



Roanoke Valley Area
Metropolitan Planning Organization

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The 26th day of March, 2009

RESOLUTION

To Reconfirm Support for Rail Alternatives to Complement Planned Improvements to I-81

WHEREAS, the I-81 corridor is increasingly the route of choice for trucks traveling between the northeast and the south/southwest because of congestion on I-95 and expanding shipments generated by the North American Free Trade Act;

WHEREAS, roadway improvements alone are not projected to adequately address forecasted congestion levels on I-81 during the time horizon of the current Long-Range Transportation Plan;

WHEREAS, improvements to rail infrastructure near the I-81 corridor may be thought of as investing in a "Steel Interstate" that would provide additional freight capacity to complement I-81;

WHEREAS, various technologies including but not limited to: tractor-trailer on rail car, trailer on rail car, double stack intermodal container, and other strategies or technologies would benefit from increased freight rail capacity in or near the I-81 corridor;

WHEREAS, rail improvements can complement existing national policy initiatives by reducing dependence on imported fuel, providing modal redundancy, enhancing national security, and—when electrified—offering the U.S. opportunity to employ domestic renewable energy sources and efficiency to drive transportation;

WHEREAS, rail improvements offer positive advantages for communities, the Commonwealth, neighboring I-81 states, and the United States relating to cost, safety, economic growth, tourism development, decreased fuel consumption and greenhouse gas emissions, improved air quality and public health, and varied freight and passenger service options;

WHEREAS, rail improvements offer added capacity potential for possible future passenger rail service in the I-81 corridor; and

AGENDA (Cont'd)

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NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Roanoke Valley Area Metropolitan Planning Organization strongly petitions for the development of rail improvements, which benefit both freight and passenger rail service options, parallel to I-81, to complement highway-widening and to move a large volume of the long-distance freight traffic from trucks on I-81 to freight trains parallel to I-81.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David B. Trinkle", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

David B. Trinkle, Chairman,
Roanoke Valley Area Metropolitan Planning
Organization Policy Board