



November 14, 2023

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The Honorable W. Sheppard Miller, III
Secretary of Transportation
Patrick Henry Building
1111 East Broad Street
Richmond, VA 23219

Dear Secretary Miller:

I am writing to you on behalf of VA West. VA West is a business and legislative coalition representing 16 chambers of commerce in Central, Southwestern, and Southside Virginia.

As the Commonwealth Transportation Board nears the conclusion of its review of the SMART SCALE process, I am writing to share concerns on the proposed recommendations under active consideration.

We understand that SMART SCALE is not perfect, and technical adjustments are needed from time to time to address unforeseen needs in allocating our transportation dollars. These proposed changes create massive disparities in funding between the three largest metro areas and the rest of the state.

VA West opposes a reduction in the number of applications: The reductions would reduce the number of competitive projects while having only a minimal impact on overall application quality.

VA West opposes the elimination of Step 2 in the SMART SCALE scoring process: The complete elimination of Step 2 without additional mechanisms to help districts meet important statewide goals with smaller, more targeted projects would swing the pendulum too far in the other direction, concentrating state resources in only a handful of districts with capacity to develop large-scale projects.

A united voice for western Virginia on issues that affect the business community.

210 South Jefferson Street, Roanoke, Virginia 24011 (540) 983-0700

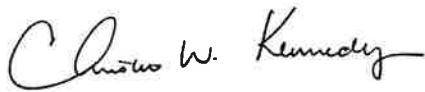
VA West opposes the proposed revision to the current definition of qualifying High Priority Projects: The current definition of High Priority Projects in the Code of Virginia allows for a diversity of project types that can meet both the Commonwealth's strategic objectives while allowing appropriate flexibility for local planning efforts reflective of regional priorities.

These proposed changes to the current funding formula would gut the intent of SMART SCALE and affect communities across the VA West footprint now and in the future.

We appreciate you taking these concerns into consideration as you evaluate the best ways to improve the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Please feel free to contact me if you'd like to discuss this matter further.

Sincerely,



Christine Kennedy
VA West Chair
ckennedy@lynchburgregion.org

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