

Construction of I-99

Appropriation Act Item 427 H. (Special Session I, 2006)

**Report to the Chairmen of House Committees on Transportation and Appropriations
and Senate Committees on Transportation and Finance**

Virginia Department of Transportation
1401 East Broad Street
Richmond, Virginia 23219

November 2006



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Office of the Governor

P.O. Box 1475
Richmond, Virginia 23218

Pierce R. Homer
Secretary of Transportation

(804) 786-8032
Fax: (804) 786-6683
TTY: (800) 828-1120

November 25, 2006

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable John H. Chichester
The Honorable Martin E. Williams
The Honorable Vincent F. Callahan, Jr.
The Honorable Leo C. Wardrup, Jr.

FROM: Pierce R. Homer *PH*

RE: Construction of I-99

The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) was directed through Item 427 H of the 2006 Appropriation Act to initiate a study to determine the interest of affected states in the construction of a new Interstate highway (I-99) with terminus points in Wilmington, Delaware and Charleston, South Carolina and to report its findings by November 30, 2006, to the Chairmen of the Senate Committees on Transportation and Finance and to the Chairmen of the House Committees on Transportation and Appropriations.

The attached report provides information on the affected states' interest in the proposed concept, and current projects planned or programmed in the vicinity of the corridor. At this time the consensus among states is to not study the proposed interstate or limited access concept further, and, to instead, focus limited funding on existing priorities within the corridor.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please feel free to contact me.

Attachment

Copy: Mr. David S. Ekern

Preface

Chapter 3 of the 2006 Acts of Assembly, Special Session I, Item 427 H requires the Secretary of Transportation to initiate a study to determine the interest of affected states in the construction of a new Interstate highway (I-99) with terminus points in Wilmington, Delaware and Charleston, South Carolina, and traversing the Delmarva Peninsula, and the eastern portions of the Commonwealth of Virginia and the states of North Carolina and South Carolina. It also requires the Secretary to report his findings by November 30, 2006, to the Chairmen of the Senate Committees on Transportation and Finance and to the Chairmen of the House Committees on Transportation and Appropriations.

Study participants include:

- Mr. Chris E. Detmer, Policy Manager, Transportation Planning Division, Virginia Department of Transportation
- Mr. Ralph A. Reeb, Director of Planning, Delaware Department of Transportation
- Mr. Raja Veeramachanenia, Director of Planning and Preliminary Engineering, Maryland State Highway Administration
- Mr. Calvin Leggett, PE, Manager, North Carolina Department of Transportation Program Development Branch
- Mr. Tony L. Chapman, State Highway Engineer South Carolina Department of Transportation

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Executive Summary

At the directive of the Virginia General Assembly pursuant to Item 427 H of Chapter 3 of the 2006 Acts of Assembly, Special Session I, the Virginia Department of Transportation sent a letter on behalf of the Secretary of Transportation to Delaware, Maryland, North Carolina and South Carolina to gauge each state's interest in participating in the planning and construction of a new interstate or limited access facility traversing the Mid-Atlantic coast. Each state identified a point of contact and provided an official response to Virginia's letter (refer to Appendix C). A follow-up e-mail was sent to each state with background information, a map of the corridor in Virginia and a request for the identification of any issues related to the proposed facility. Most state provided limited information in their responses.

Findings

Most states reported that the cost of a new interstate facility or limited access concept is too costly to pursue at this time. States instead are recommending improvements to existing facilities that increase capacity and safety at certain points or along specific segments as needed. Some states have corridor studies underway on segments in the vicinity of the proposed corridor but no states are opting for a major capitol project of this magnitude. The piecemeal approach in the corridor appears reflective of two principles:

1. Insufficient revenue and interest to plan, design and/or construct the proposed facility.
2. Significant priorities exist elsewhere.

Recommendation

Given the limited financial resources and low level interest among states, it is recommended that states consider access management, corridor preservation, completing existing projects and/or corridor studies that will improve connectivity and level of service along the proposed I-99 corridor.

Introduction

Chapter 3 of the 2006 Acts of Assembly, Special Session 1, Item 427 H requires the Secretary of Transportation to initiate a study to determine the interest of affected states in the construction of a new Interstate highway (I-99) with terminus points in Wilmington, Delaware and Charleston, South Carolina, and traversing the Delmarva Peninsula, and the eastern portions of the Commonwealth of Virginia and the states of North Carolina and South Carolina. It also requires the Secretary to report his findings by November 30, 2006 to the Chairmen of the Senate Committees on Transportation and Finance and to the Chairmen of the House Committees on Transportation and Appropriations.

Study Area

The study area extends from Dover, Delaware to Charleston, South Carolina. The general alignment for the new limited access facility could follow U.S. Route 13 from Dover, Delaware, through Salisbury, Maryland, across the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel, along the Southeast Expressway in Virginia Beach and the Dominion Boulevard Connector in Chesapeake to the U.S. Route 17 Corridor through North Carolina and South Carolina, and join Interstate Route 95 southwest of Charleston, South Carolina. For maps of the study area in Virginia and the entire corridor refer to Appendix B.

