

## SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 126

*Commending the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission.*

Agreed to by the Senate, February 22, 2024  
 Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 26, 2024

WHEREAS, the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission, created by the General Assembly in 1964, will celebrate its 60th anniversary on September 5, 2024; and

WHEREAS, the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission (NVTC) began with an initial district of five jurisdictions, including the Counties of Arlington and Fairfax and the Cities of Alexandria, Fairfax, and Falls Church, with 11 elected officials from those jurisdictions and the chair of the State Highway Commission serving jointly as commissioners; and

WHEREAS, NVTC membership has grown to include Loudoun County and now has 21 commissioners, including six members of the General Assembly and a designee of the Secretary of Transportation; and

WHEREAS, the NVTC district now has a population of approximately two million people in a territory covering 1,000 square miles, connected by a robust transit network providing residents with 1.5 million transit trips each week on Metrorail, Virginia Railway Express (VRE), local and express bus services, and paratransit services; and

WHEREAS, the public transit network serving the NVTC district is a vital component of the region's transportation system that supports its overall quality of life and economic competitiveness, generating more than \$1.5 billion in annual sales and income tax revenue for the Commonwealth, a 160 percent return on the state investment in these transit systems; and

WHEREAS, NVTC played a pivotal role in creating the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA), whereby the resulting interstate compact requires WMATA's Virginia board members to be appointed from among the NVTC's commissioners, who now provide additional oversight and reporting responsibilities as directed by an update to state code in 2018; and

WHEREAS, NVTC began to plan for commuter rail service at its first business meeting in 1964 and persevered until VRE began operations in 1992, a system now co-owned with the Potomac and Rappahannock Transportation Commission that has carried more than 95 million riders; and

WHEREAS, NVTC initiated the first transit service to run on dedicated bus lanes with the NVTC Shirley Highway Express-Bus-on-Freeway Demonstration Project, serving as a model for future Express and Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) corridors, including the regional Envision Route 7 BRT planned for the Cities of Alexandria and Falls Church and the Counties of Arlington and Fairfax; and

WHEREAS, NVTC launched the innovative Commuter Choice program in 2017, which has invested more than \$150 million in toll revenues for projects that have moved more than five million people through the congested Interstate-66 and Interstate-395/95 corridors while reducing vehicle emissions by 69 percent, saving 1.1 million hours of travel time and \$14.5 million in fuel costs, and preventing more than 130 vehicle crashes; and

WHEREAS, NVTC manages financial resources from federal, state, regional, and local partners exceeding \$400 million annually, while demonstrating sound fiscal management of public funds and establishing a set of stringent internal controls to manage NVTC's complex financial role in the region, resulting in unblemished independent audits; and

WHEREAS, NVTC consistently promotes transit innovations leading to improved efficiency, environmental stewardship, and customer service, including advanced fare payment systems, hybrid and zero-emission bus technologies, improved bus speeds on local and interstate routes, bus stop improvements, and policy considerations for fare-free transit; and

WHEREAS, NVTC has managed numerous successful public transit marketing campaigns in coordination with the Department of Rail and Public Transportation, the jurisdictions that make up NVTC, the local bus systems in Northern Virginia, and VRE to promote transit use throughout the region; and

WHEREAS, NVTC routinely leads regional planning efforts to provide coordinated emergency responses by Northern Virginia's transit systems to facilitate faster transit reactions and better communication with customers, police, fire departments, and other public safety personnel during emergencies and transit system shutdowns; and

WHEREAS, NVTC provides ongoing and extensive data analysis of Northern Virginia public transit trends to better understand how our transit network serves our region in terms of service area coverage, connectivity, ridership, service levels, and accessibility; and

WHEREAS, NVTC conducts policy and financial analyses to support funding and legislative actions

including conducting regional transit needs assessments, regional economic impact studies, and evaluation of the impact of federal and state policy and funding actions on the public transit systems that serve Northern Virginia; and

WHEREAS, in 60 years of leadership in transit system development, expansion, funding, and research, each of the current and former board members and staff of the NVTC have played an integral role in building and operating the transit network required to sustain the regional economy; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission on the occasion of its 60th anniversary; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare copies of this resolution for presentation to Matt de Ferranti, chair, and Kate Mattice, executive director, of the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission as an expression of the General Assembly's congratulations on reaching this landmark in the commission's history and appreciation for the leadership of the commission in promoting public transit and other sustainable commuting options in Northern Virginia to the benefit of the region and the entire Commonwealth.