

**Resolution by
The Rockbridge County Board of Supervisors
Concerning Plans for
Interstate 81**

WHEREAS the I-81 corridor is increasingly the route of choice for trucks traveling between the northeast and the south and southwest because of congestion on I-95 and expanding shipments generated by the North American Free Trade Act (NAFTA) ; 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, the 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, and its decision will have significant impacts for 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 Bypass"; 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, and 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 the creation of new freight rail capacity nationwide, resulting in more shipping options at lower cost for the nation's business;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Rockbridge Board of Supervisors requests the Virginia Department of Transportation, when evaluating alternatives solutions under the National Environmental Review Act, to consider innovative concepts, such as the "truck -ferry" and "Steel Interstate", that have the potential to divert time-sensitive freight from trucks on I-81 to rail; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Rockbridge County Board of Supervisors requests the Commonwealth of Virginia through the Virginia Department of Transportation, and other appropriate agencies, to work with their counterparts in Maryland, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, and West Virginia along with various railroad companies to explore a viable I-81 rail alternative.

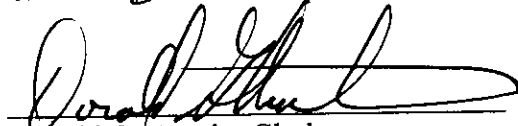
Adopted this 14th day of July 2003.

ROCKBRIDGE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

By:


Chairman, Board of Supervisors

Attest:


Donald G. Austin, Clerk