



January 30, 2020

The Honorable Richard L. Saslaw
Senate of Virginia
Pocahontas Building, Room E602
900 East Main Street
Richmond, VA 23219

Dear Senator Saslaw,

The Arlington Chamber of Commerce is pleased to support Governor Northam's transportation package and SB 890, which you have patroned. A strong infrastructure, including a robust transportation network, is essential for businesses to grow. We support investments such as these to maintain and to improve Virginia's public infrastructure to sustain the Commonwealth's economic engine.

The package includes support for critical infrastructure projects such as a new Long Bridge and improvements to the Rosslyn Metro station, potentially including a new tunnel under the Potomac River. These projects will help connect our region, removing congestion on Metrorail, vastly improving Virginia Railway Express (VRE) and regional Amtrak service, and opening up the possibility of cross-river commuter rail. These connections will support continued economic expansion and job growth in Virginia.

The Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTA) remains an important source of funding for critical projects in Arlington and our neighboring communities. While the bill increases funding for NVTA, the Chamber supports restoring NVTA's funding fully to its pre-2018 level. The Chamber likewise supports the 5-cent increase in the grantor's tax contained in SB 890 and the amended version of HB 1414, rather than the 10-cent increase originally proposed in HB 1414. This approach helps ensure that the sources of revenues for transportation remain broad-based.

The ability to connect people across our region is critical to our continued economic growth. With an increasingly 24-hour workforce and connections to the entire world, the investments supported by SB 890 will help Virginia to remain an economic leader in the decade to come. We thank you for your attention to 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

CC: Senate Finance and Appropriations Committee members; Arlington County Senate Delegation