

**11. CONSIDERATION OF A RESOLUTION
OPPOSING TOLLS ON I-95**

Attached for your consideration, please find a request from the Southampton County Planning Commission seeking your consideration in adopting a resolution of opposition to the installation of toll collection facilities on I-95 in Southside Virginia.

The Virginia Department of Transportation's plan, backed by Governor McDonnell, is to put a toll operation just north of Emporia, a little more than 20 miles from the North Carolina line, and charge \$4 for cars and \$12 for trucks each way, raising \$35 million to \$40 million per year.

Opposition to tolls on the interstate has been growing all summer. Sixteen localities have formally stated opposition — Hanover, Dinwiddie, Greensville, Sussex, Prince George and Spotsylvania counties and Ashland, Petersburg, Hopewell, Colonial Heights, Emporia, Dumfries, Jarratt, Stony Creek, Wakefield and Waverly. U.S. Representative Randy Forbes, R-4th, has also asked Governor McDonnell to halt the toll proposal.

MOTION REQUIRED:

If the Board is so inclined, a motion is required to adopt the attached resolution.



**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
SOUTHAMPTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA**

RESOLUTION 0812-11

At a meeting of the Board of Supervisors of Southampton County, Virginia, held in the Southampton County Office Center, Board of Supervisors' Meeting Room, 26022 Administration Center Drive, Courtland, Virginia on Monday, August 27, 2012 at 7:00 p.m.

PRESENT

The Honorable Dallas O. Jones, Chairman
The Honorable Alan W. Edwards, Vice Chairman
The Honorable Carl J. Faison
The Honorable S. Bruce Phillips
The Honorable Barry T. Porter
The Honorable Glenn H. Updike
The Honorable Ronald M. West

IN RE: Installation of Toll Facilities on Interstate 95 in Southside Virginia

Motion by Supervisor _____:

WHEREAS, the proposed toll collection facilities are an inefficient means of collecting additional revenues with the equivalent of at least an entire year's revenue necessary to construct the collection facilities; and

WHEREAS, the presence of toll facilities increase traffic congestion and accidents in addition to placing an additional burden on state police and local court systems; and

WHEREAS, the toll collection facilities on I-95 will result in increased traffic volumes on locally maintained roads, particularly U. S. Route 58, as both local residents and through motorists seek to circumvent the toll collection facilities; and

WHEREAS, toll collection facilities on I-95 discourage the location of new supply chain logistic companies in Virginia and will adversely affect existing operations; and

WHEREAS, the federal interstate system and Rehabilitation Pilot Program, under which

VDOT proposes toll facilities, specifically prohibits the use of federal interstate maintenance funds on any segment of interstate on which toll facilities are placed during the term of the pilot program, resulting in the loss of approximately \$50 million per year that VDOT currently receives from the Federal Highway Administration for maintenance of I-95; and

WHEREAS, Southampton County asks that the Governor, the General Assembly, and the Commonwealth Transportation Board consider other means to raise revenues, such as an increase in the gasoline excise tax, to provide for new transportation funding in the Commonwealth rather than constructing toll plazas that are costly to build and operate and detrimental to citizens, businesses, and visitors.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF SOUTHAMPTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA:

1. That, the Board of Supervisors does hereby oppose the current Virginia Department of Transportation "Interstate 95 Corridor Improvement Program" and the installation of toll collection facilities on Interstate 95; and
2. That this resolution shall be in full force and effect upon its passage.

Seconded by Supervisor _____.

VOTING ON THE ITEM: YES –
 NO -

A COPY TESTE:

Michael W. Johnson, County Administrator/
Clerk, Southampton County Board of Supervisors

MEMORANDUM

TO: Michael Johnson, County Administrator
FROM: Beth Lewis, AICP, Community Development Director
DATE: August 17, 2012
RE: Tolls on I-95

At their August 9, 2012 meeting the Planning Commission approved a motion requesting that the Board of Supervisors adopt a resolution expressing the County's concerns about the prospect of tolls on I-95 from the North Carolina state line north to the Stony Creek exit, Exit 31. The Planning Commission feels that instituting tolls on I-95 in the Greenville County area will negatively impact economic development in Southampton County. An excerpt from the minutes follows:

Commissioner Tennessee said there was one thing he would like to bring to their attention tonight. He stated he did not know how much attention was being paid to what was going on in the western part of the county. He stated that in Greenville County they are talking about putting tolls on each exit all the way up to exit 31 and he feels like that affects Southampton County as well. We have a lot of people in the county that have to travel that route to go to work. That will be increasing their cost by \$8.00 per day to go to work. Also, if you look at it from an economic development standpoint that might hinder someone from wanting to locate in Southampton County because if they have to use Interstate 95 below exit 31 that will be an added expense to them as well. Being as we have a few of our Supervisors here tonight he would like to see this county get behind and support our neighboring counties in an effort to try to get those tolls moved a little farther north where the people actually need the roads and not affect the people here who are traveling up and down the highway every day just trying to make a living.

