



May 3, 2021

National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board  
Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments  
777 North Capitol Street NE, Suite 300  
Washington, DC 20002

Dear Chair Allen,

The Arlington Chamber of Commerce encourages the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board to include cross-river rail service as part of its Visualize 2045 long-range transportation plan. Regional investments are critical to improving the connectivity of the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia, but such direct passenger rail connection is not included in the draft of Visualize 2045.

The current regional rail network connects both Maryland and Virginia with DC, but requires any person traveling between Maryland and Virginia to change between MARC and Virginia Railway Express service, or to connect to Metro. The lack of a seamless connection for rail passengers prevents Greater Washington from enjoying the benefits of a unified rail network, such as facilitating commutes between a home in Maryland and a job in Virginia, or vice versa.

The construction of the new Long Bridge and establishment of the Virginia Passenger Rail Authority expect to expand passenger rail capacity within the Commonwealth and to open opportunity for more connection between Virginia, the District of Columbia, and Maryland. Regional leadership from the Transportation Planning Board can help the region to take advantage of this additional connectivity by including cross river MARC/VRE operation in Visualize 2045.

We thank you for your consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kate Bates". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kate Bates  
President & CEO