



TOWN OF CLIFTON FORGE

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A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING RAIL ALTERNATIVES TO COMPLIMENT PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS TO I-81

WHEREAS the I-81 corridor is increasingly the route of choice for trucks traveling between the northeast, the south and the southwest due in part to increased congestion on I-95 as well as expanded shipments generated by the North American Free Trade Act; and

WHEREAS two multi-national corporations, Halliburton and Fluor Corporations, have submitted proposals to the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) to expand the number of lanes and other appurtenances on I-81; and

WHEREAS Norfolk-Southern Corporation estimates that seventy percent (70%) of truck traffic on I-81 passes through Virginia to destinations south or north; and

WHEREAS the minimal rail freight proposals included in the Star Solutions and Fluor Public Private Partnership Act proposals do not adequately address rail freight potential in the whole I-81 corridor; and

WHEREAS these same proposals provide no option for passenger rail, although upgrading the corridor's main rail line secures the passenger rail option; and

WHEREAS the Commonwealth of Virginia is now planning the future of the I-81 corridor, those decisions will dramatically impact the future of western Virginia; and

WHEREAS the Commonwealth of Virginia's decision on this corridor will determine whether I-81 and connecting interstates will become a multi-state "East Coast Truck By-Pass"; and

WHEREAS the increased use of railroads to move freight will improve safety by reducing dangerous vehicular congestion on I-81, improve energy conservation by reducing the amount of diesel fuel consumed for freight transportation, improve the health of people and other forms of life in western Virginia by dampening the rate of increase in diesel engine-generated toxic emissions along I-81; and

WHEREAS the creation of additional freight rail capacity paralleling I-81, in Virginia and Tennessee, may spur creation of new freight rail capacity nationwide, resulting in more shipping options at lower cost for the Nation's businesses in general and provide the potential for increased rail use in the Alleghany Highlands;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Council of the Town of Clifton Forge agrees with and supports the Roanoke City Council in their effort to petition for the development and promotion of rail freight and passenger service parallel to I-81, to compliment limited highway-widening and to move a large volume of the long-distance freight traffic from trucks on I-81 to freight trains on dual track, high-speed rails parallel to I-81.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clifton Forge Town Council does encourage all Local Governments in the Roanoke Valley Alleghany Regional Commission to coordinate their efforts and to adopt similar resolutions of support to help effect rail development in the I-81 corridor.

Adopted: June 10, 2003

ATTEST:

Nellie D Friel 1st
Nellie D. Friel, Clerk of Council