

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 69

Requesting the Office of Intermodal Planning and Investment to develop a Master Rail Plan for the principal facilities of the Port of Virginia. Report.

Agreed to by the Senate, February 11, 2014
Agreed to by the House of Delegates, March 5, 2014

WHEREAS, the mission of the Office of Intermodal Planning and Investment is to provide long-term multimodal planning to guide investment options and solutions; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) supports both passenger and freight rail in Virginia through planning, funding, and advocacy for rail improvements, industrial access, intercity passenger rail, and short line railway preservation and development projects; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Rail and Public Transportation's Operations Division involves coordinating with freight rail operators in Virginia on freight rail operations for public benefit, planning, and development and provides input on state and federal rail policy and regulations, track abandonment, freight and passenger rail feasibility analysis, identification of freight rail needs, and updates to state rail studies, maps, and plans; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Rail and Public Transportation has been instrumental in the development of rail landside service enhancements to the Port of Virginia through the development of the Heartland, National Gateway, and Crescent corridors and the development of dual rail access to APM Terminals and the proposed Fourth Marine Terminal; and

WHEREAS, the Port of Virginia is a cornerstone of the Virginia economy and one of the Commonwealth's most valuable and important state assets; and

WHEREAS, the Port of Virginia is responsible for 343,000 port and port-related jobs, \$41 billion in annual economic impact, \$13.5 billion in annual employee compensation, and \$1.2 billion in annual state and local taxes; and

WHEREAS, the principal facilities of the Port of Virginia are four marine terminals and one intermodal container transfer facility: Norfolk International Terminals, Portsmouth Marine Terminal, Newport News Marine Terminal, APM Terminals Virginia at Portsmouth, all on the harbor of Hampton Roads, and the Virginia Inland Port at Front Royal, Virginia, and including Richmond Deep Water Terminal on the James River, and other VPA port terminal interests existing or potential, including but not limited to the Fourth Marine Terminal and terminal operations outside of Virginia; and

WHEREAS, the Port of Virginia is governed by the Virginia Port Authority (VPA) and is operated by Virginia International Terminals, an operating company of the Virginia Port Authority; and

WHEREAS, the Port of Virginia is uniquely positioned to benefit from the anticipated shifts in global trade patterns and its 50-foot channels and unobstructed marine terminal access position it ahead of other East Coast ports to handle new Panamax vessels that will soon begin transiting the expanded Panama Canal to open in 2015; and

WHEREAS, the Commonwealth has a strong interest in road, rail, and marine highway systems that will provide multiple avenues to quickly and efficiently deliver cargo to its destination and to make the Port of Virginia the ideal location for first and last port-of-call; and

WHEREAS, the Commonwealth of Virginia has a substantial investment in the Port of Virginia and is dependent on its continued economic success; therefore, the development of a Master Rail Plan for the principal facilities of the Port of Virginia is in the best interests of the Commonwealth and the citizens of Virginia; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the Office of Intermodal Planning and Investment, in consultation with the Department of Rail and Public Transportation and the Virginia Port Authority, be requested to develop a Master Rail Plan for the principal facilities of the Port of Virginia in the interest of the development of landside rail access logistics to serve the principal facilities of the Port of Virginia.

In developing the Master Rail Plan for the principal facilities of the Port of Virginia, the Virginia Office of Intermodal Planning and Investment shall consider, but not be limited to, the following issues:

1. The status and characteristics of the current rail systems that support the port facilities.
2. The development of a rail master plan with the flexibility to support both near- and long-term business opportunities at the port facilities.
3. The identification of any operational and physical constraints or limitations on providing efficient and competitive dual rail access service to the port facilities and recommendations to mitigate them to the extent practicable.
4. The identification of any improvements to rail access to the port facilities and related intermodal

facilities to support desired train volumes.

5. The identification of potential increases to the port facilities' intermodal rail throughput capacity as demand increases.

6. Strategic recommendations to guide future rail planning and funding decisions to support desired train volumes.

The Virginia Office of Intermodal Planning and Investment shall develop the Master Rail Plan in consultation with the Virginia Port Authority and the Department of Rail and Public Transportation and with input from Virginia freight rail operators, local governments, regional authorities, other affected entities, and interested parties.

All agencies of the Commonwealth shall provide assistance to the Virginia Office for Intermodal Planning and Investment for this study, upon request.

The Virginia Office of Intermodal Planning and Investment shall complete its development of the Master Rail Plan by November 30, 2014, and shall submit to the Governor and the General Assembly an executive summary and a report of its findings and recommendations for publication as a House or Senate document. The executive summary and report shall be submitted as provided in the procedures of the Division of Legislative Automated Systems for the processing of legislative documents and reports no later than the first day of the 2015 Regular Session of the General Assembly and shall be posted on the General Assembly's website.