Proposed Concept Issues, Planned Improvements, Recommendations

Virginia

In Virginia, US 13 traverses the entire length of the Eastern Shore of Virginia and is a four lane divided facility with relatively no control of access, yet a depressed median separates the northbound and southbound directions of travel. There are a total of 21 traffic signals and, based on existing traffic volumes, US 13 operates at a good level of service (LOS C or better).

There are a few planned projects listed in the 2026 Hampton Roads Constrained Long Range Plan including widening Route 17 in Chesapeake (George Washington Highway) from the North Carolina state line to Dominion Boulevard from two lanes to four lanes and the Southeastern Parkway and Greenbelt, also in Chesapeake.

Virginia has identified a few improvements to the U.S. 13 corridor along the Eastern Shore in its 2025 State Highway Plan. Most of these are short segments including:

- Improve US 13 to urban 4 lane divided with median typical section from South Corporate Limits Painter to North Corporate Limits Painter (0.89 miles length)
- Improve US 13 to urban 4 lane divided with median typical section from South Corporate Limits Keller to North Corporate Limits Keller (0.83 miles length)

- Improve US 13 to urban 4 lane divided with median typical section from South Corporate Limits Melfa to North Corporate Limits Melfa (0.87 miles length)
- Improve US 13 to urban 4 lane divided with median typical section from Route 789 to Route 691 South (1.20 miles length)
- Improve US 13 to urban 4 lane divided with median typical section from South Corporate Limits Nassawadox to North Corporate Limits Nassawadox (0.98 miles length)

Virginia has briefly examined the corridor and has identified the following issues.

1. Cost – The proposed concept or limited access facility would divert billions of transportation funds from existing interstate needs. A preliminary planning level cost estimate for the improvements in Virginia, including improvements to the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel, is on the order of five billion dollars. Virginia is facing significant revenue shortfalls. Major interstate projects in the Hampton Roads region have been removed from the Six Year Improvement Program.
2. Alignment - Significant studies would need to be performed to determine the feasibility of the concept being built on new location, utilizing existing US 13 on the Eastern Shore or a combination of both. Additionally, there is significant traffic congestion on existing routes in Virginia Beach / Norfolk (proposal overlaps already congested facilities in Hampton Roads region).
3. Environmental Issues - Improving U.S. 13 or building a new limited access facility on the Eastern Shore of Virginia could potentially impact sensitive environmental features including wetlands, prime farmland, historic resources and endangered species (both federal and state). Wetlands are a predominant feature in the area, particularly in the northern half of the eastern shore. An examination of both sides of US 13 indicates substantial wetlands may have to be mitigated if US 13 is widened or built on new location. Historic resources include several historic districts located along US 13 including Eastville Station Historic District, Machipongo Historic District and Accomac Historic District. Several animal species in the vicinity of US 13 have been classified as state and federally threatened, including the bald eagle and northeastern tiger beetle, and the Delmarva fox squirrel has been designated as an endangered species. Depending on the alignment, impacts to these species would need to be investigated further. Construction of a parallel Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel would require U.S. Army Corps of Engineers approval.
4. Local / Statewide/ Regional Support - Some citizens strongly oppose the major reconstruction of the US 13 corridor or a new facility because it would be detrimental to the counties way of life and natural heritage, as well as farming and maritime industries. Northampton County states in their Constrained Comprehensive Long Range Plan that they are opposed to widening US 13. The success of this concept would require agreement among 5 states.

5. Is the Facility Needed in Virginia? - Traffic in the corridor is projected to grow at between 0.7 and 2.8% annually in the next 20 years (assuming a no build scenario) and the corridor is expected to continue to operate at acceptable levels of service (LOS C or greater). A detailed traffic diversion study analysis would be required to determine additional traffic impacts. Analysis would focus on the I-95 and I-81 corridors. This also assumes neighboring states would implement improvements on the proposed corridor. Additionally, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina and Virginia are in the process of jointly submitting a corridor proposal for I-95 under the Corridors of the Future Program to widen I-95 to eight lanes in North Carolina and South Carolina.

While the proposed concept would provide an alternative north-south route in Virginia and provide increased access to communities along the eastern seaboard, Virginia does not recommend moving forward with further study for the proposed I-99 concept due to other interstate and primary funding priorities and revenue shortfalls.

Delaware

Delaware indicates interest in studying the proposed I-99 interstate or limited access concept further. Delaware has created 42 miles of limited access highway between Dover and I-95. They have been active in studying improvements for a similar and connecting US 113 corridor from Milford (North of SR 1) to the Maryland state line. The US 113 North/South Study will consider existing and future transportation needs along this 32 mile corridor while preserving the environmental and historic resources and accommodating planned growth. They also report that economic development interests exist in Delaware to have an Interstate designation running north and south.

In 2002, DelDOT estimated the cost to upgrade the US 113 corridor from Milford to Selbyville to cost between \$400-750 million. Concerns would include funding, design of the existing limited access road (SR 1) and the ability to forecast traffic volumes correctly at a regional level.

