



Responses to Virginians for Better Transportation's (VBT) Candidates Questionnaire

Virginians for Better Transportation (VBT) recently disseminated a transportation specific questionnaire to all of the candidates running for the House of Delegates as well as all of the candidates running for Governor, Lieutenant Governor and Attorney General.

So far we have heard the following:

All candidates who have responded believe that Virginia is facing a transportation funding crisis and the large majority of respondents ranked the importance of finding a transportation funding solution as a 10 or higher on a scale from 1-10.

Breakdown of the respondents who rated the importance of finding a transportation funding solution as a 10 or higher:

- **Jody M. Wagner (Democrat – Lieutenant Governor candidate)**

- Wrote, "In the future, I believe all options should – and must – be on the table when it comes to funding transportation. Due to the economic environment, I don't believe right now is the time to raise taxes. However, as the economy and employment returns to normal growth levels, we should consider all of our options."
- When asked about additional proposals or ideas she may have to help fix the transportation funding issue in Virginia, Wagner wrote, "Finding a long-term funding solution for transportation is critical. As the Treasurer and Secretary of Finance, I've worked for seven years to help form a bipartisan consensus, but we've been stymied every step of the way by people more interested in playing politics than in actually addressing our challenges. However, at a time when Virginia just recently went through a fiscal year three times as bad as any on record, when we have hundreds of thousands of families and businesses struggling to hold on financially, I just don't believe we can raise or create new taxes right now. When the economy recovers – and it will soon – we can consider new sources of revenue for the future."

Until those revenues recover, we should re-think the terms of this debate. The gas tax is seen by many as a panacea, despite the fact that it's a depleting resource as vehicles become more fuel-efficient. I have been a strong advocate for smart growth planning. The population boom across Virginia in the last two decades has resulted in a majority of our population living in sprawling suburbs and heavily dependent on our over-used roads and highways. We need to implement smarter growth patterns now, to avoid exacerbating the problem. Virginians should live and work in the same community, which will greatly relieve the traffic pressures we currently face. I believe telework needs a much bigger place in our economy, to get drivers off the roads, and to give parents more time with their families. Rail both

within our metropolitan areas as well as connecting them, should be a major goal for the Commonwealth as well.

As Lt. Governor, I will continue my work from the last seven years to create a consensus, comprehensive plan to fix our transportation crisis in Virginia, and ensure that the Commonwealth is prepared for future economic growth and success.”

- **Del. Danny C. “Dan” Bowling (Democrat – 3rd District)**

- Wrote, “I will vote for any plan that can get enough votes to pass the House of Delegates. I will not vote for flawed plans that can not pass. Any plan I support must be statewide and sustainable.”
- When asked about additional proposals or ideas he may have to help fix the transportation funding issue in Virginia, Del. Bowling wrote, “We have seen them all. But, not enough support to pass them. Work on others and I will support any statewide sustainable plan.”

- **Richard P. “Dickie” Bell (Republican – 20th District)**

- Would support tolls (in certain situations).
- When asked about additional proposals or ideas he may have to help fix the transportation funding issue in Virginia, Bell wrote, “More private capital is needed to help solve transportation problems. Some roads should be leased to private companies for tolling operations. A statewide program could produce thousands of jobs and billions of dollars. I also believe we must pursue a multi-modal system that includes rail. I also support safe offshore drilling and exploration by lease agreement, and designating the revenue from those leases to transportation improvements and maintenance.”

- **Dr. Greg Marrow (Democrat – 25th District)**

- Would support increasing the tax base with green collar job creation as well as departmental efficiency audits to help Virginia fix its transportation funding crisis.

- **Matt A. Carson (Independent – 30th District)**

- Would support Public Private Transportation Act (PPTA) funding and other solutions.
- When asked about additional proposals or ideas he may have to help fix the transportation funding issue in Virginia, Carson wrote that he would support privatizing more state projects because studies have shown that other states save money by doing this and the money ends up in communities across the state.

- **Del. L. Scott Lingamfelter (Republican – 31st District)**
 - Would support PPTA funding, tolls, gas tax (with reform to the current system), General Fund allocations, bonds, fee based ideas and sales of ABC stores.
 - When asked about additional proposals or ideas he may have to help fix the transportation funding issue in Virginia, Del. Lingamfelter wrote, “We must get the Fed to recognize they must see that the metro region needs Fed help. They tend to wash their hands of us.”

- **Del. Kenneth R. Plum (Democrat – 36th District)**
 - Would support PPTA funding, tolls, gas tax, sales tax, bonds, special tax districts and vehicle miles driven tax.
 - When asked about additional proposals or ideas he may have to help fix the transportation funding issue in Virginia, Del. Plum wrote that he would follow the Baliles model from 1986 and get everyone together to agree on a transportation funding plan.

