COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Commonwealth Transportation Board

Pierce R. Homer
Chairman

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Agenda item # 7

RESOLUTION
OF THE
COMMONWEALTH TRANSPORTATION BOARD

June 21, 2007

MOTION

Made By: Dr. Davis Seconded By: Mr. Martin Action: Motion Carried, Unanimously

Title: Rail Preservation Program
Exception for the Continuation of Safe and Efficient Intercity Passenger Rail Operations

WHEREAS, Section 33.1-221.1:1.2 of the *Code of Virginia* requires the Commonwealth Transportation Board (Board) to allocate funds from the Shortline Railway Preservation and Development Fund in accordance with Board established Rail Preservation Program policies and procedures; and,

WHEREAS, it has been the policy of the Board to allocate funds to Rail Preservation projects at a goal of achieving and maintaining a Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) Class 2 Track Safety Standard; and,

WHEREAS, the Buckingham Branch Railroad is a shortline railroad that carries both passenger and freight trains on its line section between Orange, Gordonsville, Charlottesville, Staunton and Clifton Forge; and,

WHEREAS, the Buckingham Branch Railroad line section between Gordonsville and Clifton Forge is maintained at a FRA Class 3 Track Safety Standard for the purpose of achieving a 60 miles per hour passenger train speed and track safety for the movement of passenger trains where if this line section is allowed to be downgraded to a FRA Class 2 Track Safety Standard the achievable passenger train speed will decrease to 30 miles per hour over this 116 mile line section; and,

WHEREAS, the Amtrak *Cardinal* intercity passenger rail service utilizes the Buckingham Branch Railroad line section between Orange and Clifton Forge and travels over the FRA Class 3 Safety Standard line section between Gordonsville and Clifton Forge; and,

WHEREAS, the Buckingham Branch Railroad has applied for Rail Preservation Program funds for improvements to its line section between Gordonsville and Clifton Forge and this project is included in the Six-Year Improvement Program and Rail and Public Transportation Allocations for Fiscal Years 2008-2013 to assist in track and roadbed improvements that will contribute to the continuation of safe and efficient passenger services through improving and maintaining these rail sections at FRA Class 3 Track Safety Standards; and,

WHEREAS, the Rail Preservation Program adopted Board policies and procedures set a goal to improve shortline railroads to a FRA Class 2 Track Safety Standard, and the Buckingham Branch Railroad's projects to benefit Amtrak *Cardinal* service require the Board to make exception to the adopted Board policies and procedures goal to allow these projects to assist to maintain FRA Class 3 Track Safety Standards; and,

WHEREAS, allocation of grant funds to the Buckingham Branch Railroad for improvements to the Gordonsville to Clifton Forge line section will assist to maintain a FRA Class 3 Track Safety Standard and contribute to the continuation of Amtrak *Cardinal* passenger rail service that operates from New York to Chicago and serves Virginia stations located in Alexandria, Manassas, Culpeper, Charlottesville, Staunton, and Clifton Forge, of which Staunton and Clifton Forge have no other passenger rail service; and,

WHEREAS, the Board recognizes that this project is appropriate for the efficient movement of people and freight and, therefore, for the common good of the Commonwealth.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board grants an exception to its adopted Rail Preservation Program policies and procedures for the Buckingham Branch Railroad projects that will assist in track and roadbed improvements to maintain FRA Class 3 Track Safety Standards contributing to the continuation of safe and efficient Amtrak *Cardinal* intercity passenger rail service between Gordonsville and Clifton Forge as included in the Six-Year Improvement Program and Rail and Public Transportation Allocations for Fiscal Years 2008-2013.

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