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For Immediate Release
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DCRA Celebrates Opening of Slip Ramps Enhancing Rapid Transit in the Dulles Corridor

Midday today, October 27, Governor Mark Warner joined U. S. Representative Jim Moran, Virginia Delegate Ken Plum, Chairman of the Fairfax County Board Katherine Hanley and Supervisors Catherine Hudgins, Gerry Connolly, and Stu Mendelsohn, and Director of Rail and Public Transportation Karen Rae at the Reston East @ Wiehle Avenue Commuter parking lot to celebrate the opening of two new slip ramps on the Dulles Access and Dulles Toll Roads.

Chairman Hanley told a group of the community leaders and media representatives that the Board was pleased to be able to announce another short-term improvement that will enhance the existing bus rapid transit system in the corridor.

Ho Chang, Director of Transportation, explained that by using the slip ramps, FAIRFAX CONNECTOR buses will by-pass rush-hour traffic on the Dulles Toll Road and transport passengers to and from the West Falls Church Metrorail Station along the Dulles Airport Access Road in minutes. The new gate-arm technology allows buses to pass through the ramps at 55 mph, saving travel time for riders. Besides faster travel times, the express buses will have greater schedule reliability by avoiding the delays caused by congestion on the Dulles Toll Road and at the Main Toll Plaza. Buses will be able to use the ramps 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Hunter Mill Supervisor Hudgins said that the County Board had just approved more frequent, 15-minute headway for the mid-day buses serving the corridor (Route 505), which will go into effect December 1 and was completing substantial improvements at the West Falls Church transit station.

Governor Warner praised the dual approach that was being taken with continuing short term improvements to the bus system to make the commute shorter, while making incremental progress toward rail. He noted that 13 years ago when he was a member of the Commonwealth Transportation Board, rail to Dulles was under discussion. Finally, we are at the point where it is going to become a reality because of steps being taken at the federal, state, and local level.

Dulles Corridor Rail Association (DCRA) Chairman Kenneth R. Plum commented afterwards, "Fairfax has made significant progress in building transit ridership. The improvements announced today truly enhance the bus rapid transit system in the corridor and represent important steps forward on the way to bringing rail to the corridor."

The slip ramps are located east of Hunter Mill Road, one in the eastbound lanes and the other in the westbound lanes. Funding for the \$8.4 million slip ramp project was provided with \$4.5 million of federal funds with a 20 percent county match and \$3.9 million of VDOT - Dulles Toll Road project funds.