossing; I-64 widening, certainly, I'd like to echo
10 Delegate Oder's comments on widening on the Peninsula, and I
11 also would like to continue to reiterate I-64 widening on
12 the Southside at what is often known as the High-Rise Bridge
13 all the way back to Bowers Hill. The 64/264 interchange
14 carries hundreds of thousands of people a day. It
15 certainly, as you know, needs some funding. Route 58
16 widening in Suffolk needs some help. Again, we want to
17 continue to stress Dominion Boulevard, Route 460,
18 Southeastern Parkway, if we can get that environmental
19 document completed, and the Lesner Bridge.

20 I'd like to also turn your attention to
21 the projects on the DRPT side of the plate, and we have some
22 great thank you's there from the great work that Ms. Drake
23 is doing and Kevin Page is doing, and that's the
24 Richmond-Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Service, NIT
25 marshalling yard, and the Craney Island connector, which

1 we're funding with rail enhancement funds, and, of course,
2 the Virginia Beach Transit Extension study. We really do
3 thank you for funding those great projects.

4 However, the TPO staff urges the
5 Commonwealth of Virginia to secure the necessary funds
6 required to operate. I talked with Kevin just before this
7 meeting to operate this new passenger rail service between
8 Hampton Roads and Petersburg and Richmond. We think it's
9 just exciting news for us, and as you know, and I think as
10 Thelma, you've indicated, we have overwhelming support here
11 and as shown at the downtown Norfolk public hearing back in
12 the fall.

13 We appreciate your providing us the
14 opportunity to give you the comments that we're giving
15 today, and also, for scheduling -- I think we're rescheduled
16 for an October 20th CTB meeting, and we look forward to
17 that, but Mr. Secretary, what I would like to suggest is
18 that you really give some strong consideration to possibly
19 affording TPO's, general assembly members who are on the
20 TPO's and elected officials an opportunity to have a
21 workshop setting where we could, and maybe around that
22 October time frame, where maybe there's some time set aside,
23 an hour or two, to sit down and listen to the challenges,
24 talk about priorities.

25 We are, as Mayor Frank indicated and

1 Delegate Oder has indicated, we are about to release,
2 probably in July, June and July, release our prioritization
3 process. So by the fall, we will have run some numbers that
4 we could put in front of our local elected officials, and
5 we'll be well on our way for prioritization. So a workshop
6 setting would be a wonderful event to possibly work that
7 out, and I think the fall would be a perfect time. So with
8 that, again, thank you very much for giving us this
9 opportunity.

10 SECRETARY CONNAUGHTON: Thank you,
11 Mr. Farmer.

12 Next is Mr. Ellis James.

13 MR. JAMES: Thank you, Mr. Secretary.
14 My name is Ellis W. James. I'm a lifelong resident of
15 Hampton Roads and specifically of Norfolk. I'd like to
16 fully endorse the comments that were made by Mayor Frank as
17 well as the comments you have just heard. There are many
18 things to be thankful for in terms of some of the projects
19 that have been put forth. However, I'm going to bite the
20 bullet, and I want to talk to you about what we need to do.
21 If you keep in mind what those two speakers said; that is,
22 it should be imminently clear that the way we survive in the
23 eastern part of the Commonwealth is if we get a job done on
24 transportation with a capital T. If we don't do
25 transportation, we're going to fall by the wayside in many

1 respects.

2 Now, most of you who know me, I am not a
3 negative doomsdayer [sic]. I wouldn't keep coming to
4 meetings all the time if I believed that, but somebody has
5 got to say that in this state with the tax rate 17 cents
6 below the federal average, somebody has got to begin to pay
7 attention to the least regressive tax in the Commonwealth
8 and how we get the funding done. I have spent years
9 listening to these excellent officials talk about our
10 problems and our needs. Nobody wants to effectively go
11 after the core issue. Needs and money. It's simple.
12 Either we have the courage to step up to the plate and
13 provide the funding or we're going to fall on our face and
14 that's ludicrous.

15 This Commonwealth is one of the best
16 states in the United States if not the best. We have the
17 capacity, the intelligence. We have excellent people. Look
18 at Dana Dickens and all the work that he has done.

