



COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
HOUSE OF DELEGATES
RICHMOND

ROBERT G. MARSHALL
POST OFFICE BOX 421
MANASSAS, VIRGINIA 20108-0421

THIRTEENTH DISTRICT

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS:
PRIVILEGES AND ELECTIONS
COUNTIES, CITIES AND TOWNS
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

July 14, 2009

The Honorable Frank Wolf
U.S. House of Representatives
241 Cannon HOB
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Wolf:

I would like to request that you consider introducing an amendment to the Transportation Appropriations Bill to suspend the federal law for one year which prohibits Virginia and other states from contracting with private restaurants or gas stations to operate at state owned rest stops on Interstates.

You may be aware that many of Virginia's rest stops and welcome centers will close July 21, 2009, because of "budgetary restraints". I believe that the \$8.6 million in needed funding to keep these rest stops open could have been found, but since that did not happen I am trying to find other ways keep Virginia rest stops open (or allow them to reopen as soon as possible).

Rest stops are an important part of Virginia's transportation infrastructure and their closing will likely affect Virginia's tourism industry in a negative way. It will also mean the loss of jobs for many people who work at these rest stops. In these difficult economic times we cannot afford for this to happen.

The closing of the rest stops is also a problem from a safety perspective as they are one of a very few places that people can pull over to rest when drowsy. In fact Virginia rest stops are formally known as "Safety Rest Stops".

There are a number of states (including Maryland and Pennsylvania) which were grandfathered when the Federal law prohibiting this sort of public/private partnership passed and still have rest stops with restaurants and gas stations attached. I believe these partnerships have worked well.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this request. If you have any questions or concerns please contact me at (703) 853-4213 or delbmarshall@house.virginia.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Bob Marshall'.

Delegate Bob Marshall