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## HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 694

Offered January 21, 1999

*Requesting the Governor to take certain actions to improve safety on a portion of U.S. Route 15.*

Patrons—Black, Albo, Armstrong, Baker, Barlow, Behm, Bennett, Bloxom, Bryant, Callahan, Councill, Cox, Crittenden, Davies, Davis, Devolites, Drake, Dudley, Hamilton, Hargrove, Harris, Ingram, Joannou, Johnson, Jones, D.C., Keating, Landes, Marshall, McClure, McEachin, McQuigg, Morgan, Nixon, O'Brien, Parrish, Phillips, Plum, Purkey, Putney, Reid, Robinson, Rollison, Rust, Scott, Tata, Tate, Thomas, Van Yahres, Ware, Watts, Wilkins and Williams; Senator: Mims

Referred to Committee on Transportation

WHEREAS, safety on U.S. Route 15 between Point of Rocks, Maryland, and Leesburg, Virginia, is a critical situation and nine people have lost their lives on this 10-mile stretch of highway in the past several years, including three during the 1998 Thanksgiving weekend; and

WHEREAS, the critical situation is a result of major increases in interstate and commuter traffic over the last decade and a lack of geometrics, including shoulders and turn lanes, to safely accommodate the current traffic demands; and

WHEREAS, the existing 55-mile-per-hour speed limit should be reduced and a new lower speed limit strictly enforced in this hazardous corridor; and

WHEREAS, the need for immediate safety improvements to the existing highway, as well as an alternate highway to carry future traffic growth, has been recognized by many civic, environmental, and business interests for more than a decade; and

WHEREAS, on March 31, 1998, the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) completed a "Route 15 Safety Study - North Segment" that identified the need for \$13 million in safety improvements to the existing highway; and

WHEREAS, the Commonwealth Transportation Board has recognized the need for a new highway to accommodate the traffic growth as it is impractical to increase the capacity of Route 15 due to civic, historical, environmental, and geological factors; and

WHEREAS, public input into the Western Transportation Corridor Major Investment Study, opinion polls, and the affected counties have all strongly endorsed the need for a new highway east of Route 15, which would cross the Potomac River, be designed for limited access in the George Washington Parkway style, and link I-95 in Virginia to I-270 in Maryland; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby requests the Governor to immediately take measures, coordinated with the Commonwealth Transportation Board, VDOT, local governments, local and State Police forces, and any other appropriate entity, to (i) implement additional safety measures along U.S. Route 15 between Leesburg and Point of Rocks, Maryland; (ii) gain the state of Maryland's concurrence on the need for a new highway link; (iii) facilitate as expeditiously as possible an environmental impact study for the western transportation corridor in order to develop a long-term solution; and (iv) upon completion of the environmental impact study, direct VDOT to preserve the right-of-way for the western transportation corridor before the region's projected growth precludes this option.

INTRODUCED

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