Maryland

Maryland has not considered designating an Interstate route on its Eastern Shore, but it has made considerable investments to upgrade its major north-south corridors, such as US. 13. The US 13 corridor in Maryland is on the state's Primary Highway System and also the National Highway System. It serves the Salisbury Urbanized Area and carries their highest volume of traffic. A 11.3 mile fully access controlled bypass of Salisbury has been completed and another 22.9 miles has partial control access from Salisbury Bypass to US 113 in Pocomoke City. For the uncontrolled portion of US 13 from US 113 to the Virginia state line, an access control concept plan has been developed to guide decisions on limiting private access. Additionally, the uncontrolled divided section north of Salisbury to the Delaware state line is included in Maryland's Highway Needs Inventory (a long-range planning document) as a divided highway reconstruction with access control improvements.

Maryland indicates a willingness to participate in a concept development study of the proposed interstate or limited access concept only if all other states are interested. The proposed concept is not a priority of the State Highway Administration and given other high-priority and other high-cost projects throughout the state, a major commitment of funding is not expected in this corridor for many years. Maryland's major efforts on its Eastern Shore will be to upgrade US 50 and MD 404.

North Carolina

The US 17 corridor (270 miles) functions as a vital coastal intrastate highway in North Carolina and is part of the Intrastate Highway System, which was identified by the North Carolina State Legislature in the 1989 Highway Trust Fund Act. This act established a funding source for the multi-laning of all segments of the Intrastate Highway System. Currently, approximately 170 miles or 63% is multi-laned and 98 miles or 36% has construction underway or in planning, design, or right of way acquisition phase. Nearly 67 miles of US 17 currently exist as, or are being designed/constructed as freeway. US 17 from the South Carolina State line to a point 20 miles eastward is being designed to interstate standards as part of I-74 as well as the Wilmington Urban Loop (which will be designated I-140).

In addition, US 17 corridor has been designated as a Strategic Highway Corridor (#51 and #52) under North Carolina's Long-Range Multimodal Statewide Transportation Plan. Ultimately, a freeway type typical section is envisioned for this corridor but it would not be developed to interstate standards. North Carolina's long term vision is to bring all of US 17 up to freeway standards as funding and development opportunities allow. However, the basic multi-laning must be completed first in accordance with the state's Highway Trust Fund Law. The completion of the initial multi-laning is not expected within the next twenty years because of funding limitations.

Several improvements to the Route 17 corridor are in the North Carolina State Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP) including a Route 17 Corridor study in Brunswick County.

South Carolina

South Carolina is committed to completing several major projects in their state, including interstate I-73. Congress identified I-73 as a High Priority Corridor from Michigan to South Carolina, and the state anticipates that a final environmental impact statement for a portion of I-73 will be completed this year. They are engaged in developing an innovative funding package upwards of \$2 billion to construct their entire 80 mile corridor from North Carolina to Myrtle Beach. South Carolina happens to have a few I-99 corridor related projects recommended along their Route 17 corridor in the 2007-2012 State Transportation Improvement Program. In the Charleston area, Route 17 from I-526 to Isle of Palms Connector is proposed to be widened from 5 to 7 lanes and the US 17 Bypass from US 501 to 29th Avenue North is proposed in Myrtle Beach.

With several significant projects already under consideration and a fully committed federal-aid program, South Carolina informs it will not be able to contribute financial resources to support study of the I-99 concept at this time. However, they welcome the opportunity to coordinate with Virginia and offer to provide any existing data they currently maintain.

Findings and Conclusion

- Funding limitations and competing priorities appear to be the greatest obstacles. All states indicate that their limited financial resources are already committed to other high priority projects.
- Currently, states are making improvements along the corridor to existing roadways including upgrading sections to full access control, partial access control, constructing bypasses, developing access control / management plans, developing corridor studies, and multi-laning.
- The level of response received from the majority of the four respondent states indicates little interest in new interstate / limited access improvements along the proposed corridor.
- Given the limited financial resources and low level interest among states, it is recommended that states consider access management, corridor preservation, completing existing projects and/or corridor studies that will improve connectivity and level of service along the proposed I-99 corridor.

Appendix A – Budget Amendment Item 427 H

Secretary of Transportation (186)

427.	Administrative and Support Services (79900)	685,500	685,500
	General Management and Direction (79901)	685,500	685,500
Fund Sources:	Commonwealth Transportation	685,500	685,500

Authority: Title 2.2, Chapter 2, Article 10, §[2.2-201](#), and Titles 33, 46, and 58, Code of Virginia.

A. The transportation policy goals enumerated in this Act shall be implemented by the Secretary of Transportation, including the Secretary acting as Chairman of the Commonwealth Transportation Board.

