

# Governor Terry McAuliffe

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## Governor McAuliffe Announces Bipartisan Compromise to Address Gridlock on I-66 Inside the Beltway

~Project includes funding to immediately widen I-66  
eastbound, improved transit service and conversion to  
express lanes~

Governor Terry McAuliffe and members from both parties and both chambers of the Virginia General Assembly announced today a bipartisan agreement to move forward on a plan to reduce congestion on I-66 inside the beltway by widening a four mile stretch from the Dulles Connector Road to Ballston, improving transit, and adding new options for single drivers.

The agreement will be reflected in the House amendments to Governor McAuliffe's budget proposal after extensive negotiations between the Governor's office, Delegate Jim LeMunyon and House Appropriations Committee Chairman Chris Jones. Republicans in the House of Delegates have also agreed to table legislation that would have precluded an optional toll for single drivers on I-66 inside the beltway, a key revenue source for planned transit improvements.

"This agreement is a big win for Virginia's economy and for the commuters who spend too much time on the most congested road in the most congested region in the country," **said Governor McAuliffe**. "After a spirited political debate last fall, and a series of productive discussions after the General Assembly convened, we are proud to announce a compromise that will move our plan to transform I-66 inside and outside the beltway forward. This multi-pronged strategy will increase options and reduce commute times through improved transit, smarter management of the lanes we already have and a new agreement for a wider roadway both inside and outside the beltway. I want to thank the bipartisan group of leaders who worked together to advance this important project so that we can unlock I-66, grow our economy and improve the quality of life of the commuters who use this road every day."

"This agreement is another example of how the General Assembly and the Governor are working together to provide real solutions to the transportation challenges Virginians face every day," **said Chairman Jones (R-Suffolk)**. "After major investments in 2013 and innovative reforms in 2014 and 2015, we worked closely with Secretary Layne and his staff to find a practical solution to not only move the Transform 66 project forward, but to make it better for citizens throughout the congested I-66 corridor. The House budget will contain language and funding to immediately begin work on adding new lane capacity inside the beltway, a key concern from members of both parties. We

appreciate the Governor's willingness to discuss this important issue, and are grateful for the time and efforts of Secretary Layne and his staff."

**Transportation Secretary Aubrey Layne added,** "This plan will significantly improve the I-66 corridor by moving more people with fewer vehicles, giving solo drivers the option to stay on the road and pay a toll during the peak travel times and increasing carpools, buses and transit in the corridor. We will also begin the process to widen the road at a key bottleneck inside the beltway that will add further capacity without requiring the loss of any existing homes or businesses. This is a comprehensive plan that will ease congestion, support smart growth and advance the Governor's goal of building a new Virginia economy."

"This bipartisan agreement will ease congestion and stimulate economic growth that will benefit the entire Commonwealth," **said Senator Hanger (R-Augusta).** "I am proud of the way in which leaders of both parties and both branches of government were able to sit down and find a way forward on this important project."

"My colleagues and I made the case for widening I-66 inside the beltway," **said Delegate LeMunyon (R-Fairfax).** "I'm glad there is now consensus on the need to do this as soon as possible. This is a step forward in our efforts to address the gridlock on I-66 within the limits of current budget resources. I look forward to taking additional steps to reduce congestion in this key corridor."

**Senator Barbara Favola (D-Arlington)** added, "I appreciate the bipartisan commitment to find a compromise that preserves the I-66 transformation, including the multimodal improvements such as commuter bus services and facilitating carpooling options that are so critical to reducing commuting times for the people of this region."

The work to start widening of eastbound I-66 from the Dulles Connector Road to Ballston will commence this year with an environmental assessment. Construction work will start in 2017 and the new lane will be open to traffic in 2019. This construction will take place within the existing right-of-way, will not take any homes and will be designed in a context sensitive manner.

Project description:

- Converts I-66 inside the beltway to Express Lanes during rush hours in the peak directions, widens I-66 eastbound from the Dulles Connector Road and improves transit service throughout the corridor.
- If you carpool today (two or more people in a vehicle), you will continue to ride the lanes for free when dynamic tolling is scheduled to begin in 2017 during morning and evening rush-hours (5:30 am to 9:30 am eastbound and 3 pm to 7 pm westbound). Solo drivers can ride the lanes in exchange for paying a variable toll based on the distance they travel. Average toll is expected to be \$6 a trip.
- In 2020, lanes will be free to vehicles with three or more people during rush-hours (carpoolers, vanpools and buses) and motorcycles per adopted regional policy. All others will pay a variable toll.
- The lanes will remain free to all traffic during off-peak periods. There will be no tolling in the reverse commute.
- All of the revenues raised from the tolls will be used by the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission for improvements in the corridor such as new transit service and carpooling incentives. Estimated toll revenue in 2018 is \$18 million.
- Increased revenues from the FAST Act and the revised state revenue forecast will finance the environmental work and construction to widen I-66 eastbound from the Dulles Connector Road to Ballston – eliminating the current bottleneck inside the beltway.

- Estimated cost of construction is up to \$140 million and will be funded with increased revenues from the recently passed FAST Act and improved state revenues. No revenues will be taken from the HB2 recommended projects released in January.

The expected benefits of the project include the following:

- Reduce more than 26,000 person hours of delay a day in the future.
- Move more than 40,000 additional people through the I-66 corridor a day in the future.
- Provide reliable travel speeds of at least 45 mph during rush hours in the peak direction.
- Provide increased travel choices for single-occupant drivers and better transit service.

Extensive studies performed over the past several administrations in Virginia show a combination of dynamic tolling and multi-modal improvements will provide a faster and more reliable trip on I-66 inside the beltway during peak travel times, providing a minimum reliable speed of at least 45 miles per hour.

- See more at:

<https://governor.virginia.gov/newsroom/newsarticle?articleId=14095#sthash.q5uOI7cO.dpuf>