- **Del. Vivian E. Watts (Democrat – 39th District)**
 - Would support PPTA funding, tolls, gas tax, sales tax, bonds, vehicle titling tax, authorization to enact local taxes dedicated to regional transportation authority and a constitutional amendment to bar the Transportation Trust Fund – which by law (Va. Code) passed as part of the 1986 Special Session is supposed to be used for construction – from being used for maintenance, as has occurred since 2001 through budget language. Del. Watts also wrote that, a fix must include new statewide tax revenue and optional regional tax revenue supplemented any or all of the other means of finance.
 - When asked about additional proposals or ideas he may have to help fix the transportation funding issue in Virginia, Del. Watts wrote, “I fully support all alternatives to reduce vehicle use and improve traffic flow in Northern Virginia, such as increased Metro capacity, expanded transit alternatives, computerized traffic management, and telecommuting. However, significant public funding is essential to achieve meaningful traffic reduction through these means.”

- **Susan S. Conrad (Democrat – 40th District)**
 - Would support PPTA funding, tolls, gas tax, sales tax, General Fund allocations and bonds.
 - When asked about additional proposals or ideas she may have to help fix the transportation funding issue in Virginia, Conrad wrote that she would propose tax credits for businesses that encourage teleworking and alternate work hour schedules as well as Federal funds to compensate Northern Virginia for gridlock caused by massive relocation of Department of Defense employees from Arlington County to Fort Belvoir and Fort Meade under BRAC.

- **Del. Mark D. Sickles (Democrat – 43rd District)**
 - Would support PPTA funding, tolls, gas tax, sales tax (only for regional plan) and bonds. Sickles also wrote, “I voted for Saslaw bill without the gas tax. Am willing to vote for a similar bill with a regional plan that stays in region, and statewide maintenance fix.”
 - When asked about additional proposals or ideas he may have to help fix the transportation funding issue in Virginia, Sickles wrote, “I am not opposed to creating a Baliles-like commission, although I don’t believe one is necessarily needed. I believe the Saslaw bill (SB 6009) was the best bill I’ve been able to vote for in my six years, and would be willing to introduce or co-patron a similar bill in the future.”
- **Del. David L. Englin (Democrat – 45th District)**
 - Would support PPTA funding (with better transparency and oversight than currently), gas tax, sales tax and bonds.
- **Joshua F. Ruebner (Green – 47th District)**
 - Would support General Fund allocations.
 - When asked about additional proposals or ideas he may have to help fix the transportation funding issue in Virginia, Ruebner wrote, “I support greatly increasing taxes on wealthy individuals and corporations to pay for needed transportation funds from General Fund allocations.”
- **Cynthia Neff (Democrat – 58th District)**
 - Would support General Fund allocations, bonds, making numerous revenue-neutral modifications to the way the commonwealth funds transportation, such as shifting away from newly low-impact funding sources like unleaded gas taxes and toward high-impact funding sources like taxes on diesel fuel.
 - When asked about additional proposals or ideas she may have to help fix the transportation funding issue in Virginia, Neff wrote that she would support strengthening public-private partnerships and expanding innovative funding mechanisms; enacting a “Red, White and Green” sales tax holiday to encourage consumer investments in low-impact transportation technology; and encouraging localities to adopt and integrate efficient land use management to transportation strategies.
- **Gary R. Reinhardt (Independent – 65th District)**
 - Would support PPTA, gas tax and bonds.
 - When asked about additional proposals or ideas he may have to help fix the transportation funding issue in Virginia, Reinhardt wrote, “A dedicated transportation fund to fix roads and expand passenger and freight rail.”

- **Del. C. Chuck Caputo (Democrat – 67th District)**
 - Would support gas tax, sales tax (on vehicle sales), auto insurance premium taxes, DMV fees and taxes on rental cars. Del. Caputo also wrote, “I will continue to vote for sustained, dedicated revenue for NoVa transportation that does not take money away from education.”
 - When asked about additional proposals or ideas he may have to help fix the transportation funding issue in Virginia, Del. Caputo wrote, “I think we need to change funding formulas from number of road miles to number of lane miles travelled. This will bring more of NoVa’s tax dollars back to Northern Virginia.”
- **Joseph D. Morrissey (Democrat – 74th District)**
 - Would support gas tax and bonds.
 - When asked about additional proposals or ideas he may have to help fix the transportation funding issue in Virginia, Morrissey wrote, “I am a strong proponent of a gas tax – user fee. It (i.e. user fee) is the fairest and best way to pay for our road and rail service. If we were to issue bonds, I would want the debt service on said bonds to be paid from the gas tax revenue.”
- **Del. Harry R. “Bob” Purkey (Republican – 82nd District)**
 - Would support PPTA, tolls, gas tax (if the money generated would stay in Hampton Roads), General Fund allocations, and bonds.
 - When asked about additional proposals or ideas he may have to help fix the transportation funding issue in Virginia, Del. Purkey wrote that he would also support an economic task force of state business leaders to get their input on necessary steps to take to stimulate Virginia’s economy.
- **John O. Parmele, Jr. (Independent – 82nd District)**
 - Would support increased fines for willful driving infractions (speeding, DUI, reckless driving, etc.), a two to three cent (negotiable) per gallon increase in the state’s 17.5 cent per gallon current gas tax, General Obligation Bonds and as a last result, tolls, with E-Z Pass lanes to speed traffic flow.
 - When asked about additional proposals or ideas he may have to help fix the transportation funding issue in Virginia, Parmele wrote, “Normally, I would lead the fight against new or increased taxes, but the gas tax is something we NEED to address if we expect good roads, not only for ourselves but for the many visitors who come to this area annually. I also (now) support the HR light rail system, which – in order to be cost effective – have to run from the Norfolk airport (ORF), to U.S. Naval Base, to Old Dominion University, to downtown Norfolk, to the Va. Beach Convention Center, and on to the Oceanfront. This should connect to a westward route to Richmond; and onto a N-S East Coast Rail Corridor. The current federal stimulus is nice, but when it runs out we will have some painful decisions to make.”