1. The maintenance of existing transportation assets to ensure the safety of the public shall be the first priority in budgeting, allocation, and spending. The highway share of the Transportation Trust Fund shall be used for highway maintenance and operation purposes prior to its availability for new development, acquisition, and construction.
2. The efficient and cost-effective movement of people and goods will consider the needs in, and connectivity of, all modes of transportation, including bicycling, walking, public transportation, highways, freight and passenger rail, ports, and airports. The planning, development, construction, and operations of Virginia’s transportation facilities will reflect this goal.
3. Stewardship of the environment will be a priority in the allocation of resources and the planning and evaluation of projects and activities by transportation agencies.
4. To the greatest extent possible, the appropriation of transportation revenues shall reflect planned spending of such revenues by agency and by program. The maximization of all federal transportation funds available to the Commonwealth shall be paramount in the budgetary, spending, and allocation processes. The Secretary is hereby authorized to take all actions necessary to ensure that federal transportation funds are allocated and utilized for the maximum benefit of the Commonwealth, whether such funds are authorized under P.L. 109-59 of the 109th Congress, or any successor or related federal transportation legislation.

B.1. New or increased revenues designated by the General Assembly as regional or local transportation dollars shall be used exclusively for transportation projects and services within that region or localities. The Commonwealth shall not use the revenues for any other purpose.

2. Those localities receiving increased local revenues from actions taken by the General Assembly in calendar year 2006 shall not have reductions of state funding provided for maintenance, construction or transit below the amounts provided in fiscal year 2006.

C.1. The Secretary shall ensure that the allocation of transportation funds apportioned and for which obligation authority is expected to be available under federal law shall be in accordance with such laws and in support of the transportation policy goals enumerated in this act. Furthermore, the Secretary is authorized to take all actions necessary to allocate the required match for federal highway funds to ensure their appropriate and timely obligation and expenditure within the fiscal constraints of state transportation revenues. By June 1 of each year, the Secretary, as Chairman of the Board, shall report to the Governor and General Assembly on the allocation of such federal transportation funds and the actions taken to provide the required match.

2. Federal funds included in the highway funds distributed pursuant to §33.1-23.1 B, Code of Virginia, will be distributed to the greatest extent possible to the primary system of state highways and then to the other highway systems taking into consideration the federal eligibility requirements in order to maximize the benefit of the federal funds to the Commonwealth. Such distribution will not change the total amount of funds available to be provided pursuant to §33.1-23.1.

3. Projects funded, in whole or part, from federal funds referred to as congestion mitigation and air quality improvement, shall be selected as directed by the Board. Such funds shall be federally obligated within 24 months of their allocation by the Board and expended within 48 months of such obligation. If the requirements included in this paragraph are not met by such agency or recipient, then the Board shall use such federal funds for any other project eligible under 23 USC 149.

4. Funds apportioned under federal law for the Surface Transportation Program shall be distributed and administered in accordance with federal requirements, including that seven percent that is required to be allocated for public transportation purposes.

5. Funds apportioned under federal law for the Equity Bonus program shall be allocated as required by federal law, including that thirteen percent that is required to be allocated for public transportation purposes. Funds for contract fees paid by the Virginia Railway Express for access to the rights-of-way of CSX Transportation, Norfolk Southern Corporation, and the National Railroad Passenger Corporation shall be allocated from the public transportation's portion of federal Equity Bonus program funds.

6. Notwithstanding paragraph B of this Item, the required matching funds for enhancement projects in addition to Congressionally-designated projects included in any federal appropriation bill are to be provided by the mode, system or recipient of the federal-aid funding.

7.a. Federal funds provided to the National Highway System, Surface Transportation Program, Equity Bonus Program and Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality categories as

well as the required State matching funds may be allocated by the Commonwealth Transportation Board for transit purposes under the same rules and conditions authorized by federal law. The Commonwealth Transportation Board, in consultation with the appropriate local and regional entities, may allocate to local and regional public transit operators, for operating and/or capital purposes, state revenues designated by formula for primary, urban, and secondary highways.

b. Federal funds apportioned as the Highway Bridge Program shall be allocated and obligated as required by federal law to eligible projects across the Commonwealth. The Commonwealth Transportation Board shall consider the sufficiency and deficiency ratings of such eligible projects in making their allocations.

8. If a regional area (or areas) of the Commonwealth is determined to be not in compliance with Clean Air Act rules regarding conformity and as a result federal and/or state allocations, apportionments or obligations cannot be used to fund or support transportation projects or programs in that area, such funds may be used to finance demand management, conformity, and congestion mitigation projects to the extent allowed by federal law. Any remaining amount of such allocations, apportionments, or obligations shall be set aside to the extent possible under law for use in that regional area.

9. Appropriations in this act related to federal revenues outlined in this section may be adjusted by the Director, Department of Planning and Budget, upon request from the Secretary of Transportation, as needed to utilize and allocate additional federal funds that may become available.

D. The Secretary may ensure that appropriate action is taken to maintain a minimum cash balance and/or cash reserve in the Highway Maintenance and Operating fund.

