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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 125

Offered January 21, 2000

Establishing the Hampton Roads Third Crossing Bridge-Tunnel Commission.

Patrons—Wagner, Blevins, Diamonstein, Drake, Grayson, Joannou, Jones, S.C., Larrabee, McDonnell, Melvin, Moss, Purkey, Robinson, Suit, Tata, Wardrup and Williams; Senators: Forbes, Lucas, Miller, Y.B., Norment, Rerras, Schrock, Stolle and Williams

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, the safe and efficient movement of traffic between Hampton, Newport News, Poquoson and other communities north of Hampton Roads and Chesapeake, Norfolk, Portsmouth, Suffolk, Virginia Beach and other communities located south of Hampton Roads is essential to the health, safety, and welfare of all the residents of Hampton Roads and to the economic prosperity of the entire region and the Commonwealth as a whole; and

WHEREAS, state, regional, and local transportation officials, business and civic leaders, and the general public have long agreed that the two existing crossings of lower Hampton Roads (the Hampton Roads Bridge-Tunnel and the Monitor-Merrimac Memorial Bridge-Tunnel) are inadequate to existing or projected needs; and

WHEREAS, planning for a Third Crossing of Hampton Roads, financing and constructing the facility, and placing it in operation are long, complicated, and time-consuming processes that raise a host of issues; require the solving of myriad difficult problems; and require consideration of the concerns of, cooperative assistance from, or issuance of permits by a multiplicity of federal, state, and regional entities; and

WHEREAS, it is imperative that the best possible design for the facility be chosen, that the facility be constructed without delay, and that it be placed in operation at the lowest cost to the taxpayers; and

WHEREAS, these interrelated goals of quality, speed, and economy can best be achieved by direct, face-to-face consultation and cooperation involving all the major governmental entities concerned; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That there be hereby established the Hampton Roads Third Crossing Bridge-Tunnel Commission. The Commission shall be composed of sixteen members as follows: six members of the House of Delegates, to be appointed by the Speaker; four members of the Senate, to be appointed by the Senate Committee on Privileges and Elections; and six nonvoting ex-officio members: the Commonwealth Transportation Commissioner or his designee; the Director of the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation or his designee; the Executive Director of the Virginia Port Authority or his designee; the Director of the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality or his designee; the Executive Director of the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission or his designee; and the Executive Director of the Hampton Roads Transportation District or his designee. The Commission shall elect a Chairman and Vice Chairman from among its voting members. Upon his election, the Chairman shall arrange for nonvoting participation in the work of the Commission by one representative from each of the following: the United States Department of Transportation, the United States Department of the Navy, the United States Army Corps of Engineers, the United States Environmental Protection Agency, the United States House of Representatives, and the United States Senate.

The Commission shall take such actions, conduct such studies, undertake such consultations, and hold such hearings as shall appear necessary or desirable in supporting, furthering, facilitating, expediting, or otherwise assisting any or all phases or aspects of the planning, designing, constructing, financing, and operating of the Hampton Roads Third Crossing Bridge-Tunnel.

The direct costs of this study shall not exceed \$ 7,500 per year.

Upon commencement of construction of the Hampton Roads Third Crossing Bridge-Tunnel, the Commission shall submit its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly as provided in the procedures of the Division of Legislative Automated Systems for the processing of legislative documents. At such time, the Commission membership of persons appointed under the foregoing provisions of this resolution shall terminate, and the Governor shall appoint from the population of the Commonwealth at large ten citizens to carry on the work of the Commission until such time as construction of the Hampton Roads Third Crossing Bridge-Tunnel is completed.

Implementation of this resolution is subject to subsequent approval and certification by the Joint Rules Committee. The Committee may withhold expenditures or delay the period for the conduct of the study.

INTRODUCED

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