

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

June 18, 2003

The Honorable Mark R. Warner  
Governor of Virginia  
State Capitol  
Richmond VA 23219

Dear Governor Warner:

We applaud your decision announced yesterday to move ahead with plans to widen I-66 outside the Capital Beltway from Sudley Road to the Route 234 Bypass. We write today to encourage you to go one step further and add an additional outbound lane on I-66 from the Rosslyn tunnel to the Dulles connector.

The footprint for widening I-66 outbound from the Rosslyn tunnel already exists and some estimate that the cost of adding an additional lane to the Dulles connector could be as low as \$18 million. In transportation dollars, that is a small price to pay to help mothers and fathers in northern Virginia spend more time at home rather than sitting in traffic.

As the only governor from northern Virginia since Governor Robb, you know full well that I-66 inside the beltway is at a choke-point morning, noon and night. Rarely is there any time of day that I-66 traffic inside the beltway is flowing smoothly in both directions, weekends included. At a minimum, adding an additional westbound lane to the Dulles connector could help flush out traffic more quickly during the evening rush hour. It also would help with the morning reverse commute. Outbound I-66 is now just as backed up in the morning as it is in the evening as thousands of commuters head to work in Tysons Corner or the Dulles corridor.

Another reason for widening westbound I-66 is the need for better evacuation routes in the region. If westbound traffic is gridlocked every day during the evening rush hour, how can we expect to evacuate Washington, D.C., if there is ever another emergency?

Congestion on I-66 also presents a problem for Dulles airport travelers. Dulles has been called the "economic engine" of northern Virginia. More than 17 million passengers pass through the airport every year for business or pleasure in Virginia, Maryland or the District. That engine would sputter, stall and quit if people cannot easily get to and from

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the airport. Even though the HOV restrictions on I-66 during rush hours do not apply to people going from Washington to the airport, Dulles travelers are now having to build in at least an extra hour to get to the airport because of the traffic congestion. Northern Virginia's economy would be severely impacted if Baltimore/Washington International Airport (BWI) in Maryland becomes more convenient for tourists and business travelers because of the length of time it takes to get from downtown Washington to Dulles.

As a northern Virginian, you know that traffic congestion in the region is wreaking havoc on families, on business and on the environment. You also know that when major arteries are clogged, traffic spreads out onto the side streets and alternate routes creating even more traffic in our neighborhoods. Any improvement to I-66 inside the beltway will help reduce traffic on residential streets, including Route 29, Lorcom Lane, Old Dominion Drive, Washington Boulevard, Lee Highway, Spout Run, Military Road and Route 123.

Another reason for widening I-66 is that the Environmental Protection Agency has placed northern Virginia in non-attainment status for air quality. In fact, the region's clean air status has been moved from serious to severe. The region could risk losing federal highway dollars if it does not work to reduce its ozone levels. Widening I-66 westbound would help cars move freely instead of idling in congestion and creating more air pollution.

Until I-66 is widened you will never begin to solve the transportation crisis facing our region. Neglecting this problem will only worsen the situation. Moms and dads regularly miss little league games, band concerts and other activities their children participate in because they are stuck in traffic. In addition, the cars they are idling in create more and more pollution. We encourage you to put together a group of the citizens from Arlington County – homeowners, civic association heads, business leaders and members of the Board of Supervisors – to begin discussing the possibility of widening outbound I-66.

The group should be briefed on the need and benefit, not only to commuters but to their communities since the widening will get more cars off side streets. They should meet with representatives from the Department of Homeland Security, the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority and Metro to hear why a new outbound lane needs to be added. They also should be able to meet regularly with the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) officials to

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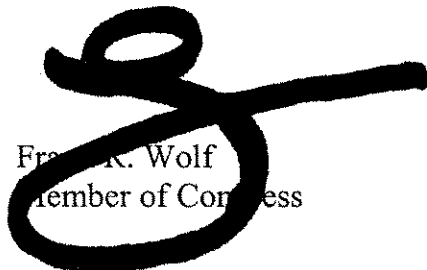
discuss and review any proposals.

This citizens' group also should be made aware of new sound wall and pavement technology that can dramatically decrease noise for the residents along I-66. These technologies should be aggressively explored and, if applicable, used in this project. We would urge you to visit the FHWA's quiet pavement website at [www.fhwa.dot.gov/pavement/ashome](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/pavement/ashome). The website lists several names and studies showing great strides in technology to improve pavement and reduce road noise. This technology could improve the noise situation.

We hope you will give this compromise position a serious look. At least the discussion with the citizens of Arlington should begin.

Best wishes.

Sincerely,



Frank R. Wolf  
Member of Congress



Tom Davis  
Member of Congress