E.1. The Commonwealth Transportation Board is hereby authorized to apply for, execute, and/or endorse applications submitted by private entities to obtain federal credit assistance for one or more qualifying transportation infrastructure projects or facilities to be developed pursuant to the Public-Private Transportation Act of 1995, as amended. Any such application, agreement and/or endorsement shall not financially obligate the Commonwealth or be construed to implicate the credit of the Commonwealth as security for any such federal credit assistance.

2. The Commonwealth Transportation Board is hereby authorized to pursue or otherwise apply for, and execute, an agreement to obtain financing using a federal credit instrument for project financings otherwise authorized by this Act or other Acts of Assembly.

F.1. The Virginia Department of Transportation, with the approval of the Governor and in a form approved by the Attorney General, is hereby authorized to exchange five acres, more or less, of the property commonly known as the Fulton Bottom property, including all buildings, structures, and appurtenances attached thereto, on the north side of Route 5 in Henrico County, to the Lehigh Cement Company, in exchange for a parcel of land

estimated at two acres, more or less, on the south side of Route 5 in the City of Richmond, to be used as a trail head facility for the Virginia Capital Trail.

2. The appropriate offices of the Commonwealth are hereby authorized to prepare, execute, and deliver such deed and other documents as may be necessary to accomplish the exchange.

3. Included in this effort shall be a review of potential environmental and other liability issues. Prior to the conveyance of the properties, the Commonwealth shall prepare a plan to address any potential liability issues associated with the property owned by Lehigh Cement Company.

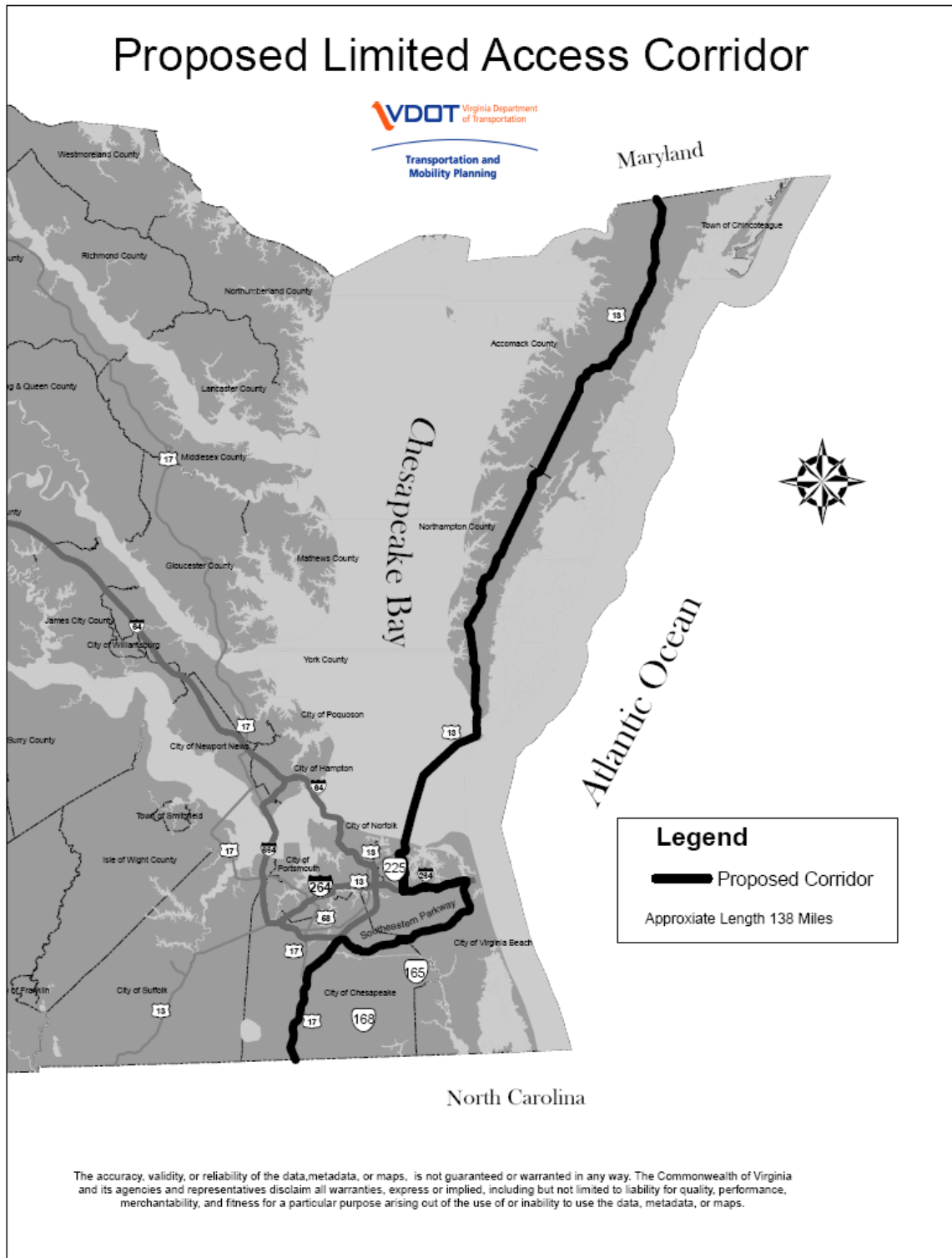
G. The Virginia Department of Transportation, with the approval of the Governor and in a form approved by the Attorney General, is hereby authorized to transfer surplus property owned by the Department of Transportation on Route 604 in New Kent County to the County for its purposes.

