



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

- **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

- **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

- **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

- **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

- **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

- **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

- **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

- **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**