19 MR. DICKENS: Mr. Ellis, I'll pay you
20 later.

21 MR. JAMES: It's okay. I chose one
22 person as an example because he's right there where I can
23 see him.

24 SECRETARY CONNAUGHTON: What about the
25 rest of us?

1 MR. JAMES: The rest of you are doing a
2 good job, but my point simply is, now's the time to take
3 that additional step. If we don't have the courage to speak
4 truth to power and do what we have to do to provide the
5 funding for these many projects -- and many of these
6 projects are worthy projects. I wouldn't knock down a
7 single one of the needs that have been presented to you this
8 evening, but the fact of the matter is, they'll go up in
9 smoke, and there's a very real possibility that this region
10 -- we always talk about region and regionalism, but if we
11 don't get serious about providing the funding, then what's
12 this for? I mean, I enjoy seeing you nice people from time
13 to time, but I'd like to be able to come and thank you and
14 thank you again for the completion and successful conclusion
15 to many of the needed projects.

16 It is the third rail of politics in
17 Hampton Roads and in the Commonwealth, and I understand
18 that, but the fact of the matter is that many people that I
19 talk to -- and I do get around. I'm retired now. I get to
20 go and do what I want to do, and I promise you, there are
21 people that I never thought would say, Hm, I don't know,
22 Ellis, taxation? And believe me, I'm not unmindful of the
23 needs of our seniors, the poor communities where there is
24 very limited funding, and working families who are barely
25 hanging on by their fingernails. I'm well aware of that,

1 but with all due respect, rather than to put a big blinking
2 neon sign at the North Carolina border sort of saying to me,
3 personally, Gee, we don't really want you to come here
4 unless, I can't see that we succeed in making this
5 Commonwealth successful the way we believe and dream of it
6 being by doing that, when we could go to what I referred to
7 earlier as the least regressive tax and to provide the
8 funding.

9 I hope that each of you will keep that
10 in mind as you think about these projects. I think it's a
11 very important part of this plan because without it, these
12 plans won't come to fruition. Thank you, Mr. Secretary.

13 SECRETARY CONNAUGHTON: Thank you,
14 Mr. James. Thank you for being here.

15 Gary Kelly.

16 MR. KELLY: This is my first time
17 reading this. This is my first time being able to attend a
18 situation like this, and I mainly came all the way from
19 James City County, York County, and Newport News to get a
20 learning experience. The only problem is, I also have a
21 class tonight, and I am going to be late, so I will be
22 leaving as soon as I finish. I have to go back to Oyster
23 Point, and as stated by Mayor Frank and several others how
24 our roads are congested, so narrow.

25 I remember reading in 1978, when I was

1 attending Hampton Institute at the time, now known as
2 Hampton University, that Interstate 64 was going to be
3 widened to three lanes all the way to interstate 95. About
4 1980 they started. 22 years later, they completed to where
5 they've stopped. So it is my interpretation, and I hope I'm
6 wrong in this, that to go that 20-odd years, averaging a
7 mile a year, to go 60-odd miles, I'll be long dead by that
8 time. I don't know if anybody in this room is going to be
9 around to see it finished. So I don't mind seeing it done.

10 I kind of miss the trees that used to be
11 in the medians because seeing that greenery was not bad.
12 When they slaughtered all the shrubbery on 64 in the median
13 between Exit 247 and the bridge that goes towards Gate 13 of
14 the Naval Weapons Station, I thought that was part of
15 widening. Turned out it wasn't, but anyway, I just thought
16 it was, and it's a shame they stopped.

17 But browsing through this, I got a
18 different education also because of what the potential plans
19 that's supposed to be working. I just hope, when they say
20 "working draft", that it's gone beyond work and that certain
21 things are being implemented because it would be nice if 64
22 was eight lanes, even though this says eight lanes all the
23 way up to Exit 243. That's a start. No problem. It's a
24 start. The only problem I have is at choke points when the
25 traffic drops to ten miles per hour in a 65 mile zone,

1 especially when you're in a hurry, and a lot of times, I'm
2 not necessarily in a hurry, but I don't have enough money to
3 spend on gasoline to sit and idle. I'm not being paid.
4 That's coming out of my pocket.

