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Responses to these questions should be emailed to Lisa Guthrie, VTA Executive Director, lguthrie@img-llc.net by COB on Friday, September 1, 2017.

1. A long-term, sustainable investment in transit capital is critical for Virginia's economic vitality.

The ability for the Commonwealth and its local governments to continue providing critically needed funding to sustain transit capital investments and keep our transit systems in a state of good repair is at risk due to the expiration of the Capital Project Revenue bond proceeds. These funds are critical in enabling local transit systems to invest in replacement buses, rail cars, infrastructure, facilities, technology, and other capital needs. A failure by the Commonwealth to provide sufficient capital funding will have a cascading effect on the ability of these systems to operate safe and reliable service and may result in the loss of federal funds if transit systems are unable to provide matching funds for capital assistance from the Federal Transit Administration.

An evaluation of the Commonwealth's documented funding needs and projected revenues has conservatively identified an average revenue gap of \$130 million annually over the next ten years, representing a drop of over 40 percent from existing funding levels.

Given this, will you commit to identifying new revenue sources for transit capital?

It is absolutely critical that we fill this gap in funding. Transit providers need these funds to keep their buses and other infrastructure in a state of good repair. The safety and reliability of our transit systems are at stake. If nothing is done, we face the loss of 1,000 jobs and \$200 million in economic activity. Buses will stop running, Virginians will be stranded, and localities will be left holding the bag.

Transit is key to creating the type of communities that attract new businesses and create high-paying jobs. For example, in Hampton Roads, more than 75 percent of businesses considering relocation to the area ask about public transportation. In Northern Virginia, multi-modal, transit-oriented development has created communities that are recognized nationwide for their desirability for living and working.

But this is not an urban issue alone. We have transit providers in all parts of Virginia. The rural elderly and disabled rely on paratransit operators like JAUNT in Albemarle County or Mountain Empire Older Citizens in Lee, Scott, and Wise Counties. Almost 1,000 riders rely on the Eastern Shore's STAR Transit every week.

I am proud of my record on this issue. As a state senator I proudly cast my vote for the 2013 transportation funding deal that made new funds available for transit. I stand by that vote today, and I will protect that funding formula from efforts to unravel it. As Lieutenant Governor, I supported the 2015 session's HB1887 that dedicated a further \$50M/year to transit capital projects.

If so, please specify which additional revenue sources you could support?

Transit funding cannot be a political football. We cannot play games with the livelihoods of thousands of Virginians. I was very encouraged by Del. Chris Peace's bill from the 2017 session that pulled together a group of experts to review transit's funding needs and make recommendations on how to fill them. I look forward to working with legislative leaders on both sides of the aisle to review these recommendations and see which could work in our Commonwealth.

2. The Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) is struggling to overcome chronic safety and reliability problems, a massive unfunded pension liability and years of expensive deferred maintenance. The transit system — created by Virginia, Maryland and Washington, D.C., in 1967 — needs about \$15.5 billion for capital needs alone over the next 10 years, according to General Manager and CEO Paul Wiedefeld.

Ray LaHood, the former Republican congressman and U.S. secretary of transportation, is currently conducting a review of WMATA's governance, performance, labor policies and to develop recommendations to fix the system.

Pending the outcome of his review, are you willing to lend your support to implement the recommendations?

While I cannot commit to supporting the recommendations before they are finalized, I am very encouraged by the direction Ray LaHood and Paul Wiedefeld are taking. I fully support the creation of a Reform Board that can work within the parameters of the existing WMATA Compact and can make the politically difficult decisions that are needed to keep Metro running. I am confident that Virginia's nominee to the Board will keep the concerns of Northern Virginia's citizens and local governments at the top of his or her priority list, along with the concerns of Virginia's taxpayers.

Furthermore, I have been consistently impressed by the work of General Manager Paul Wiedefeld. He and I have developed a good working relationship, and I believe he has the skills and the credibility to fix what is broken at WMATA. And he has a strong partner in the men and women who labor on Metro's buses and trains everyday. While they may not always agree on every point, I know both parties keep the interests of WMATA and the region as a whole in the front of their minds.

Metro cannot be allowed to fail. There is no Plan B for the region if Metro can't continue to provide high quality transit service. For decades, Metro has been at the heart of smart, sustainable urban planning that has made Northern Virginia's localities famous for their livability. For example, Arlington was recognized by Niche as the best place to live in 2016. The county's multi-modal, transit-oriented development was cited as a key factor in their decision.

What revenue sources will you support to fund WMATA's needs?

Over the past four years, the Virginia has committed roughly \$200M/year to WMATA. I will sustain at least that level of support for the duration of my administration. Additionally, I will lend my full support to the efforts of Paul Wiedefeld and the Reform Board as they develop new funding strategies to put Metro back on the right track.

3. The Commonwealth has invested \$614 million, (in state, federal, and private funding) through the six-year improvement plan process, over the last decade to sustain, improve, and expand intercity passenger rail across the state. This has resulted in ridership nearly doubling, 78 percent of Virginians having new or improved service, thousands of jobs sustained, and Virginia having the top four (out of 30+) best performing regional corridors in Amtrak's entire network.

Do you support the state continuing to invest in improving its intercity passenger rail system?

There is no question that the state should continue to improve and expand intercity passenger rail. I am very excited to see the resumption of passenger service to Roanoke later this year. And I am pleased to see the addition of new trains to Hampton Roads and Lynchburg. I intend to build on these successes as Governor by continuing to support the Atlantic Gateway Project, a historic expansion of our freight and passenger rail capacity.

The biggest challenge to the improvement of passenger rail in Virginia is the chokepoint at the Long Bridge across the Potomac. No matter what we build in Virginia, we will always be limited by that bridge. As you probably know, the Long Bridge is in the jurisdiction of Washington, DC. I will put expansion of the Long Bridge at the top of my regional agenda in talks with Washington's Mayor and City Council.

4. Had Virginia had already built higher speed rail, the Commonwealth's rail travelers in 2016 would have saved over 823,770 hours worth of time by having more reliable and shorter trips. Currently, Virginia has one high speed rail (HSR) study underway (final phase of the Washington, DC to Richmond, VA corridor), one HSR study in the pipeline (Phase I of Richmond, VA to Hampton Roads corridor was finished in 2013), and one HSR study just completed (Richmond, VA to Raleigh, NC). The completion of these studies is vital for the state to be positioned to take advantage of future federal rail grants.

Do you support the completion of the DC to Richmond and Richmond to Hampton Roads federal high speed rail studies? If no, why not?

I support the completion of Washington-Richmond study and the undertaking of the Richmond-Hampton Roads study. Working with the federal government can be challenging at times, but these studies, and the implementation of their recommendations, will remain a top priority for our Intergovernmental Affairs Office in Washington, DC. Higher speed rail is critical to our long-term economic development.

5. **If elected, how might you demonstrate your commitment to strengthening transit and intercity passenger rail in Virginia through your policy, budget, business recruitment, or legislative priorities?**

Multi-modal solutions are the only path forward for our Commonwealth's transportation system. Transit helps people get where they want to go in a sustainable, environmentally friendly way. And every person who is riding a bus to work represents one fewer car on the road, reducing congestion. As Governor, I will continue supporting a smart, results-driven funding scheme that ensures that our transportation funds are spent on the best projects possible, including transit and rail. I also want to explore ways to help localities spur transit-oriented development that attracts the next generation of business leaders and job creators.

Thank you for your responses. They will be shared with members of our two organizations and on our websites and in our social media so that our advocates can be informed about both gubernatorial candidates' positions on transit and rail.