- **Peter W. Schmidt (Democrat – 82nd District)**
 - Would support PPTA funding, tolls, gas tax, sales tax, bonds, congestion (value pricing), gas guzzler taxes tied to cafe standards, more HOV lanes and rail (light and high speed). Schmidt also wrote, "Any funding source must be dedicated and lock boxed."
 - When asked about additional proposals or ideas he may have to help fix the transportation funding issue in Virginia, Schmidt wrote that he would support having an intellectually honest discussion on project prioritization and funding options, then implement them without fear of political reprisal. In Hampton Roads, buy several years with congestion pricing at all four tunnels to equalize traffic flow during peak congestion hours (7-9 a.m. and 4-6 p.m.).
- **French D. Mackes, Jr. (Constitution – 85th District)**
 - Would support General Fund allocations, bonds and a reduction in state spending elsewhere (for example, the Virginia Information Technologies Agency) and instead spending that taxpayer money on transportation.
- **Del. G. Glen Oder (Republican – 94th District)**
 - Would support PPTA, tolls, General Fund allocations, bonds, and the allocation of 30 percent of future revenues from growth areas of our economy.
 - When asked about additional proposals or ideas he may have to help fix the transportation funding issue in Virginia, Del. Oder wrote that he would also support a VDOT performance audit, PPTA funding to build HRBT and constitutional amendment/T.T. lock tax.

Breakdown of the respondents who rated the importance of finding a transportation funding solution as a nine:

- **Will Smith (Constitution – 19th District)**
 - Wrote, "I would eliminate the wasteful, redundant spending by the commonwealth and use the money to fund our transportation shortfall." When asked about additional proposals or ideas he may have to help fix the transportation funding issue in Virginia, Smith also wrote that all of the money needed to address the commonwealth's transportation funding issue is already being collected, but is being wasted by our state government year after year.
- **Del. Robert H. Brink (Democrat – 48th District)**
 - Would support PPTA, tolls, gas tax, sales tax and bonds.

- **John A. Cox (Republican – 55th District)**

- Would support PPTA (for new construction with voluntary usage), General Fund allocations and bonds.
- When asked about additional proposals or ideas he may have to help fix the transportation funding issue in Virginia, Cox wrote, "I support much of Bob McDonnell's transportation plan and ideas but I am eager to study the specifics and I'm certainly open to other ideas and creative ways to solve this growing problem with our aging transportation infrastructure."

- **Del. David J. Toscano (Democrat – 57th District)**

- Would support PPTA, tolls, gas and sales tax, General Fund allocations and bonds.
- When asked about additional proposals or ideas he may have to help fix the transportation funding issue in Virginia, Del. Toscano wrote that he would also support better links between land use planning and transportation.

Breakdown of the respondents who rated the importance of finding a transportation funding solution as an eight:

- **E. Carter Turner III (Democrat – 8th District)**

- Ranked importance as eight and a half.
- Would support PPTA funding, tolls, gas tax and bonds.
- When asked about additional proposals or ideas he may have to help fix the transportation funding issue in Virginia, Turner wrote, "Virginia should look into designating Hampton Roads as a Federal Expansion zone due to congestion. It would require redefining the nature of these zones, and is along shot, but worth pursuing."

- **Craig E. Ennis (Independent/Green – 28th District)**

- Ranked importance as eight "and rising."
- Would support General Fund allocations.
- When asked about additional proposals or ideas he may have to help fix the transportation funding issue in Virginia, Ennis wrote, "I would also use extra funding from drilling off Virginia's coast."

- **Del. Thomas Davis Rust (Republican – 86th District)**

- Would support PPTA funding, tolls, gas tax, sales tax, General Fund allocations and bonds. Del. Rust also wrote, "All options must be on the table!"
- When asked about additional proposals or ideas he may have to help fix the transportation funding issue in Virginia, Del. Rust wrote, "Any transportation funding package must include a regional component for NOVA along with a statewide component."