

OPPOSE SB 1106/HB 2302

Topic: Transportation Partnership Opportunity Fund

Bill Patrons: Sen. Newman/Del. L. Adams

Overview:

These bills would require the Governor to include in the Budget an off-the-top appropriation from the Commonwealth Transportation Fund of up to \$100 for each year of a biennium for the Transportation Partnership Opportunity Fund to maintain a balance in the Fund of up to \$300 million.

SB 1106/HB 2302 also would allow the Governor to direct money in the Fund for “transportation projects determined to be necessary to support major economic development initiatives or to enhance the economic development opportunities of the Commonwealth’s transportation programs” when the Secretaries of Transportation and Commerce and Trade recommend such action.

The bills also would remove the current statutory requirement that the Governor provide copies of the guidelines and criteria for awarding grants and loans to the Chair of the House Committees on Appropriations, Finance, and Transportation and the Senate Committees on Finance and Appropriations and Transportation.

Reasons to oppose:

- By redirecting funds off the top of the Commonwealth Transportation Fund, SB 1106 and HB 2302 would reduce available revenues for all modes of transportation, including an annual loss of up to \$56 million for road repair, \$11.27 million for transit, \$3.675 million for rail, and \$15.6 million for Smart Scale and Interstates.
- The Governor is given almost unlimited discretion to allocate funds to support major economic development initiatives and enhance the economic development opportunities of the Commonwealth’s transportation programs. These extremely broad criteria could be interpreted to fund almost any project and are in stark contrast to the current requirements of the Fund.
- There is no limit on the amount of money the Governor can award to any one project, up to the overall Fund cap of \$300 million.
- The bills would remove the General Assembly from the process of grants and loans from the Fund, and the bills contain no reporting requirements or accountability.



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This position was taken by Virginia Conservation Network (VCN)'s Legislative Committee and Board of Directors and is supported by Virginia's conservation community. For a complete list of VCN positions, visit www.vcnva.org/bill-tracker. VCN is committed to building a powerful, diverse, and highly-coordinated conservation movement focused on protecting our Commonwealth's natural resources today and for tomorrow.