5 Now, as for tolls, I don't like tolls,
6 but I will accept tolls if it was convenience, and I'll say
7 convenience would be if we had to get on the interstate at
8 all entrances only, pay to get on, a dollar, maybe two
9 dollars, every vehicle, regardless; don't have to pay
10 anything to get off the interstate. It would make you want
11 to decide if you really want to get on, and you can make
12 that dollar stretch. For me, I'm getting on -- well, I'm
13 going to call VDOT first, 1-800-367 -- to find out if the
14 High-Rise Bridge is blocked. If not, then I'm going to have
15 to take another way to get Monitor-Merrimac because I know,
16 this time of day, it's futile to go to the Hampton Roads
17 Bridge Tunnel, but the Monitor-Merrimac was blocked -- no,
18 excuse me, 664 was congested because everyone wanted to look
19 at this accident at Dock Landing Road by the time I got
20 there. I hope it's cleared out now, but as I passed it,
21 looking at the return route, Lord, you know, I don't think
22 it would be to my advantage take 17 all the way around to
23 the JRB because I know it gets congested in the Suffolk
24 parts.

25 When I used to work in Chesapeake, the

1 shortest route to get to Newport News took me through 64 and
2 664. Sometimes 664 would be backed up to Exit 9. Luckily,
3 I'd be able to get off and take 17, which almost everybody
4 else had the some idea, and that was backed up.

5 But anyway, my desire would be to see
6 the roads that need to be done, done. Those of us that live
7 and drive in the area know which roads, and it's a shame
8 that the lottery couldn't have separate games designated to
9 pay for certain roads, but I know that would have long
10 happened. Maybe some alternative, but basically, that's all
11 I've got to say. If you have any questions, go ahead and
12 ask, if not, well, my address and e-mail is all on the card,
13 and I just wish you had pictures of certain areas, but if
14 there was a way to address it, I'll try to look it up and
15 see certain things. That's all.

16 SECRETARY CONNAUGHTON: Mr. Kelly, thank
17 you very much. Good luck in school.

18 Cecil Goodwin.

19 MR. GOODWIN: Good evening. Thank you
20 for the opportunity to come before you. I came expecting a
21 different type of environment in the fact that it was
22 public, thinking there was going to be some workshops where
23 we kind of brainstorm different projects to be looking at.
24 So that was a misconception on my part.

25 I do get concerned in what I really

1 would like to ask the board is to find out -- I'm concerned.
2 I'm a native of the area, and kind of concerned, looking at
3 all the projects we hear funding going here, projects going
4 here, and projects going there, and I got to looking at a
5 project that was done last year where there was \$3 million
6 for road improvements between the Downtown Tunnel and Bowers
7 Hill, and I got to looking at the project, and I travel that
8 area, and I'm saying, you know, money's tight, but are we
9 doing the prudent thing with the money that you're spending?
10 Because what I saw, the only thing I seen happen for
11 improvements on that \$3 million project was the fact that
12 they went through and took down guardrails that was existing
13 and put up new ones.

14 To me, we were not using our money
15 prudently in the fact that we were turning around, and when
16 I talked to the VDOT guys, said, Well, that was money from a
17 different funding source. Just because we're in the Navy,
18 you don't spend it or you don't get it next year. I think
19 we are at the time we need to spend our money wisely and
20 look at what gives the most bang for the buck.

21 But again, like I said, the workshop
22 that I came to tonight was thinking it was going to be
23 public input, looking at different various projects,
24 identifying ones there. What I would come to you and ask,
25 I'd like to get involved, learn more how your organization

1 works, how the funding is done.

