

D.J.'s Policy Agenda: Transportation

Hands down, transportation is my top policy priority. If elected, I will focus the majority of my time and energy working to reduce traffic congestion for Prince William and Fauquier County residents. I have commuted to work inside-the-beltway nearly my entire adult life and have experienced first-hand the stress of traffic congestion, and the unnecessary amount of time away from family. We must be forward-thinking and comprehensive in how we address our traffic congestion crisis. Virginia has the third-largest state-maintained highway system in the U.S, so the state government's impact on our roads is significant. If elected, I will pursue a position on the House Transportation Committee in order to be directly involved in directing and reforming transportation policy. We must move beyond partisan finger-pointing and work together on solutions that involve enhanced bus transit, rail, road construction, and more tele-working options.

1) Smart Scale Reform – The Commonwealth Transportation Board uses a program called “Smart Scale” to select and fund transportation projects based on merit. When created in 2014, the goal was to take politics out of transportation decisions. Each transportation district works with local governments to propose transportation projects based on criteria such as congestion reduction, safety, cost, and economic development. Virginia should reform the Smart Scale program to make congestion reduction the highest factor for ranking projects across the state.

2) Manage Infrastructure to Match Population Growth – We should require that land use and transportation planning be synchronized. Northern Virginia's infrastructure lags behind its population's growth. State law should be strengthened to require local governments to add additional transportation capacity anytime a zoning or other land use decision might increase congestion.

3) Priority Transportation Repairs – Roads in Prince William, Fauquier and the whole Northern Virginia Region are plagued by perpetual bottlenecks and choke points. We have several layers of bureaucracy in the form of federal and local Transportation Departments, VDOT, and the NVTB before relief can ever be delivered to commuters. D.J. will pursue improvement funding to address the I-95 Bottleneck at Occoquan River, route 28, and I-66. The stretch of highway between Interstate 95 from the Fairfax County Parkway to Fredericksburg is considered among the worst traffic choke points in the U.S., in large part because of the bottleneck at the Occoquan River where it goes from four lanes to three. The section of route 28 between Manassas Park and the Fairfax County line has become one of the most congested stretch of road in the Commonwealth. Alternative routes – such as an extension of Godwin Drive or Euclid Avenue - should be pursued to alleviate pressure.

4) Surplus Funding For Transportation – For the next five years, Virginia should use at least half of its surplus funding towards traffic congestion improvements. Based on surplus amounts from the last decade, this legislation could result in \$50 million to \$250 million additional funding for transportation.

5) Additional Bridge Across Potomac River – The Washington, D.C. metro area is one of the worst big cities in the United States for traffic congestion, according to multiple studies. One of the reasons is because of the region's minimal highway options. Virginia should work with northern Virginia localities and the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Commission to add another bridge across the Potomac River, to provide more options for commuters and travelers going to the Northeast.

6) Fight High Tolls and Make Express Lane Tolls Deductible – D.J. will oppose new tolls in northern Virginia and explore options to stop the high cost of tolls on the I-95 and I-66 Express Lanes. Virginia residents should also be able to make express tolls paid fully deductible on their state income taxes. Virginia residents own those roads they should be able to drive on them freely in their personal vehicles.

7) Bus Routes To Northern Virginia – Virginia should work with the PRTC Omniride bus transit system to expand commuter bus routes to the Tysons Corner and Dulles Corridor. Bus Rapid Transit should be expanded along both the I-66 and I-95 corridors to encourage growth in ridership along public transportation systems taking more cars off the roads.

8) Invest In Rail – The Virginia Railway Express (VRE) is an efficient form of transportation. As land becomes more limited in northern Virginia, the state should invest more in VRE trains and stations. Virginia should work with VRE to extend its Manassas Line into Fauquier County to accommodate the many Fauquier and Culpeper residents that commute to VRE stations in Prince William. We should also pursue the extension of Metrorail Blue Line from Springfield to Woodbridge.

9) Gas Tax Commission – As cars become more fuel efficient and electric vehicles become prevalent, the state gasoline tax is decreasing. A state commission should be created to study options for Virginia's declining gas tax, including the impact of a mileage tax or a short-term capital improvement tax to bridge the gap to a more permanent solution.

10) DMV Reform – The Department of Motor Vehicles manages the state's vehicle registration and driver licensing. Virginia should provide some relief to drivers by extending the vehicle inspection to three years, instead of annually.