VRE 2016/17 Legislative Agenda

**Federal Legislative Issues:**

**Issue 1: Positive Train Control (PTC) Implementation**
- VRE will continue monitoring PTC legislative and regulatory activity

**Issue 2: FAST Act Rule Making and Funding Opportunities**
- On December 4, 2015, President Obama signed into law the Fixing America’s Surface Transportation Act, or “FAST Act.”
- The FAST Act includes new programs and changes to existing programs that will require agencies to go through the federal rule making process.
- VRE will monitor and participate in the rule making process.
- VRE will look for funding opportunities within the FAST Act.

**Issue 3: Surface Transportation Board (STB) policy on Amtrak On-Time-Performance (OTP)**
- The STB recently finalized their rule regarding Amtrak OTP on host railroads. OTP will now be calculated based on every station. Previously it had been based only on the terminal station.
- Staff has analyzed the possible impacts of this rule and believe there could be negative unintended consequences for VRE operations as the host railroads implement necessary schedule changes to accommodate the new calculation.
- The Association of American Railroads and three Class I Railroads have filed suit in federal court challenging the STB’s authority to implement the rule.
• VRE will monitor current legal action, work with industry groups and other commuter railroads impacted, and support STB policy or legislative fixes if necessary.

State Legislative Issues:

Issue 1: Protective Floor for the Regional 2.1% Motor Fuels Tax

• VRE will continue to support its parent commissions on the creation of a “protective floor” for the regional 2.1% motor fuels tax. Currently without a protective floor, the existing regional 2.1% motor fuels tax generates far less revenue than expected due to the drop in fuel prices. The situation is a threat to PRTC bus service and creates serious operational constraints for VRE.

Issue 2: Explore, Identify and Secure Additional VRE Capital and Operating Funding

• As VRE implements the 2040 System Plan, it has developed an accompanying Financial Plan that identifies capital and operating requirements needed to implement the plan.

• A key findings in the Financial Plan is the clear need for increased funding, even without any proposed expansion of service.

• The local jurisdiction members of VRE are financially constrained in their ability to fund existing VRE operations and capital needs and will experience even greater challenges in securing funding for operational and capital costs identified in the System Plan.

• VRE will explore, identify and secure a long term, dependable funding source for both existing and future operations and capital costs.