

DULLES GREENWAY TOLL INCREASE APPLICATION OPPOSITION

Talking Points & Letter Template

Talking Points:

- TRIP II's request for a rate increase on the Greenway toll road amounts to over 30% over a five-year period.
- Northern Virginia is an important engine for the Virginia economy. This is the wrong time to increase costs for already struggling workers who will just be getting back to work after the COVID crisis.
- TRIP II's rate increase request is based on projections that cannot be relied upon today, much less looking forward for five years, because they do not take into account changes in people's travel habits due to COVID.
- TRIP II's high rates already unreasonably discourage travel on the toll road. The Northern Virginia population has steadily increased while traffic on the toll road has steadily decreased.
- While traffic on the toll road has decreased, traffic on the surrounding roads has increased dramatically as drivers who cannot afford the high rates of the toll road use alternate secondary routes. These drivers have determined that any benefits offered by the Greenway are not worth the high tolls.
- Increasing traffic on nearby roads creates a burden on the surrounding communities and VDOT, as maintenance costs for these roads must be passed on to the taxpayers of Northern Virginia.
- (A) If the application is approved as proposed and becomes effective, imposing five years of toll increases that will exceed current rates by more than 30% at peak times, our business/organization *will discontinue reimbursing* our employees/members for use of the Dulles Greenway.
- (B) If the application is approved as proposed and becomes effective, imposing five years of toll increases that will exceed current rates by more than 30% at peak times, our business/organization *will only reimburse employees/members for use of the Dulles Greenway at the current 2020 rates*. Any amount in excess of 2020 rates will not be reimbursed.

- (C) If the application is approved as proposed and becomes effective, imposing five years of toll increases that will exceed current rates by more than 30% at peak times, our business/organization *will study whether we will continue to reimburse* employees/members for use of the Dulles Greenway moving forward and, if so, at what rates reimbursement will be provided.

Template Letter:

The Honorable Joel H. Peck, Clerk
State Corporation Commission
c/o Document Control Center
Post Office Box 2118
Richmond, Virginia 23218-2118

Re: Application of Toll Road Investors Partnership II, L.P., For an Increase in the Maximum Level of Tolls – Case No. PUR-2019-00218.

Dear Mr. Peck,

I understand that TRIP II, which owns the Dulles Greenway toll road, is asking for an increase in tolls of more than 30% over the next five years during peak times. If the request is approved, peak rates would be a staggering \$7.90 in 2025. **On behalf of commuters in Loudoun County and all over Northern Virginia, I ask that the State Corporation Commission (SCC) reject TRIP II's request to increase tolls because TRIP II's rates will materially discourage use of the toll road, adversely impact other roads in Virginia, and hurt Virginia families and businesses at a time when our economy is struggling to cope with COVID-19.**

TRIP II's high rates already materially discourage travel on the toll road, and an increase would exacerbate this effect. **As a Northern Virginia driver, I avoid the Greenway whenever possible, due to the high toll rates.** Other drivers in Northern Virginia have made the same choice. While the population of Northern Virginia has steadily increased, the traffic on the Dulles Greenway toll road has steadily decreased due to the high toll cost. In sum, commuters have determined that any benefits offered by the Greenway are not worth the high tolls. **If toll rates are raised again, I and many other commuters will choose to use the Greenway even less than we already do.**

Commuters who have been discouraged from using the toll road by high toll rates in turn flood alternative routes, leading to heavy congestion on these public roads. Increasing traffic on nearby roads creates a burden on the surrounding communities and VDOT, as maintenance costs for these roads must be passed on to me and other taxpayers in Northern Virginia.

TRIP II's rate increase request should also be rejected because it is based on projections that cannot be relied upon today, much less in five years, because these projections do not take into account changes in people's travel habits due to COVID-19.

Finally, this is the wrong time to increase costs for already struggling workers who will just be getting back to work after the COVID-19 crisis. Residents who travel the Greenway will face the additional burden of spending hundreds of dollars more a month to simply commute to and from work in a reasonable time frame. This is the wrong time to impose economic burdens on the middle class and working-class families across Northern Virginia as well as small businesses that rely on our transportation infrastructure and are already struggling to cope with the current crisis.

I ask that the SCC oppose TRIP II's rate increase request and help protect Virginia commuters from additional economic burdens in these trying times.

Sincerely,

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