



October 14, 2020

VDOT Northern Virginia District Office  
Attn: Abi Lerner, P.E.  
4975 Alliance Drive  
Fairfax, VA 22030

Dear Mr. Lerner,

The Arlington Chamber of Commerce supports the 495 NEXT project to extend the 495 Express Lanes from their current terminus north to the George Washington Memorial Parkway. The 495 NEXT project will improve regional connectivity in Northern Virginia and prepare our region for improved connectivity with Maryland, supporting regional economic development. As a privately funded project, 495 NEXT will add to our local economy and transportation network without diverting public funds from other infrastructure and community needs.

Expanding the 495 Express Lanes will improve travel for all modes on and connecting to the Capital Beltway. Transit and carpoolers will be able to use the facility to bypass congestion across the entire western portion of the Beltway in Virginia. Express Lane users will gain new connections to the Dulles Toll Road and George Washington Memorial Parkway, two important regional arterials, promoting connectivity across Northern Virginia. Moreover, the 495 NEXT project prepares to extend the Express Lanes across a rebuilt American Legion Bridge into Maryland through the Capital Beltway Accord project.

The project will support economic development in Northern Virginia. Directly, the 495 NEXT project will constitute a \$500 million private investment. The project also anticipates creating more than 6,000 jobs and more than \$800 million of economic activity in our region, at a time when we are all working to mitigate the economic consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Arlington Chamber supports the development and maintenance of highway facilities that will promote and enhance commerce, encourage tourism, and facilitate the movement of Virginians to work, school, recreation, and other activities. The 495 NEXT project is an opportunity for VDOT and the private sector to work collaboratively to deliver transportation infrastructure that meets local needs, and to continue to embrace innovation.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kate Bates". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kate Bates  
President & CEO