The VRE Operations Board is being asked to consider and provide comment on the draft 2015 VRE Legislative Agenda. The CEO will return to the Operations Board in November to request approval of the Legislative Agenda with a recommendation that the Commissions approve the Agenda and authorize the Chief Executive Officer to actively pursue the elements set forth in the document.

**Background:**

Prior to each calendar year, VRE prepares a Legislative Agenda to communicate VRE legislative priorities in coordination with the Commissions and local jurisdictional staff. Advocacy positions related to specific federal and state legislation are presented.

**Virginia Railway Express**

**2015 Legislative Issues**

**State Legislative Issues:**

**Issue 1: Avoid the Commonwealth “Bond Cliff” funding for transportation**

- In FY2019, the CTB will allocate the last of the Transportation Revenue Bond revenue authorized by the 2007 act. Starting in fiscal year 2018, unless the
Bond Cliff issue is resolved, the Commonwealth’s transit capital funding will be reduced by 62%.

- Begin discussions with transportation partners, DRPT, CTB, the Governor’s office, and General Assembly members to advocate the benefit and need for continued capital funding to avoid the Bond Cliff.

**Issue 2: Amend State Law to allow VRE to earn interest on funds it has invested in the State Insurance Trust Fund**

- VRE retains over $10M in the Insurance Trust Fund to pay operations related claims. Prior to 2011, VRE received interest earnings from the funds invested in the pool. Change law so VRE can earn interest earnings on the funds it has deposited.

**Issue 3: Amend State Law to better leverage State and Federal grant funds for railroad infrastructure projects**

**Federal Legislative Issues:**

**Issue 1: Commuter Benefits Equity**

- Advocate for passage of currently proposed legislation (H.R. 2288 and S. 1116) to establish parity between parking and transit benefits.
- Advocate for legislation to make commuter benefits permanently equal to parking benefits in the Internal Revenue Code.

**Issue 2: Support Reauthorization of a Long-term Federal Transportation and Infrastructure Authorization Bill**

- MAP-21, the current authorization law, expires May 31, 2015. At that time, the Highway Trust Fund and its Mass Transit Account will again be depleted.
- Support long-term, dedicated funding mechanisms that ensure the solvency and supplement the Highway Trust Fund and its Mass Transit Account.