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Contact: Jennifer Pickett
(804) 786-7432
Jennifer.Pickett@drpt.virginia.gov

Virginia Receives Federal Rail Stimulus Funds

\$75 million for Richmond-Washington, DC Corridor Improvements

RICHMOND, Va., January 28, 2010- The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) today recognized Virginia's role in advancing high speed rail in the U.S. with a grant award for \$75 million to support rail improvements in the Richmond-Washington, DC corridor.

The Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) applied for federal funds to support rail improvements in this corridor, which is the highest priority for high speed rail expansion in Virginia.

"Virginia is strategically positioned at the junction of the Northeast and Southeast high speed rail corridors," said DRPT Director Thelma Drake. "Washington, DC to Richmond is the next step in expanding high speed rail on the East Coast. We look forward to working with the FRA to quickly advance these rail improvements and bring high speed rail to Virginia as soon as possible."

The \$75 million grant supports Virginia's top shovel ready project, and is part of an incremental approach to improving passenger rail service in Virginia. The federal program received \$102 billion in funding applications, which underscores the need for dedicated federal rail funding. Federal funding will be an important component of future Virginia rail projects, and funding needs include both capital funds for infrastructure improvements and passenger rail operating funds.

Future projects in the federally designated Southeast High Speed Rail Corridor are currently under development as part of Virginia's strategic rail corridor program, including the Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project. This project is currently in the federal planning process, and a decision is anticipated soon regarding the alternative that will be eligible for federal funding. Once this decision has been reached, DRPT will apply for federal funds to advance the selected alternative.

DRPT will quickly prepare to begin construction on the selected project, and is currently finalizing the construction plan based on the grant award received. Additional details regarding the construction schedule will be available soon.

About Virginia's Federal Rail Stimulus Applications

Virginia submitted two applications for federal stimulus funding. The first application was for \$74.8 million in improvements between Richmond and Washington, DC, and Virginia received a grant award today for this project. The second application was for \$1.8 billion in rail capacity improvements between Washington, DC and Petersburg. Complete details on the funding applications and maps of the rail corridor are available online at <http://www.drpt.virginia.gov/news/details.aspx?id=441>. Today's grant award is an important step forward for the critical Washington, DC to Richmond corridor.

Virginia is also preparing to apply for federal funding to advance the Richmond/Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Project. The project is currently in the federal planning process.

About DRPT

The Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) is the state agency for rail, public transportation and commuter services in Virginia. DRPT's mission is to improve mobility and expand transportation choices in Virginia. Visit us at www.drpt.virginia.gov.

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