



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Office of the Governor

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July 9, 2008

Ms. Meredith Richards
Chair, Piedmont Rail Coalition
1621 Trailridge Road
Charlottesville, Virginia 22903

Dear Ms. Richards:

Thank you for your recent letter regarding passenger rail service between Lynchburg and Washington DC.

The Kaine Administration is committed to improving both passenger and freight rail service in the Commonwealth. The Department of Rail and Public Transportation is currently working on the Statewide Rail Plan. The plan will include both passenger and freight rail priorities. I have attached a list of locations and times for the public hearings on the draft plan.

The Department of Rail and Public Transportation worked with Amtrak to determine the costs and feasibility of extending and increasing passenger rail service in the Commonwealth. This report, titled "Advancing Passenger Rail in the Commonwealth of Virginia," can be found at <http://www.drpt.virginia.gov/studies/files/Amtrak%20Report%201-25-08.pdf>. As you know, the report studied the Lynchburg to Washington DC corridor and determined that approximately \$1.9 annually is needed to support the operational costs of this service. No funding sources currently exist to provide this operating subsidy. However, the Commonwealth has identified one-time capital funding to enable expanded Lynchburg to Washington DC passenger rail service.

Expanding passenger rail service in the Commonwealth requires a funding commitment from state, local, private, and federal sources. We remain hopeful that the General Assembly will pass legislation that includes a commitment to operational funding for intercity rail service. The special session legislation proposed by Governor Kaine (House Bill 6026) included such a provision.

Thank you again for your recent letter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Pierce R. Homer".

Pierce R. Homer