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CONGRESSIONAL NEWS  
**FRANK R. WOLF**

Member of Congress  10th District, Virginia



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**To:** 10<sup>th</sup> District Homeowner Association Presidents  
**From:** Rep. Frank R. Wolf  
**Date:** April 21, 2004  
**Re:** Transportation Update

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Knowing how important transportation issues are to our region, I wanted to make you aware of legislation now moving through Congress that contains funding for major transportation improvements in northern Virginia. I hope you will share this information with your membership.

Congress every six years typically acts on a major federal highway, safety and transit aid reauthorization bill. The House passed its version of the Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users – commonly referred to as TEA-LU – in early April. Differences between the House and Senate versions of this critical six-year spending plan will be settled on in the coming weeks. Final passage of the measure is expected this summer.

#### **DULLES MASS TRANSIT**

I am pleased to report the House version of this legislation includes the all-important authorizing language necessary to build a mass transit system from the West Falls Church Metro station out the Dulles Corridor. To date, I have secured more than \$160 million in federal funding for this project, but an authorization is necessary to ensure that federal funding can continue to be secured through the appropriations process over the next six years.

#### **I-66 IMPROVEMENTS**

In addition, the bill authorizes \$5 million to help pay for the widening of I-66 westbound from the Rosslyn Tunnel to the Dulles Connector. I secured \$1 million in current year appropriations to begin studying the feasibility of the project. The footprint to widen I-66 already exists, and I am told the project can be done with no impact to neighborhoods along I-66.

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I have urged the state to move as quickly as possible to open up this choke point. I also have encouraged the state to consider the use of new quiet pavement technology for this stretch of I-66. Another lane on I-66 inside the Beltway will increase capacity, take cars off residential side streets in communities near the highway, and improve air quality by reducing idling traffic.

The highway bill also includes authorization to spend \$4.5 million to improve the I-66/Route 29 interchange in Gainesville, an area experiencing severe congestion. Prince William County and the Commonwealth of Virginia both have identified this project as a priority. I have already secured \$1.75 million in current year appropriations for this project.

#### **ADDITIONAL PROJECTS**

The federal aid highway bill also includes authorization to spend:

- \$6 million to help with the construction costs of widening Route 7 from the Reston Parkway to Rolling Holly Drive in Fairfax County. Preliminary planning and design work has been completed and this funding will go toward construction costs.
- \$2 million for preliminary engineering to widen the Route 7 Bypass in Loudoun County from East Market Street in Leesburg to the intersection with Route 9.
- \$1 million for improvements and traffic calming on Route 50 at Gilbert's Corner in Loudoun County.
- \$6 million to purchase Metro buses which operate on natural gas, a cleaner fuel.

#### **ROUTE 7 TRAFFIC FLOW**

In addition to these projects, you may recall that I worked to obtain \$500,000 in current fiscal year appropriations for traffic monitoring and signalization equipment in the Route 7 corridor from Leesburg to Tysons Corner. This state-of-the-art technology allows the remote monitoring of traffic flow so signals can be quickly changed when accidents or other traffic problems occur.

The signalization project is an example of a transportation improvement that can be made now as we also work on long-term projects to help improve mobility and help people stop wasting time sitting in traffic congestion. I will continue to

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look for ways to make similar improvements on major traffic arteries in our region.

### **COMMITMENT TO FIGHTING GRIDLOCK**

Over the past 20 years I have been involved in most of the major transportation initiatives in northern Virginia, including: obtaining full funding for the Metrorail system; funding mass transit in the Dulles Corridor; lowering car pool restrictions on I-66; adding a reversible lane on the Theodore Roosevelt Bridge; improving safety and driving conditions on the George Washington Memorial Parkway, including the additional lane from Spout Run to the Roosevelt Bridge; advancing the Woodrow Wilson Bridge reconstruction project, and advocating telecommuting in both the private sector and the federal government. Improvements to getting on and off the 14<sup>th</sup> Street bridge from the Parkway are ongoing.

I also have pushed Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) to work with the Virginia State Police, the U.S. Park Police, the District of Columbia and Maryland to better coordinate efforts to improve vehicle incident management in our region, speed up accident response time and clear disabled vehicles from the region's major arteries.

In addition, I have brought to VDOT's attention the need to lift HOV restrictions on I-66, I-95, and I-395 when local schools close because of weather emergencies to provide better access and more commuting options for those workers who still must drive into the nation's capital.

It's not just a question of mobility. At the heart of finding solutions to reduce traffic congestion for thousands of commuters who drive the highways every day in northern Virginia is giving people more control over their lives – giving working parents more time to spend with their families, giving everyone time to shop, sing in the church choir, go to the movies, coach little league, or take part in any other community or leisure activity, whatever the choice may be.

You may be assured that I will continue to make improving transportation a top priority.

I hope this information is helpful to you.

Best wishes.