

VIRGINIA ACTS OF ASSEMBLY -- 2011 SESSION

CHAPTER 554

An Act to amend and reenact § 33.1-23.03:01 of the Code of Virginia and to amend the Code of Virginia by adding in Article 15 of Chapter 1 of Title 33.1 a section numbered 33.1-223.2:25, relating to duties and responsibilities of Metropolitan Planning Organizations.

[S 1112]

Approved March 25, 2011

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That § 33.1-23.03:01 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted and that the Code of Virginia is amended by adding in Article 15 of Chapter 1 of Title 33.1 a section numbered 33.1-223.2:25 as follows:

§ 33.1-23.03:01. Distribution of certain federal funds.

Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) as defined under Title 23 U.S.C. 134 and Section 8 of the Federal Transit Act shall be authorized to issue contracts for studies and to develop and approve transportation plans and improvement programs to the full extent permitted by federal law.

The Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB), Virginia Department of Transportation, and Department of Rail and Public Transportation are directed to develop and implement a decision-making process that provides MPOs and regional transportation planning bodies a meaningful opportunity for input into transportation decisions that impact the transportation system within their boundaries. Such a process shall provide the MPOs and regional transportation planning bodies with the CTB priorities for development of the Six-Year Improvement Program and an opportunity for them to identify their regional priorities for consideration.

§ 33.1-223.2:25. *Transportation planning duties and responsibilities of Metropolitan Planning Organizations.*

The Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) of Virginia shall be responsible for the development of regional long-range transportation plans for the regions they represent in accordance with federal regulation. Each such long-range plan shall include a fiscally constrained list of all multimodal transportation projects, including those managed at the statewide level either by the Virginia Department of Transportation or the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation. The purpose of the plan is to comply with federal regulations and provide the MPOs and the region a source of candidate projects for the MPOs' use in developing regional Transportation Improvement Programs (TIPs) and serving as an input to assist the Commonwealth with the development of the statewide Long-Range Plan (VTrans).

The MPOs shall develop amendments for their regional TIPs in accordance with federal regulations.

The MPOs shall be required to coordinate planning and programming actions with those of the Commonwealth and duly established public transit agencies in accordance with federal regulations.

The MPOs shall examine the structure and cost of transit operations within the regions they represent and incorporate the results of these inquiries in their plans and shall endorse long-range plans for assuring maximum utilization and integration of mass transportation facilities throughout the Commonwealth.

The MPOs shall conduct a public involvement process focused on projects and topics that will best enable them to develop and approve Long Range Transportation Plans (LRTPs) that shall be submitted for approval by their board and forwarded to the Commonwealth Transportation Board and updated as required by federal regulations.