



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

*Office of the*

SECRETARY of TRANSPORTATION

# Update on the Governor's Climate Change Commission

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# Update on the Governor's Climate Change Commission \*

- **43-member Commission formed December 2007**
- **Comprised of representatives from the General Assembly, state government, local government and private sector**
- **Key goal - Identify actions needed to reduce green house gas (GHG) emissions by 30% below business as usual levels by 2025 (equivalent to 2000 levels)**
- **Full Commission has met on seven occasions and heard testimony from numerous federal, state, local, private sector experts and the public**

\*The findings/recommendations contained in this document result from the Commissions deliberations.

# Update on the Governor's Climate Change Commission

- **Commission has developed preliminary findings/principles that include but not limited to:**
  - **Because the effects of climate change on Virginia are real, we cannot wait for the federal government to act; state actions can have a significant effect on global GHG levels**
  - **Sea level rise is a major concern for coastal Virginia**
  - **Climate change will have a significant impact on Virginia's ecosystems, possibly causing some species to become extinct.**
  - **Climate change has potential impacts on human health and quality of life, including more frequent hurricanes, water-borne diseases, etc.**

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# Update on the Governor's Climate Change Commission

- **Commission's preliminary findings/principles cont'd**
  - **It is not possible to address the impacts of climate change without significant public and private investment**
  - **The three largest sources of GHG emissions in Virginia are electricity generation, transportation, and non-utility fuel used in industrial and commercial facilities**
  - **Energy efficiency and conservation provide the least costly energy resource options**
  - **Transportation GHG emissions will continue to grow over time; however, recently enacted CAFÉ standards and increased fuel costs can significantly reduce emissions that result from VMT**

# Update on the Governor's Climate Change Commission

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- **Commission has been divided into four workgroups,**
  - Electricity Generation/Other Stationary Sources
  - Adaptation/Sequestration
  - Built Environment
  - Transportation and Land-Use
- **Interim Draft Report available:**  
<http://www.deq.state.va.us/info/climatechange.html>

# Transportation and Land Use Working Group

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- **Chaired by former Lt. Governor Don Byers**
- **Deputy Secretary Davis represents the Secretary**
- **Working Group is vetting initiatives to reduce transportation green house gas emissions through:**
  - **Improved fuel economy**
  - **Low carbon (alternative) fuels**
  - **Transportation and Land Use Efficiency Measures**

# Transportation and Land Use Working Group

## Preliminary Recommendations

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- **Improved Fuel Economy**
  - **Advocate the establishment of CAFE standards for heavy trucks**
  - **Set minimum standards for fleet mpg for all Commonwealth fleets**
  - **Create state tax incentives for the purchase of high mpg vehicles**
  - **Renew dormant “Cash-For-Clunker” program**
  - **Amend the current vehicle titling tax to weight the taxation based on fuel efficiency**
  - **Support Pay-As-You-Drive insurance**

# Transportation and Land Use Working Group

## Preliminary Recommendations

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- **Low Carbon (alternative) Fuels**
  - Establish a regional diesel biofuel standard
  - Support university research to describe the GHG impact of sugar-based ethanol, and of other biofuels
  - Allow VDOT rights-of-way to be used for solar and wind farm connections to the power grid
  - Make and market Virginia as “hybrid friendly”



# Transportation and Land Use Working Group

## Preliminary Recommendations

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- **Transportation and Land Use Efficiency Measures**
  - **Target available state funds towards compact, walkable, transit-oriented development areas**
  - **Increase funding for the Access Management Fund to preserve new transportation corridors and to retrofit existing corridors**
  - **Change the state transit funding formulas to include state funding for operations**
  - **Amend VDOT landscaping standards to minimize mowing and increase carbon retention**

# Transportation and Land Use Working Group

## Preliminary Recommendations

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- **Transportation and Land Use Efficiency Measures Cont'd**
  - **Create new or added benefits for state workers who take transit, walk, or bike to work**
  - **Provide funding and technical assistance to local governments to amend zoning codes that currently establish excessive minimum parking space standards**
  - **Establish roundabouts as the default design new intersections and for intersection improvements**
  - **Increase State Police funding for more consistent enforcement of existing speed limits**

# Transportation and Land Use Working Group

## Preliminary Recommendations

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- **Transportation and Land Use Efficiency Measures Cont'd**
  - **Expand the Virginia Rail Enhancement Fund, from \$24 million to \$200 million per year, to develop the potential for North-South freight rail (especially along the I-81 corridor)**
  - **Develop plans for a statewide bicycle network**
  - **Create Parking Pricing Research Fund, to stimulate the emerging strategies connected to parking pricing**
  - **Establish “tree banking” program to expand our carbon sinks**

# Next Steps

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- **September - Preliminary recommendations will be vetted by Working Groups, develop cost/ton of emissions**
- **October - Full Commission will meet to finalize findings and review Working Groups' recommendations**
- **November – Finalize recommendations**
- **December 2008 – Review and approve final report**