

DEDICATED FUNDING FOR METRO: WHY IT SHOULD MATTER TO YOU

*Read the Facts!
Then Contact Your General Assembly Member.*



METRO MOVES THE VIRGINIA ECONOMY



With 110 million trips in Virginia alone last year Metro's subway and bus systems are second in the country in ridership and carry 40 percent of rush hour trips to jobs located in the core of the Washington D.C. metropolitan area.

With 27 percent of Virginia's population, Northern Virginia has 70% of statewide transit ridership. Without Metro, Northern Virginia's economy would collapse.

Northern Virginia has 30 percent of the total jobs throughout the commonwealth but these jobs produce 36 percent of statewide sales tax revenue and 45 percent of statewide income tax. About \$6 in economic activity results from each \$1 invested in transit, or about \$7 per Metro trip.

State investments in Metro yield a stunning 19 percent annual rate of return for the entire commonwealth.

A sound Northern Virginia economy helps us all, and that is only possible with a healthy Metro.

METRO NEEDS DEDICATED FUNDING

A Blue Ribbon panel of private and public sector leaders found Metro needs a dedicated funding source to meet growing demand and maintain the quality of its past investments. It is the only large system in the U.S. without significant dedicated funding.

An energetic coalition of businesses, governments, environmentalists, and other groups (including state-wide organizations) is advocating General Assembly action to **allow Northern Virginia to raise about \$50 million annually of its own money.** This is about \$38 per capita in five Northern Virginia jurisdictions supporting Metro.

This dedicated funding will match \$150 million of annual federal dollars to keep Metro working for Virginia. **Remember, the dedicated funds would come exclusively from five Northern Virginia jurisdictions and taxes would not be raised in any other jurisdictions.**

The Virginia General Assembly Should Act Now to Provide Dedicated Metro Funding

Please contact your General Assembly member now at:

1-800-889-0229 or <http://legis.state.va.us/>

WHY SUPPORT METRO DEDICATED FUNDING?

Dedicated funding will purchase 340 new Metro railcars and 275 new buses and provide many other improvements.

The commonwealth has failed to keep its transit bargain with local governments. The General Assembly has established a state statutory target of paying 95% of transit costs net of fares and federal assistance. However, the current draft Virginia Transportation Improvement Program shows an all-time low 21 percent match for transit capital (down from 63% last year) and a dismal 47 percent for operations (down 10%).



Statewide, this means local governments must come up with a stunning \$230 million more than if the state met its statutory obligation, and \$160 million of that shortfall is in the five Metro jurisdictions. Lynchburg and Blacksburg both are short-changed by \$2 million, Charlottesville by \$1.5 million and Harrisonburg by \$0.5 million, for example.

Metro yields \$3 per trip in environmental benefits. Northern Virginia needs to make a significant effort to comply with EPA's eight-hour ozone standard by 2010 and to do so without a healthy Metro would be prohibitively costly for state taxpayers. All Virginians benefit from clean air achieved through reduced automobile emissions.

THERE IS MORE THAN ONE KIND OF TAX RELIEF

Some members of the General Assembly oppose dedicated Metro funding even though the funds would be raised only in five Northern Virginia jurisdictions. They say they must protect all taxpayers. But dedicated Metro funding in fact provides an important kind of tax relief. Here's how:

- Currently Northern Virginia exerts maximum effort to support transit and covers 63% of its transit costs from local sources. The rest of the commonwealth covers only 38 percent of its transit costs from local sources. Dedicated Metro funding offers the prospect of local property tax relief.
- Gasoline prices have risen above \$3 per gallon and this costs Northern Virginia drivers \$400 million more compared to last year (at an average price of \$2.26 per gallon).
- Traffic congestion costs about \$2.5 billion annually in the Washington metropolitan area, but Metro provides \$1 billion annually in congestion relief.
- Rising gas prices and congestion costs are equivalent to taxes, but they are paid to oil companies and oil producing countries and/or simply spent and lost forever with no revenues to help solve the problems.
- Auto drivers are flocking to Metro in record numbers to avoid those "taxes".



Consider This:

Is it wise to invest \$38 per person each year raised in five Northern Virginia jurisdictions to support Metro and help save almost \$1,000 annually per person throughout the commonwealth (congestion, gas, air quality, jobs)?

For further information visit www.thinkoutsidethecar.org.