Chairman Drake said you have a valid point.

Commissioner Edwards said that would be nice, but he didn't think that was in our jurisdiction. He said if you look at Highway 460 everything is pretty much set in stone.

Commissioner Tennessee said what he was saying was just more or less for moral support to know that we don't approve of the location of it. We can express the fact that it will affect us and well as the other counties.

Chairman Drake asked if they knew if the Board of Supervisors had mentioned any of this or how it would affect the county or of any kind of resolution.

Mrs. Beth Lewis said she didn't recall anything about it.

Supervisor Phillips said not at this point.

Commissioner Edwards said that is a good idea if you want to send that to the Board and ask them for some sort of resolution or comment. That would be very appropriate from this committee.

Chairman Drake said if there were any pros at all he thought we should if he could get a motion.

Commissioner Tennessee made a motion that we ask the Board of Supervisors to send a letter of support towards the county as far as not having the tolls located right next to Greenville County.

Chairman Drake asked if he had a second.

Commissioner Edwards seconded the motion.

Chairman Drake called for discussion. He asked Commissioner Tennessee if he knew how Greenville, our next door neighbor, felt about this.

Commissioner Tennessee said it was in the paper last week that Greenville County, Sussex County, City of Emporia, the Township of Jarratt, and he thought Stony Creek as well all got together against the toll. He said if you are up there any time you will see "No Toll" signs all up and down Interstate 95. The way it is proposed he thought the toll was supposed to be located somewhere below Skippers and every exit from that point to exit 31 which is Stony Creek it will cost you \$4.00 to get on so you will have to pay that going and coming so you will have to add \$8.00 a day to a person's cost of getting to and from work as he did traveling to Petersburg when the mill was shut down. There are several people in the western part of the county that he knows it will affect and it will also affect people coming out of North Carolina going to Deerfield Correctional Center to work. So it can be a burden on people in the county and the people that are coming to this county to work; and looking at it from an economic development standpoint you have to factor that in as well.

Chairman Drake asked Mrs. Beth Lewis if they were in line with this motion.

Mrs. Beth Lewis said certainly.

Commissioner Pope said she attended a meeting in Sussex County about that. She was asked to come up there because of her involvement with the correctional center and it is really going to be a burden on those people if they do that. She agrees she doesn't understand why they started as far down as they did instead of going up with it. She said those people are really working to try to get something done about it.

Chairman Drake asked if there was any other discussion. He called for the vote on the motion which was to request that the Board of Supervisors send a resolution about our concerns regarding the toll to be placed on Interstate 95 from the North Carolina line up to exit 31 at Stony Creek. The motion carried unanimously.

Chairman Drake asked Mrs. Beth Lewis to take care of this for them.

Locality leaders gather to shout down plan for I-95 tolls

BY RANDY HALLMAN
Richmond Times-Dispatch

Standing in front of an 18-wheeler painted bright yellow with dark 4-foot-tall capital letters shouting "NO TOLLS," more than a dozen government officials from Virginia localities vowed Wednesday to fight to prevent tolls on Interstate 95.

Virginia is one of three states that can take advantage of a federal pilot program that would allow interstate tolls. The Virginia Department of Transportation's plan, backed by Gov. Bob McDonnell, is to put a toll operation just north of Emporia, a little more than 20 miles from the North Carolina line, and charge \$4 for cars and \$12 for trucks each way, raising \$35 million to \$40 million per year.

Emporia Mayor Samuel W. Adams III summed up Wednesday's message. He said Southside Virginia has been pushed around before because it lacks political and economic clout, "but this time we're going to fight it and fight it to the end."

Peggy R. Wiley, chairwoman of the Greensville County Board of Supervisors, said, "Virginia has transportation problems, but the solution is not tolls. There is nothing about this plan that makes sense. It is a waste of taxpayer dollars."

VDOT has estimated that building the toll operation will cost \$50 million. Wiley said that cost plus the maintenance and operating costs would drain about 38 percent of the first six years of toll revenue.

She said tolls would drive I-95 traffic to other highways, creating safety issues and maintenance costs on those roads.

Rufus E. Tyler Sr., chairman of the Sussex County Board of Supervisors, said, "This train is moving fast and

Comments on the plan

If you want to voice your opinion:

A petition is available at www.VirginiaTollFree95.com

Virginia Secretary of Transportation Sean T. Connaughton

Phone: (804) 786-8032
Email: Sean.Connaughton@Governor.Virginia.gov

Gov. Bob McDonnell

Phone: (804) 786-2211
Email: [Link to form available at www.governor.virginia.gov/CommunityRelations/](http://www.governor.virginia.gov/CommunityRelations/)

we need to take a stand now."

