

**Remarks for Mayor Paul D. Fraim
HSR Public Hearing
Half Moone Cruise and Celebration Center
January 28, 2010 @ 5:30 PM**

My name is Paul Fraim, and I have the privilege of serving the residents of the City of Norfolk as their Mayor.

I would like to thank the many organizations and speakers that have come forward in support of the agreed upon regional vision of High Speed Rail connecting to Hampton Roads. The importance of High Speed Rail to the future growth and development of the region cannot be overstated.

This is especially true in light of the President's announcement today awarding \$8 billion in stimulus funds for high-speed rail.

Some believe we are currently behind other regions in making our vision a reality; however, I am convinced that through a united partnership of all levels of government, the region's railroads, and our business community we can advance the Hampton Roads rail program forward and successfully compete at the national level both in the immediate and longer term.

Given the amount of time that has transpired in order to get us to the point of having a Draft Environmental Impact Statement, it is understandable to find a number of modifications needed before the draft document is finalized.

In this regard, I am submitting for the record a detailed Technical Memorandum setting forth issues and concerns that should be addressed in both finalizing the current draft document and also in moving forward to the next levels of analysis in the federal process.

For every major comment area in the Technical Memorandum, we have also recommended corrective actions we believe are appropriate to address our concerns.

I want to stress that we have undertaken this analysis and offer these proposed corrections, in the spirit of wanting to be a supportive and participative partner. We believe that through this kind of collaboration we can best ensure that these required steps are completed as quickly as possible.

Proper attention to these issues will assure that the final environmental document addresses both our concerns, as well as the regional consensus on the future of high speed and

intercity passenger rail service to our region as expressed by the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization in October of 2009.

I will not attempt to list all items from the Technical Memorandum here, however some of the most significant points – many of which may be addressed by other speakers in greater detail, – include the following:

- We need a true High Speed alternative for Southside Hampton Roads reflective of HRTPO resolution # 2009-05 incorporated in the analysis. This can be best accomplished through an enhancement of Alternative 1.
- The assumption that a 3rd Crossing will exist should be excluded from all base alternatives.
- A true High Speed Train set should be used for the modeling of all High Speed alternatives.
- “Economies of Scale” associated with higher service frequency which we expect to be justified based upon a revised ridership forecast associated with true High Speed Rail train service to the region.
- An updated Capacity Analysis for each corridor should be carried out in conjunction with the freight railroads.
- We must ensure that there is an appropriate allocation of Costs and Revenues in the Petersburg to Richmond segment of the shared Southeast High Speed Rail and Southside Hampton Roads High Speed rail corridor.
- Finally we must make sure that Federal Railroad Administration financial and economic criteria are consistently used to evaluate all options.

The overall effect of these changes will show that an enhanced Alternative 1, consistent with HRTPO Resolution 2009-05 will provide the most effective option for High Speed Rail service to Southside Hampton Roads and enhanced intercity passenger rail service to the Peninsula.

As I mentioned before, I firmly believe that the completion of this work can best be advanced as a cooperative partnership between the State, the region as represented by the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization, and the region’s freight railroads.

All key stakeholders must be included in the development of a comprehensive rail plan for the Hampton Roads region in order to guarantee our best possible result.

We look forward to working with you in partnership so that together we can make high speed and enhanced intercity passenger rail service a reality for the Hampton Roads region.

Thank you for your work to bring us to this point. And we look forward to your favorable consideration.