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## **Board Matter**

**July 13, 2010**

Madam Chairman— As the Board is aware, the Governor's Commission on Government Reform and Restructuring is holding regional town hall meetings this summer to solicit public comment on the Commission's work. The first of these town hall meetings was held last Thursday, July 8, in Tysons Corner. As Legislative Chair, I presented testimony on behalf of the Board that was based on the outline of ideas the Board approved at our last meeting. Copies of my written testimony have been distributed today to Board members.

Briefly stated, the testimony discusses our partnership with the state and suggests some ways to improve it. A critical area for improvement is the state's underfunding of its responsibilities, most notably K-12 and transportation. My testimony also suggested that the Commission consider providing more flexibility to localities to administer local affairs. As I'm sure my colleagues will agree, flexibility to solve local problems is essential to efficient and responsive government. Since a number of the bills the County has introduced over the last 20 years have dealt with issues common to urban and urbanizing localities, these jurisdictions, such as Fairfax County, should be allowed to exercise broader authority to deal with specific community issues. Finally, the testimony asks that the state refrain from additional incursions on our local

authority, especially in the key areas of land use and taxation. We believe that local government is truly “closest to the people” and the local electorate holds local elected officials accountable.

This testimony includes several attachments which contain the staff research and more detailed background information on these suggestions. Also included are some specific examples of areas under discussion with the state, including the list of transportation-related items the Department of Transportation previously provided to the Commission at the request of Secretary Connaughton, and information on a joint effort between the County and the school system in regards to the school bus maintenance schedule.

Therefore Madam Chairman—I move that the Board approve the attached joint draft letter, which transmits the testimony and attachments to Chairman Malek, with copies to Mayor Paul Fraim, the chair of the Intergovernmental Relations Committee (which is examining the state-local relationship), and the three other committee chairs. I would also ask that we copy Senator Whipple, as a member of our delegation and a member of the Commission, and the Virginia Association of Counties.