Opposition to tolls on the interstate has been growing all summer and not just in Southside. Fifteen localities have formally stated opposition — Hanover, Dinwiddie, Greensville, Sussex, Prince George and Spotsylvania counties and Ashland, Petersburg, Hopewell, Emporia, Dumfries, Jarratt, Stony Creek, Wakefield and Waverly.

The Richmond Area Metropolitan Planning Organization and the Crater District Planning Commission both oppose tolls, said group spokesman Casey Werderman.

Trucking groups have joined the opposition.

U.S. Rep. J. Randy Forbes, R-4th, who has asked McDonnell to halt the toll proposal, was not at Wednesday's gathering in Petersburg, but during a visit to Fort Lee he said the proposal would put an undue hardship on residents near the toll plaza.

"While it is true that we have many people coming from other

parts of the country that will be traveling through, they are only going through one time," Forbes said. "Whereas these individuals have to do it on a daily basis, so they are going to be bearing that burden every single day. That's why we're fighting hard to make sure we can try to stop it."

A frequently mentioned alternative to tolls is to raise Virginia's gas tax, which has not been done in 25 years. The current tax is 17.5 cents per gallon. Only 10 states have lower gas taxes and Virginia's is less than half North Carolina's.

McDonnell's office referred questions Wednesday to Virginia Secretary of Transportation Sean T. Connaughton. He said that a decision to proceed with tolls ultimately lies with the governor.

"We are pursuing tolling not because we want to," Connaughton said, "but because we have to."

VDOT calculates Interstate 95 will need \$12.1 billion in work over the next 25 years, but only \$2.5 billion will be available during that time, leaving \$9.6 billion unfunded.

Connaughton said more efficient vehicles and alternate-fuel vehicles cut into gas tax revenue and inflation means the money doesn't go as far as it once did.

"I cannot overstate the fact that tolling is going to become a reality in Virginia and around the country, given the dilemma we are facing," he said.

Emporia's Adams said the General Assembly needs to take responsibility for the shortfall.

"The legislature needs to face reality," he said, "and get off this no-tax-increase kick."

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Staff writer Jeremy Slayton contributed to this report.

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Opposition grows to I-95 toll proposal

Published: August 20, 2012

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SIGN UP NEWSLETTER

The group of those opposed to a state proposal to place a toll booth on Interstate 95 near the North Carolina border is growing.

In recent days, the local governments of Petersburg, Hopewell and Prince George counties have all passed resolutions opposing VDOT's proposed toll plan for I-95. Dinwiddie County officials have been critical of the project and the region's planning group - the Tri-Cities Area Metropolitan Planning Organization - has come out against the proposal.

The Tri-Cities is joining the local governments of Emporia, Greensville County and Sussex County in adopting resolutions in opposition the proposed toll plan. Also, the trucking industry is opposing the proposed tolls, according to a media report. A multimedia campaign - including a website called

VirginiaTollFree95.com and companion Facebook page - is being coordinated by the National Association of Truck Stop Operators, the American Trucking Association and the Virginia Trucking Association, according to The Virginian-Pilot.

Joining the opposition has been Republican Congressman Randy Forbes, whose Fourth District includes the I-95 corridor. Forbes sent a letter to fellow Republican Gov. Bob McDonnell and separate letter to Victor Mendez of the Federal Highway Administration expressing his "strong opposition" to the proposal, according to a statement from the congressman.

"Adding tolling stations will disproportionately burden the citizens of [the] region unable to shoulder additional economic challenges," Forbes wrote. "Many of the communities surrounded by the proposed placement of the toll facility are already identified by the Commonwealth of Virginia as 'economically stressed.'"

Forbes said he has opposed the addition of tolls to the I-95 corridor south of Richmond since 2010.

Forbes said tolls will further distress the Southside Virginia economy and discourage economic growth. He also noted it would place a strain on families traveling in the region.

Initial estimates indicate that Virginia Department of Transportation's toll will cost \$4 for cars and \$12 for large trucks each time a vehicle passes through a gantry.

VDOT has said that maintenance and upgrades to I-95 will cost an estimated \$12.1 billion over the next 25 years. The state has budgeted about \$2.5 billion of the repairs - leaving about \$9.6 billion to be filled.

State transportation officials anticipate tolls will raise \$35 million to \$40 million annually, money that can be reinvested in the highway corridor to help plug the estimated \$9.6 billion funding gap over the next 25 years.

The toll is a bad idea. It will place a burden on those already struggling economically in Southside Virginia and will not fully pay the bill for needed repairs on Interstate 95. It also sends a very poor message to those visiting Virginia. Welcome to Virginia and Virginia is for Lovers - now pay up.



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Considering that tourism is a key and growing industry in Virginia, state officials may want to reconsider the message a toll plaza on the border sends to visitors. Also, considering the growing opposition to tolls on Interstate 95, the governor and his administration may want to reconsider the proposal altogether.

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