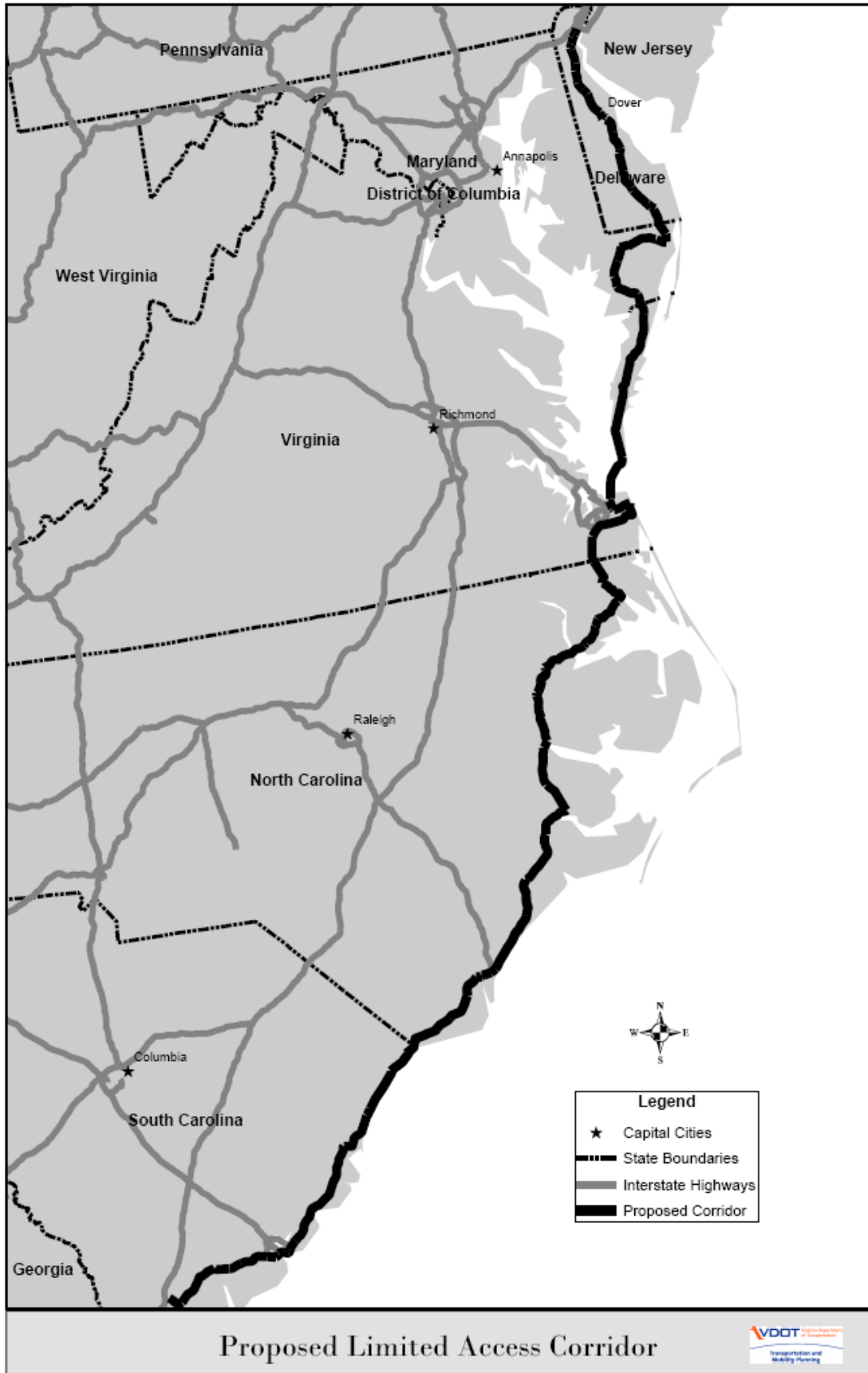
H. The Secretary of Transportation shall initiate a study to determine the interest of affected states in the construction of a new Interstate highway (I-99) with terminus points in Wilmington, Delaware and Charleston, South Carolina, and traversing the Delmarva Peninsula, and the eastern portions of the Commonwealth of Virginia and the states of North Carolina and South Carolina. The Secretary shall report his findings by November 30, 2006, to the Chairmen of the Senate Committees on Transportation and Finance and to the Chairmen of the House Committees on Transportation and Appropriations.