2 Looking at funding, being a facility
3 engineer, I'm looking at funding and the fact that you come
4 together with a long range plan, and if you're saying we
5 fund this project this year, well, if that project gets
6 funded, then where does it go next year? Is there a long
7 range plan when you're looking six years there so that as
8 you're coming through and you're funding your projects, you
9 have to take it in step. You say, Phase 1 is we take and
10 get this mile-and-a-half done knowing that next year we're
11 going to complete that stage versus funding it there and
12 then it just stops. So looking at when you're funding
13 things, is there a rational plan in place to say, All right.
14 We're going to fund this project here, because like I said,
15 if you fund the project one year, and the second or third
16 phase of that project does not carry through to get that
17 going from A to B, but you stop somewhere in-between because
18 only half of the project got funded, that then concerns me
19 because we're not getting the most bang for the buck.

20 So again, like I said, I was expecting a
21 different forum. What I would like to do, and I'll stick
22 around, I'd like to get involved and learn a little more
23 about how you-all are operating as far as funding projects,
24 what you look at, and I heard him talking about
25 prioritization of a -- and the fact that I used to work for

1 TRADOT (phonetic) Engineer Command, and what we did was
2 actually score projects before the people come in, and it
3 takes some of the, what you might say, Well, what can I do?
4 Can I do this one or that one? And you score them. You
5 actually end up ranking them, and people vote on it so that
6 you get a ranking order that comes back, not just something
7 haphazardly, well, six people agree at this time.

8 So that's where I'd like to come from,
9 and I'd ask to be able to get together with somebody and
10 learn a little more about your organization and see if I
11 could be a contributing member and try to make sure we do
12 the wise thing with the money that we get because money is
13 tight. Thank you.

14 SECRETARY CONNAUGHTON: I'll just point
15 out this gentleman right here. He's our VDOT -- well, he's
16 kind of putting his head down. He's our VDOT planner, and
17 also, Mr. Farmer back here and his organization does the
18 regional planning. So these two gentlemen right here can
19 actually answer all your questions as to state and federal
20 and region.

21 MR. GOODWIN: I thank you for your time.

22 SECRETARY CONNAUGHTON: So that's all we
23 have signed up. Does anyone else want to make a statement
24 that hadn't signed up? Come on up.

25 MR. RICKARDS: Mr. Secretary, I'm Mark

1 Rickards, resident of James City County, Executive Director
2 of the Williamsburg Area Transit Authority and member of the
3 TPO. I apologize for being late, but I lost 30 minutes on
4 664. It was an incident, not congestion, but I do apologize
5 for that. I would have spoken a little bit earlier.

6 I just want to thank you for your
7 support of public transportation, especially in support of
8 the Williamsburg area. It's very important. We have 3
9 million riders in our little system, our Williamsburg
10 Transit Authority, James City County, York County, Colonial
11 Williamsburg and the City of Williamsburg. That is a lot,
12 if you think about it. The City of Williamsburg itself,
13 population is about 13,000. 3 million riders for a city
14 that size. Of course, we have the College of William and
15 Mary. We have a couple major tourist attractions, Busch
16 Gardens, which had a fabulous weekend, and Colonial
17 Williamsburg, which is world-renowned. We have a lot of
18 international workers, a lot of international visitors, and
19 they are used to taking public transportation, and they find
20 that they have a good system here. So we appreciate your
21 support.

22 In the Six-Year Plan, I recommend that
23 you approve the draft. We have some projects in there. We
24 didn't get everything we wanted, but with DRPT's work and
25 support, we have seed money for our facility, and we're

1 looking forward to working with them in the future. I
2 appreciate your support, and to let you know how important
3 public transportation is to all of Hampton Roads, we're
4 going to be there for the long ride. Thank you.

5 SECRETARY CONNAUGHTON: Okay. Thank you
6 very much.

7 Anyone else? Okay. Well, listen, at
8 this point, we're going to close out the public hearing.
9 Does anybody up here, any CTB members have anything to say?

10 MR. LANE: First of all, I thank
11 everybody for their comments. I'm a native of Hampton
12 Roads, so I share a lot of the frustration, but also the
13 concerns. I'd like to recognize Secretary Connaughton and
14 Director Thelma Drake. They have brought a new inclusive
15 and innovative approach to our transportation issues. I
16 know, Mayor Frank, you spoke about some things going on in
17 Hampton Roads, and a lot of the plans we're talking about
18 today, they were already in process when the new
19 administration came in, but they have demonstrated that they
20 are willing to get involved in our Hampton Roads issues.

