

Study Resolution

Transportation Infrastructure and Funding

Authorized by the Commission on November 16, 2020

WHEREAS, Virginia has diverse transportation needs and transportation facilities, such as the Metro in Northern Virginia, the Port of Virginia in Hampton Roads, highways traversing the mountainous regions of Southwest Virginia, and intercity rail throughout the state; and

WHEREAS, prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, changes were made to expand transportation revenues but gasoline tax revenue was still highly dependent on vehicle miles traveled by increasingly fuel-efficient vehicles; and

WHEREAS, during the pandemic, vehicle miles traveled declined substantially and it is unclear whether miles traveled will return to pre-pandemic levels, which may cause a permanent reduction in transportation revenues; and

WHEREAS, due to the substantial investments in transportation, and the various entities that have the authority to administer such investments, there is a need for an independent review of the current state of transportation funding and systems in the Commonwealth; now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission shall direct staff to study the state of the Commonwealth's transportation infrastructure, funding, and preparedness for change.

In conducting its study, the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission shall review (i) the state of the highways and transportation infrastructure in the Commonwealth; (ii) funding sources used by transportation entities; (iii) trends in vehicle miles traveled and changes in commuting patterns; (iv) challenges facing transportation facilities and infrastructure, particularly the Port of Virginia, Interstate 81, and Interstate 95, due to increased activity and use and potential solutions for such challenges; (v) the impact of the increase in the number of vehicles with noncombustion engines or more fuel-efficient combustion engines on transportation funding and alternatives to ensure that the owners and operators of such vehicles are contributing a fair share to transportation funding in the Commonwealth; and (vi) the preparedness to adapt to changes within the transportation landscape due to advances in technology.

JLARC shall make recommendations as necessary and review other issues as warranted.

All agencies of the Commonwealth, including the Virginia Department of Transportation, Department of Rail and Public Transportation, Commonwealth Transportation Board, the Virginia Academy of Science, Engineering, and Medicine, the Virginia Tech Transportation Institute, and Metropolitan Planning Organizations shall provide assistance, information, and data to JLARC for this study, upon request. JLARC staff shall have access to all information in the possession of agencies pursuant to § 30-59 and § 30-69 of the Code of Virginia. No provision of the Code of Virginia shall be interpreted as limiting or restricting the access of JLARC staff to information pursuant to its statutory authority.