

Public Comment Input

September 27, 2012

To: John Winkle (John.Winkle@dot.gov)
Federal Railroad Administration

Re: Tier I Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for future passenger rail service to Hampton Roads

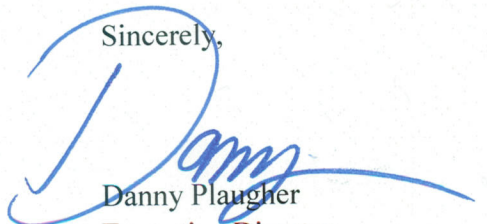
Let me begin by thanking you for allowing Virginians for High Speed Rail (VHSR) to comment on the final environmental impact statement for the future of passenger rail service between Richmond and Hampton Roads. VHSR is a non-profit coalition of citizens, companies, economic development agencies, and localities that educate and advocate for the advancement of fast, frequent, and reliable rail service linking the Commonwealth of Virginia to the rest of the east coast.

The advancement of improved, enhanced, and high speed rail from Richmond to Hampton Roads is of vital importance for the economic prosperity of the Commonwealth. Virginia's Golden Crescent (Washington-Richmond-Hampton Roads) is home to nearly 67 percent of Virginians, 79 percent of the Commonwealth's economy, and it is also home to a large population of seniors, college students, and congestion. The average commuter along the Golden Crescent wastes 229 hours either sitting in traffic or driving to work. Further, our citizens lose \$841 in congestion costs annually.

Our economy and our citizens cannot afford to waste valuable dollars and time sitting in congestion. We need the Federal Railroad Administration to advance the FEIS for the Richmond to Hampton Roads corridor. While VHSR is disappointed that the FEIS limits the speed of the proposed corridor to 90 miles per hour, we strongly encourage you to finalize a record of decision for the Richmond to Hampton Roads.

High speed rail must advance in Virginia.

Sincerely,



Danny Plaugher
Executive Director
Virginians for High Speed Rail