

March 20, 2012

Irene Rico, Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration
400 North 8th Street, Suite 750
Richmond, VA 23219

VIRGINIA DIVISION OFFICE
RICHMOND, VIRGINIA

MAR 22 2012

RE: U. S. Route 29 Charlottesville Bypass

FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION
RECEIVED

Dear Ms. Rico:

We are the members of the Albemarle County Board of Supervisors who made up the majority that voted to remove opposition to the U. S. Route 29 bypass from our Metropolitan Planning Organization Transportation Improvement Plan. More importantly we represent the overwhelming majority of area residents who want a bypass built as indicated in two independent surveys. Up until now we have been silent in this matter but as we observe correspondence from different groups we felt a need to make our position known.

1. We acknowledge you have a strict process to follow when building roads and see no need to interject our amateur micromanagement.
2. Two surveys have been conducted regarding the U. S. Route 29 bypass; one in April of 2004 by the Mason-Dixon Polling and Research Group with 67% saying the bypass is needed; and most recently by the UVA Center for Survey Research released this month in which 69.3% of the 1,096 respondents answered "yes, needed" to the question about the need for a U. S. 29 bypass around Charlottesville.
3. Two recent letters sent by Steve Williamson from the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission and Mark Graham of the Albemarle County Community Development department were not approved by us.

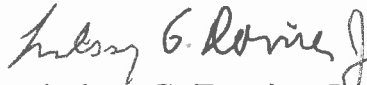
4. The Places29 local land-use and transportation plan reached a consensus approval after six years and millions of taxpayers' expense only after softening any language regarding grade separated interchanges along the current U. S. Route 29 corridor, considered locally as our Main Street. The lack of support for these interchanges more significantly impacts the non-local traffic concerns of the Federal and State transportation interests. Any references to turning this into an expressway were moved far into the future, if at all, so that we could reach this consensus and free up the stranglehold on land use economic progress that had been created by this unsettled plan. It is now interesting that those individuals, who blocked for years any consideration of including the bypass as a part of the Places29 study, are now calling for such a comparison review. Despite the unanimous vote, it is very much a stretch to indicate this plan had unanimous support.
5. The recent resolution passed on October 12, 2011 regarding a "request" for certain considerations regarding the U. S. Route 29 bypass was a unanimous vote which we agreed to only because it was a request to consider and not a demand. Unlike implied in recent correspondence from those opposed to the bypass we were not disappointed by Mr. Utterback's reply and considered it a reasonable response.
6. We voted against the recent request for you to "require" VDOT to perform full SEIS which was subsequently sent by three of our colleagues. We have confidence in your organization and believe your process is adequate to determine whether or not there is need. We also feel that this demand, if not necessary, is a delay tactic which could significantly drive up the cost.
7. We understand that a recent study of children in California schools next to freeways is unsettled science and has not been adopted by the EPA as a concern nationwide. We know of no evidence in Virginia, or along the local 29/250 corridor where many schools are already next to the road, where there have been health issues

We all recognize the importance of making sure we are protective of our environment, our quality of life, and our school children as we build this much needed road. We also recognize the unpleasant short term discomforts of road construction. However, we are willing to rely on your thoroughness and expertise in these matters as you consider the extensive research and design features already built into this bypass over years of study.

Sincerely,



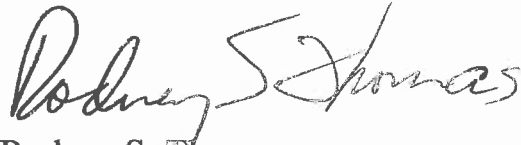
Kenneth C. Boyd
Rivanna District



Lindsay G. Dorrier, Jr.
Scottsville District, (Retired)



Duane E. Snow
Samuel Miller District



Rodney S. Thomas
Rio District

Cc: Sean T. Cannaughton, Secretary of Transportation
Gregory A. Whirley, Sr., Commissioner
James S. Utterback, Culpepper District Administrator