I.1. The Intermodal Office shall coordinate the efforts of the Departments of Transportation, and Rail and Public Transportation to work with local governments to develop specific performance measures and criteria by which to measure the success of transportation projects funded with any revenues derived from legislation enacted by the General Assembly to provide local governments or regional authorities with dedicated transportation revenues. Such criteria shall measure performance, including but not limited to, improvements related to safety, connectivity, economic development, improved air quality, and traffic mitigation.

2. As part of this effort, the Intermodal Office shall work with the relevant state agencies and representatives of local government to develop a standard cost/ benefit methodology to analyze projects.

Appendix B - Maps





Appendix C – State Correspondence



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
1401 EAST BROAD STREET
RICHMOND, VIRGINIA 23219-2000
VirginiaDOT.org

GREGORY A. WHIRLEY
ACTING COMMISSIONER

September 6, 2006

Mr. Lyndo Tippet
North Carolina Secretary of Transportation
1501 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-1501

Dear Mr. Tippet:

The 2006 Virginia General Assembly passed two legislative initiatives that consider construction of a north-south highway along the east coast. The first is House Bill 5002 Item 427 H., which requests the Secretary of Transportation to initiate a study to determine the interest of other states in the construction of a new interstate, I-99, along the easternmost portion of five coastal states to connect Wilmington, Delaware to Charleston, South Carolina, traversing the Delmarva Peninsula. The second is Senate Joint Resolution 184 directing the Virginia Department of Transportation to explore the feasibility and desirability of entering into an interstate compact for the construction and operation of a controlled access highway between Dover, Delaware and Charleston, South Carolina with counterparts in the states of Delaware, Maryland, North Carolina, and South Carolina.

The Secretary of Transportation is required to report to the Virginia General Assembly by November 30, 2006 on the interest of other states. I and my staff will work to coordinate the identification, discussion and documentation of related issues among the states.

I would ask for your cooperation in conducting this study and would request that you designate someone from your state who can serve as a point of contact. Your representative should be able to speak on behalf of your state's interest in participating in the planning and construction of a new interstate concept. Chris Detmer of VDOT's Transportation and Mobility Planning Division will work with your state representative to identify and discuss the issues related to this possible new route. Please provide the name of your representative to Chris Detmer at Chris.Detmer@VirginiaDOT.org or contact him at (804) 786-3599. Since time is of the essence in making the November report to the General Assembly it would be appreciated if you could identify your states point of contact by September 22, 2006.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Richard L. Walton, Jr.", written over a horizontal line.

Richard L. Walton, Jr.
Chief of Policy, Planning and the
Environment





South Carolina
Department of Transportation

October 18, 2006

Commissioner's
OCT 23 2006
Office

Mr. Richard L. Walton, Jr.
Chief of Policy, Planning and Environmental
Commonwealth of Virginia
Department of Transportation
1401 East Broad Street
Richmond, Virginia 23219

RE: Study for Interstate 99

Dear Mr. Walton:

Thank you for your letter requesting the participation of the South Carolina Department of Transportation to study a new interstate from Delaware to South Carolina.

The South Carolina Department of Transportation and the South Carolina General Assembly are committed to completing several major transportation projects in the state, including Interstate 73. As you know, this is also a new interstate concept originally identified by Congress as a High Priority Corridor extending from Michigan to South Carolina. While the status of I-73 varies in each state, we anticipate having the final environmental impact statement for a portion of I-73 completed this year. The significant challenge that we are actively working on involves developing an innovative funding package upwards of \$2 billion to construct the entire 80-mile corridor from the North Carolina border to Myrtle Beach.

With several significant projects already under consideration and a fully committed federal-aid program, we will not be able to contribute any financial resources in support of the study at this time. However, we welcome the opportunity to coordinate with your staff and will provide any existing data that we currently maintain. I would recommend contacting Mark Pleasant, our Statewide Planning Chief, at 803-737-1444 to discuss any planning issues related to the study.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth S. Mabry
Executive Director

ESM:mmb
cc: Tony L. Chapman, State Highway Engineer
File: Pln/MDP

CTS 27574



Post Office Box 191
Columbia, South Carolina 29202-0191

Phone: (803) 737-2314
TTY: (803) 737-3870



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Maryland Department of Transportation
The Secretary's Office

Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr.
Governor
Michael S. Steele
Lt. Governor
Robert L. Flanagan
Secretary
James F. Ports, Jr.
Deputy Secretary

September 28, 2006

Mr. Richard L. Walton, Jr.
Chief of Policy, Planning and the Environment
Virginia Department of Transportation
1401 East Broad Street
Richmond, Virginia 23219-2000

Commissioner's
OCT 02 2006
Office

Dear Mr. Walton:

Thank you for your letter requesting Maryland's interest in developing a controlled-access highway along the East Coast between Dover, Delaware and Charleston, South Carolina. I appreciate your heading this effort to upgrade the US 13/US 17 corridor. As for the proposed highway number, I believe that Pennsylvania has already appropriated the I-99 designation for its US 220 corridor.

