



COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
HOUSE OF DELEGATES
RICHMOND

G. GLENN ODER
213 ROBIN DRIVE
NEWPORT NEWS, VIRGINIA 23606

NINETY-FOURTH DISTRICT

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS:
GENERAL LAWS
TRANSPORTATION
COUNTIES, CITIES AND TOWNS

March 27, 2008

Pierce R. Homer
Secretary of Transportation
Patrick Henry Building, 3rd Floor
1111 East Broad Street
Richmond, VA. 23219

RE: Request for VDOT to Study Expansion of the Hampton Roads Bridge Tunnel

Dear Secretary Homer:

We are writing today to formally submit our request for the Virginia Department of Transportation to prepare a conceptual engineering study for the expansion of the Hampton Roads Bridge Tunnel.

As you are aware, the previous study of the HRBT expansion evaluated the project based upon the addition of 6 new lanes of travel. This would have increased the HRBT to a total of 10 lanes of traffic. Although this would certainly alleviate traffic congestion on the existing bridge tunnel, the extent of residential and commercial condemnations to accommodate these additional lanes of traffic is unacceptable. In addition, the financial cost of such a large expansion further exasperates the ability to pay for the project.


Based upon research that we have done over the past several weeks, it has come to our attention that an addition of one tube with two lanes of traffic at the HRBT would accomplish the following:

- Significant congestion relief and would raise the status of the HRBT to a level "C" transportation corridor.
- Significantly lower the cost of the previous cost estimates for expanding the HRBT.
- Most of the lane additions could be accommodated in the current right of way and provide very little impact to existing homes and businesses.

Additionally, it is important to note that we are requesting this study to be paid for and managed by VDOT. This request is significant because it is important that the work be performed outside of the bounds of the MPO and the HRPDC. By specifically keeping this expansion study outside of the realm of these two organizations, we will avoid any negative impact to the work that has been previously accomplished on the six projects contained within the MPO proposed transportation package.

In conclusion, the urgency of this request cannot be overstated. The time for addressing the most critical and obvious congestion problem in Hampton Roads is long overdue. This new study will provide the information needed to determine the positive impact of this proposal as well as identify potential costs of the improvements to the HRBT. The results of such a study can then be used in discussions with our congressional delegation as they begin to plan for the 2009 federal transportation allocations. Finally, by accepting the leadership role in this evaluation process, the Kaine administration will demonstrate its commitment to resolving the most critical transportation issue in Hampton Roads. Then, we can begin to take positive steps toward real regional transportation solutions for this region.

Please feel free to contact either of us if you have any questions or comments regarding this request. Additionally, we stand ready to assist in any way possible with the evaluation of this expansion study.



Delegate G. Glenn Oder

Sincerely,



Delegate Phillip Hamilton