



Northern Virginia Transportation Authority

The Authority for Transportation in Northern Virginia

TO: Monica Backmon, Northern Virginia Transportation Authority

FROM: Tracy M. Baynard

DATE: September 2, 2020

RE: Update on the 2020 Virginia General Assembly Special Session

The Special Session is moving along with a hope that the Senate Finance and Appropriations Committee and the House Appropriations Committee can provide budgets for full votes next week.

This session does not have many initiatives affecting transportation funding or operations of the Authority. However, a few issues have engaged Authority and local government liaisons.

Proposed changes regarding long term stays in transient housing

The Virginia Poverty Law Center (VPLC) sought a way to permit individuals using hotels/motels as permanent housing to receive rental assistance from local, state or federal sources. The proposal created doubt on whether the transient occupancy tax (TOT) would still be imposed and collected. (SB 5089-Locke and HB 5120 - Jenkins).

If true, this would remove a source of transportation funding for (1) the Metro Capital Fund and (2) transportation purposes for Prince William County, Manassas and Manassas Park.

Upon reflection and due to the numerous concerns raised Senator Locke withdrew her bill and HB 5120 looks like it will not be taken up.

Provisions Related to Joint Public Hearing of the Authority, NVTC and VDOT

The Northern Virginia Transportation Commission (NVTC) is pursuing a budget language amendment that would allow the Authority, NVTC, CTB and VRE and to hold the annual joint public meeting (HB 1285 (2018), remotely due to Governor Northam's state of emergency declaration that makes it unsafe to meet in person.

Delegate Rip Sullivan has submitted the language for consideration.

The Budget

At this time the Senate and House do not look like they will have budgets ready for full floor votes until next week.

The proposed budget language amendments from the administration do not seem to be in jeopardy. These amendments provide flexibility in how the Commonwealth Transportation Board mitigates the impact of lower transportation revenue.

The General Assembly members are not expressing concern about the transportation flexibility language but may ask that the Secretary or Commonwealth and Transportation Board provide information on how the flexibility is used.