While Maryland has not considered designating an Interstate route on its Eastern Shore, it has made considerable investments to upgrade its major north-south corridors. The most important route has been, and remains, US 13, because it serves the Salisbury Urbanized Area and carries the highest volume of traffic, by far. We have developed an 11.3-mile, fully access-controlled bypass of Salisbury; another 22.9 miles of US 13, from the south end of the Salisbury Bypass to US 113 in Pocomoke City, has partial control of access. For the uncontrolled, divided-highway section between US 113 and the Virginia Line, we have developed an access-control concept plan to guide decisions on limiting private access. The uncontrolled, divided section north of Salisbury to the Delaware line is included in Maryland's Highway Needs Inventory, our long-range planning document, for divided-highway reconstruction with access-control improvements.

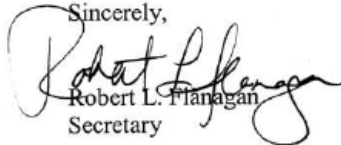
Delaware has been more active in pursuing improvements along its DEL 1/US 113 corridor. While Maryland has dualized over half of its US 113 corridor and plans to reconstruct the rest in the next decade, it is not our preferred corridor for interstate traffic.

The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) is willing to further discuss the concept of an improved Interstate route along the mid-Atlantic coast. Given other high-priority and high-cost projects throughout Maryland, we are not able to commit to more major investments in this corridor for many years. I am designating Mr. Raja Veeramachaneni, Director of Planning and Preliminary Engineering, SHA as my representative on this issue.

My telephone number is 410-865-1000
Toll Free Number 1-888-713-1414 TTY User Call Via MD Relay
7201 Corporate Center Drive, Hanover, Maryland 21076

Mr. Richard L. Walton, Jr.
Page Two

Thank you again for your letter. If you have any further questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact Mr. Veeramachaneni at 410-545-0412, toll-free 888-204-2848 or via email at rveeramachaneni@sha.state.md.us. SHA will be pleased to assist you.

Sincerely,

Robert L. Flanagan
Secretary

cc: Mr. Neil J. Pedersen, Administrator, SHA
Mr. Ralph Reeb, Director of Planning, Delaware Department of Transportation
Mr. Raja Veeramachaneni, Director of Planning and Preliminary Engineering, SHA

Mr. Detmer,

It appears that I-99 as currently conceived would follow US 17 through North Carolina. The US 17 corridor through North Carolina is a very important facility. It is a part of the Intrastate Highway System, which was identified by our State Legislature in the 1989 Highway Trust Fund Act. This Act established a funding source for the multi-laning of all segments of the Intrastate Highway System. Also, US 17 has been identified as an NC Strategic Highway Corridor, and the NC Strategic Highway Corridor Vision Plan recommends that it be a freeway throughout North Carolina in the future.

As provided for in the Highway Trust Fund Act, US 17 will ultimately be four-lanes throughout North Carolina. Currently, approximately 170 miles of 270 total NC miles (about 63%) is multi-laned. The multi-laning of approximately 98 miles (about 36%) is either underway or in planning, design, or right of way acquisition. Of the 270 total miles, about 67 miles (about 25%) currently exist as, or are being designed/constructed as freeway.

US 17 from the South Carolina State Line to a point approximately 20 miles eastward is proposed to carry I-74, so it would be built to interstate standards. Also, part of the Wilmington Urban Loop, which will be designated I-140, will be built to interstate standards.

In keeping with the NC Strategic Highway Corridor Vision Plan, we would like to bring all of US 17 up to freeway standards as funding and opportunities allow. However the basic multi-laning in accordance with Trust Fund law must be completed first. Because of funding limitations, we do not expect to fully complete this multi-laning within the next 20 years.

Please let me know if I may be of any further assistance. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Calvin W. Leggett, P. E.



STATE OF DELAWARE
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
800 BAY ROAD
P.O. BOX 778
DOVER, DELAWARE 19903

CAROLANN WICKS, P.E.
SECRETARY

October 6, 2006

Mr. Richard L. Walton, Jr.
Chief of Policy, Planning and the Environment
Commonwealth of Virginia
Department of Transportation
1402 East Broad Street
Richmond, Virginia 23219-2000

Dear Mr. Walton:

We are interested in joining with you in exploring the feasibility of creating a transportation facility your letter describes. Our economic development colleagues have been pushing to have an Interstate designation running north and south. We have created 42 miles of limited access highway between Dover and I-95. We are currently in the process of planning and designing a similar and connecting facility from Dover south to the Maryland line.

While we can make no commitment to you at this point beyond committing to work with you. I have asked our Director of Planning, Ralph Reeb, to serve as our point of contact for this effort. Mr. Reeb can be reached by mail at, Department of Transportation, Administrative Center, P.O. Box 778, Dover, DE 19903-0778, telephone number 302-760-2111, and by email at Ralph.Reeb@state.de.us.

Thank you for inviting us to participate in this effort.

Sincerely,

Carolann Wicks
Secretary

CAW:rrp

cc: Chris Detmer, Policy Manager, Transportation and Mobility Planning ✓
Ralph Reeb, Director, Planning

