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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 199

Offered January 26, 1998

Establishing a joint subcommittee to study the allocation of funds to support public transit in Northern Virginia and the structure and the membership of the Northern Virginia Transportation District Commission.

Patron—Gartlan

Referred to the Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, the 1958 Virginia General Assembly concurred with the State of Maryland and the District of Columbia in the creation of the Washington Metropolitan Transit District to facilitate the development of passenger carrier facilities in the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area; and

WHEREAS, the 1964 Virginia General Assembly approved the Transportation District Act of 1964 to provide general statutory authority of transportation commissions across the Commonwealth and specific statutory guidance for any transportation commissions created in the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area; and

WHEREAS, the Transportation District Act of 1964 requires the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission to make a determination of the equitable allocation of facility and service costs among its component local governments after considering the relative population of, benefits to, and commitments from its component local governments; and

WHEREAS, the 1964 Virginia General Assembly created the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission subject to the limitations contained in the Transportation District Act of 1964 in order to further facilitate the development of passenger carrier facilities in the Northern Virginia portion of the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area; and

WHEREAS, the 1964 Virginia General Assembly designated the geographic area and the component political subdivisions of the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission, including Arlington County, Fairfax County, and the cities of Alexandria, Fairfax, and Falls Church; and

WHEREAS, the 1964 Virginia General Assembly designated the membership of each political subdivision on the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission, including four representatives for Fairfax County, three representatives for Arlington County, two representatives for the city of Alexandria, and one representative each for the cities of Fairfax and Falls Church; and

WHEREAS, in 1964, the population of Fairfax County comprised approximately 62 percent of the total population in the area designated by the Virginia General Assembly for the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission; and

WHEREAS, in 1980, the population of Fairfax County comprised approximately 68 percent of the total population in the area designated by the Virginia General Assembly for the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission; and

WHEREAS, the 1980 Virginia General Assembly increased the number of representatives for Fairfax County from four to five, and approved a two percent regional motor fuels tax with authority to increase the regional motor fuels tax to four percent in 1982; and

WHEREAS, the 1981 Virginia General Assembly capped the regional motor fuels tax at two percent; and

WHEREAS, the component political subdivisions of the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission assumed increasing financial responsibility for regional transit operations, a particularly significant undertaking for the financially constrained political subdivisions of Arlington County and the Cities of Alexandria, Fairfax, and Falls Church, which lack land for significant new economic growth; and

WHEREAS, the 1986 Special Session of the Virginia General Assembly approved significant additional resources for transit in Northern Virginia; all of which is allocated to the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission and subsequently reallocated to the political subdivisions through a formula approved by the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission; and

WHEREAS, the 1991 federal Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act authorized significant additional resources for transit in Northern Virginia, all of which are allocated to the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission and subsequently reallocated to the political subdivisions through a formula approved by the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission; and

WHEREAS, the reallocation formula approved by the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission essentially reimburses component political subdivisions for their local transit expenditures, in effect rewarding a local commitment to transit services; and

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60 WHEREAS, the local financial commitment to transit services is increasingly difficult to maintain for
61 political subdivisions without land for significant new economic growth; and

62 WHEREAS, in 1996, the population of Fairfax County comprised approximately 74 percent of the
63 total population in the area designated by the Virginia General Assembly for the Northern Virginia
64 Transportation Commission; and

65 WHEREAS, the General Assembly has not reviewed the membership on the Northern Virginia
66 Transportation Commission since 1980 and the Fairfax County share of the total population in the area
67 designated by the General Assembly for the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission has increased
68 from approximately two-thirds of the total to nearly three-quarters of the total in that same time period;
69 and

70 WHEREAS, the amount of transit funds annually flowing through the Northern Virginia
71 Transportation Commission has increased by several million dollars since 1980, and many of these
72 transit funds are subsequently reallocated to the political subdivisions based on earlier population data,
73 older assumptions of transit benefits, and different levels of financial commitment by the political
74 subdivisions; now, therefore, be it

75 RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the Joint Subcommittee on
76 Transit Allocations in Northern Virginia be established. The joint subcommittee shall be composed of
77 eleven members to be appointed as follows: four members of the House of Delegates, and two local
78 elected officials, both of whom shall be nominated by a local governing body represented on the
79 Northern Virginia Transportation Commission, all such state and local appointees to be drawn from
80 election districts predominantly within the area served by the Northern Virginia Transportation
81 Commission, all to be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Delegates; and three members of the
82 Virginia Senate, and two local elected officials both of whom shall be nominated by a local governing
83 body represented on the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission, all such state and local
84 appointees to be drawn from election districts predominantly within the area served by the Northern
85 Virginia Transportation Commission, all to be appointed by the Senate Committee on Privileges and
86 Elections.

87 The joint subcommittee shall review and make recommendations on the following matters: the
88 statutory framework for the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission; the fairness of the
89 membership structure of the Commission, with particular reference to population growth in, benefits
90 received by, and financial commitments of individual political subdivisions; the fairness of the financial
91 allocations among the component local governments, with particular reference to population growth in,
92 benefits received by, and financial commitments of individual political subdivisions; the adequacy of
93 existing funds to meet existing transit needs; the identification of potential funding sources to address
94 any financial allocations deemed to be unfair by the joint subcommittee; and possible remedies for any
95 membership or procedural requirements deemed to be unfair by the joint subcommittee.

96 The joint subcommittee shall receive such assistance as it requires from the Northern Virginia
97 Transportation Commission and from its component governments.

98 The direct costs of this study shall not exceed \$ 7,350.

99 The Joint Subcommittee on Transit Allocations in Northern Virginia shall complete its work in time
100 to submit its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the 1999 Session of the General
101 Assembly as provided in the procedures of the Division of Legislative Automated Systems for the
102 processing of legislative documents.

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