21 We've mentioned some of the things
22 tonight. Mayor Krasnoff mentioned about putting funding
23 back on Dominion Boulevard for right of way acquisition, and
24 we talked about Middle Ground Boulevard, which is fully
25 funded, and even with some of the pickups, we've been able

1 to do that. That was their involvement, and of course, it
2 goes without saying, you have a shot of getting rail service
3 between here and Richmond. That was not on the books
4 before, so they found that. So I just wanted to recognize
5 that while I understand some of the concerns the area has in
6 regards to other areas, we do have a voice now or someone
7 that's listening and understands our area. I want to let
8 the people of Hampton Roads know that.

9 But we also understand, notwithstanding
10 all their leadership and efforts, we have a significant
11 revenue shortfall. I think Dwight gave a presentation the
12 other day that 145 projects, really, are in the works in
13 Hampton Roads and \$19.2 billion, and the projections we show
14 going out, last thing that came -- Rita, I know you shared
15 with us over the next 30 years about \$2 billion over the
16 next 30 years. So there is a significant difference.

17 So there is a recognition, I understand,
18 but this board is charged with allocation of resources, and
19 so with that, I also would like to applaud the Hampton Roads
20 Planning Transportation Organization for tackling the
21 priority process, because that is going to be key, not only
22 in getting funding in the future with our limited resources,
23 but also making sure, Dwight, as you pointed out, put money
24 on projects we actually can get built.

25 So I, just with that, would like to let

1 you know we hear you, and I think we have a team now that
2 understands what's happening here in Hampton Roads. So
3 thank you, Mr. Secretary.

4 SECRETARY CONNAUGHTON: Thank you,
5 Mr. Lane.

6 Anyone else?

7 MR. DICKENS: If I may, just a couple of
8 quick comments. I'd like to echo what my colleague,
9 Mr. Lane, has said. We do have a working relationship with
10 the Secretary and the Director. They have very clearly
11 shown an interest in the TPO, which represents Hampton
12 Roads, together with the Commonwealth Transportation Board,
13 and it certainly bodes well for us.

14 And I'd also like to take a second to
15 thank Mayor Frank for his service, long service. He's been
16 a great advocate for regional cooperation for regional
17 transportation issues. He's been a real warrior for the
18 region. I personally thank you for all that you've done,
19 sir, and wish you all the -- the -- all the rewards of your
20 labors.

21 I'd also like to thank Dwight Farmer and
22 all the staff of the PDC. You-all do a great job for the
23 region. You are a lot of help to me, as a board member, and
24 I appreciate that. And I'd like to thank everybody who has
25 been here. Certainly, Ellis, for your kind comments. I

1 will pay you later, but it's been a great opportunity to
2 listen to what you-all have to say.

3 And one final comment, we are not the
4 funders of transportation. We allocate what funds are
5 provided for us, so some of your comments would be well used
6 with some of our funding folks. So thank you very much, and
7 we appreciate you being here.

8 SECRETARY CONNAUGHTON: Thank you.
9 Before we close out, I just want to recognize one other
10 person, Dave Tyeryar, who's Deputy Secretary, is here as
11 well, and with that, we will have one more hearing, public
12 hearing, tomorrow. That actually is out in southwest
13 Virginia near Dublin, and then the board will be meeting on
14 June 16th to adopt the Six-Year Plan. We appreciate
15 everyone being here and appreciate everyone's comments, and
16 this public hearing is adjourned.

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18 (Whereupon, the public hearing concluded
19 at 7:00 p.m.)
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C E R T I F I C A T E

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2
3
4 COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

5 CITY OF CHESAPEAKE, to wit:
6
7

8 I, Sheila L. Lowe, do hereby certify
9 that the foregoing pages are a true and correct transcript
10 of my Stenotype notes of the public hearing held at the time
11 and place in the caption mentioned.

12 This 17th day of June, 2010.
13
14

15 _____
16 Sheila L. Lowe
17 Notary Public
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25 My term in office expires January 31, 2014.

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