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Dulles Corridor Rail Association Supports Transportation Sales Tax Referendum

(RESTON, VA) The Dulles Corridor Rail Association (DCRA) Board of Directors Tuesday unanimously approved a resolution in support of the Northern Virginia Transportation Referendum. The half-cent sales tax increase will fund transportation projects in Northern Virginia. Over 40 percent of all bond funds generated would be used to finance transit projects including Metrorail extensions and infrastructure replacement, new transit lines and expansions of Virginia Railway Express. The Dulles Rapid Transit Project would receive \$350 million in bond funding.

“As we move forward and seek federal reauthorization having voter approval of local funding for the project will help our Northern Virginia congressional delegation in their efforts to get matching federal funds,” Delegate Ken Plum, DCRA Chairman, said. Federal funds are expected to cover half of the more than three billion dollars the project will cost.

The DCRA resolution cites the increase in congestion in the region with delay per peak period road traveler having risen to 84 hours per year at a cost of \$1,595 annually. It notes that Northern Virginia is projected to add 550,000 jobs and 785,000 residents by 2025.

“To meet this growing demand Northern Virginia needs an enhanced, multi-modal transportation system,” Plum said. “The list of referendum projects includes many transit and high occupancy vehicle projects. All the funding will be spent in Northern Virginia with decisions made by a board of Northern Virginia elected officials.

The voters will go to the polls on November 5. Leo Schefer, DCRA Board Member and Washington Airports Task Force President, said “While polls show support for the referendum, the key will be to get supporters to the polls to vote. We urge Northern Virginia businesses to encourage their employees to vote.”

Plum noted the critical timing: “We need to have the financing nailed down this year so that the project can be included in the reauthorization of the federal surface transportation legislation in 2003.”

Dulles Corridor Rail Association and
Resolution in Support of the Northern Virginia Sales Tax Referendum

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Whereas the Washington region is has the third highest amount of delay per peak road traveler at 84 hours at a cost of \$1,595 annually;

Whereas the projected growth of Northern Virginia will add 550,000 jobs and 785,000 people by 2025 and will result in growing congestion;

Whereas the proposed projects to be funded by the Northern Virginia sales tax increase will fund needed transit and roadway improvements, with an emphasis on providing new and expanded transit facilities;

Whereas the Northern Virginia sales tax increase will provide \$350 million for the Dulles Rapid Transit Project, the highest earmarked amount;

Whereas approval of the referendum will indicate to Congress the willingness of the localities to provide matching funding for Dulles rail;

Whereas Northern Virginia's share of Commonwealth transportation funding will not be reduced by passage of this referendum;

Whereas all of the funds raised will be used for transportation improvements in Northern Virginia; and,

Whereas decisions on how to allocate the \$5 billion that could be raised by the referendum will be made by the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority, the majority of whose members are local officials responsible to the voters;

Now therefore be it resolved that the Dulles Corridor Rail Association (DCRA) Board of Directors endorses the Northern Virginia half-cent sales tax referendum and directs its President to make its position known to its members.