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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 55
AMENDMENT IN THE NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE

(Proposed by the Senate Committee on Rules
on February 14, 2000)

(Patron Prior to Substitute—Senator Edwards)

Requesting the Secretary of Transportation to expand the scope of her study on the desirability and feasibility of establishing additional intermodal transfer facilities (House Joint Resolution 704 (1999)) to include the potential for shifting Virginia's highway traffic to railroads.

WHEREAS, safety is a primary goal of the Commonwealth's transportation program; and

WHEREAS, many of the Commonwealth's interstate highways are experiencing an erosion of safety as the result of staggering increases in traffic; and

WHEREAS, one acute example of this situation is Interstate Route 81, whose design intended the facility to carry no more than 15 percent of its total traffic volume as truck traffic, but whose current traffic is made up of as much as 40 percent trucks; and

WHEREAS, widening Interstate Route 81 alone is estimated to cost in excess of \$3 billion and take at least 10 years to complete, with similar improvements to other interstate highways with high traffic volumes costing comparable amounts and requiring no less time; and

WHEREAS, it may be both desirable and feasible in the short term to alleviate excessive volumes of traffic on Interstate Route 81 and other interstate highways in Virginia to seek to shift traffic on our highways to trains on our railroads; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the Secretary of Transportation be requested to expand her study on the desirability and feasibility of establishing additional intermodal transfer facilities (House Joint Resolution 704 (1999)) to include the potential for shifting Virginia's highway traffic to railroads. The request to conduct this study shall be contingent upon the availability of funding and assistance from private industry or other sources.

The Department of Transportation and the Department of Rail and Public Transportation shall assist the Secretary in the conduct of the study. Other agencies of the Commonwealth shall provide assistance to the Secretary, upon request.

The Secretary of Transportation shall complete her work in time to submit her findings and recommendations to the Governor and the 2001 Session of the General Assembly as provided in the procedures of the Division of Legislative Automated Systems for the processing of legislative documents.