

4.H.

**Jurisdiction and Agency Coordinating Committee
Northern Virginia Transportation Authority**

MEMORANDUM

TO: Martin E. Nohe, Chairman
Northern Virginia Transportation Authority

Members
Northern Virginia Transportation Authority

FROM: Tom Biesiadny, Chairman
Jurisdiction and Agency Coordinating Committee
Northern Virginia Transportation Authority

SUBJECT: Approval of Comments on Recommendation Before the Government Reform Commission (Item 4.H.)

DATE: July 2, 2010

Recommendation:

The Jurisdiction and Agency Coordinating Committee recommends that the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority approved the attached list of comments on recommendations being considered by the Government Reform Commission.

Background:

On January 16, 2010, Governor Robert McDonnell established the Government Reform and Restructuring Commission to conduct a thorough review of Virginia state government:

- Identify opportunities for creating efficiencies in state government, including streamlining, consolidating, or eliminating redundant and unnecessary agency services, governing bodies, regulations and programs;
- Explore innovative ways to deliver state services at the lowest cost and best value to Virginia taxpayers;
- Seek out means to more effectively and efficiently perform core state functions, including potential privatization of government operations where appropriate, and restore focus on core mission oriented service; and
- Examine ways for state government to be more transparent, user friendly and accountable to the citizens of the Commonwealth.

Mr. Martin E. Nohe, Chairman
Members, Northern Virginia Transportation Authority
July 1, 2010
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The Commission has established four committees:

- Customer Service / Transparency / Performance / Accountability Committee
- Consolidation of Shared Services Committee
- Intergovernmental Relations Committee
- Simplification and Operations Committee

It appears that transportation recommendations will be handled by either the Consolidations of Shared Services Committee or the Intergovernmental Relations Committee. Several of the committees will be meeting in the next several weeks. The Simplification and Operations Committee will meet in Stafford County on July 12, 2010. The Intergovernmental Relations Committee will meet in Richmond on July 14, 2010. The full commission will meet on July 20, 2010.

A list of 129 transportation recommendations has been prepared. The Jurisdiction and Agency Coordinating Committee is still reviewing this recommendation; however, there are two in particular the JACC thought the NVTA would like to consider (see Attachment I). Additional recommendations may be developed prior to the NVTA meeting. If there are additional recommendations, they will be blue sheeted for the NVTA meeting.

JACC Members and I will be available at the Authority meeting on July 8, 2010, to answer questions.

Cc: Members, NVTA Jurisdiction and Agency Coordinating Committee

Comments of Recommendations Being Considered by the Government Reform Commission
DRAFT: July 1, 2010

Comment #127: Currently there are three separate transportation groups in Northern Virginia carrying out similar tasks: the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission, the Potomac and Rappahannock Transportation Commission and the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority. The NVTA, PRTC and the NVTA are both tasked with developing a transportation plan in the Northern Virginia region. Both groups may construct, acquire, contract, etc. for transportation facilities and both groups may issue debt.”

Proposed Change: Consolidate these three organizations into one body to deal with Northern Virginia transportation issues.

JACC Recommendation: Oppose this recommendation. NVTC, PRTC and NVTA have distinctly different roles. NVTC is primarily focused and WMATA, VRE oversight, and transit issues and technologies. PRTC is focused on VRE oversight and transit issues, but also operates a significant amount of bus service for some of its member jurisdictions. NVTA is charged with long range transportation planning, programming transportation funds, and advocating for Northern Virginia’s transportation needs. These tasks general don’t overlap, as such, there would be little staff or office savings through a combination. Each has a different geography. While theoretically a comprehensive transportation agency could be developed which might achieve some efficiencies, it would take significant effort that would detract from each agencies’ current mission.

Comment #108: Local commuter rail controlled by operating authorities.

Proposed Change: The Commonwealth should consider assuming ownership and operation of commuter rail services which span different regions.

JACC Recommendation: Oppose this recommendation. The Virginia Railway Express was initiated by local governments in Northern Virginia. The local governments developed the VRE Master Agreement and have all backed VRE’s bond issuances. The local governments continue to provide an annual subsidy to VRE. Local elected officials are more responsive to the needs of their constituents. However, if the Commonwealth were willing to fund all of VRE’s expenses and assume VRE’s debt, the role of the local governments might be reevaluated.