



December 10, 2010

Senate Democratic
Caucus
House of Delegates
Democratic Caucus
910 Capitol Square
Richmond, Virginia
23219

**Dear Democratic
Legislator:**

I hope this letter finds you well and in good spirits this holiday season. We truly live in a beautiful Commonwealth, and that beauty is especially pronounced around the holidays.

I realize this letter is likely unexpected, and we're all busy preparing for family gatherings and the General Assembly session, so I'll cut right to the chase. We've all spent hours stuck in traffic jams caused by roads with too few lanes, too many pot holes, and too many cars. There's not a person in Virginia who doesn't want to see this problem fixed. What we need are ideas.

Governor Mark Warner is fond of saying, 'Good ideas don't come with a 'D' or an 'R' attached to them.' While I don't often agree with Mark Warner, in this case he's absolutely right. If you don't like the Governor McDonnell's ideas for transportation, that's fine. There's room for debate. The free and open exchange of ideas is what makes this wonderful experiment in self governance work.

I'm writing to you today to invite you to share your plan with us. Transportation is a big problem, and there's no room for "inside the box" thinking. If you have an idea, we want to hear it. Ideas are the engines that make our country and Commonwealth move. Governor McDonnell has repeatedly asked you and other Democrats for their ideas to fix transportation, but thus far there has been no response. And that's understandable. I can imagine the partisan peer pressure that you and your colleagues have faced, discouraging you from crossing the aisle. The first step is always the hardest.

So, if for some reason you feel uncomfortable reaching out to the Governor, just drop by our Headquarters on Grace Street. You don't even have to come in the front door. We're putting a drop box in the atrium. Just open the door, and drop your plan. Any format you like.

I'll go one better - I'll personally carry each and every idea that you and your colleagues bring to us over to Capitol Square and present them to the Governor. It's that important. And we will give credit where credit is due. If you, or any other Democrat comes up with the blockbuster idea that solves the problem, I'll personally announce it and introduce you at a press conference as "The Architect of Our Transportation Solution." I'm sure the applause will be long and loud. It will be well deserved.

But if the Democratic playbook is what I fear - no new ideas, no new roads, no new construction jobs, no nothing until the gas tax is increased - voters need to know that, too. They need to know which parties are out looking for ideas and trying to solve the problem, and which ones are just digging in their heels to raise taxes on hard working Virginia families in the middle of a recession.

Recent comments from Chairman Moran, House Minority Leader Armstrong and others give me great pause, and I fear that the aforementioned 'tax-hike or nothing' might actually be their position. They seem intent on raising taxes, as opposed to the level of discourse. But I hold out great hope for you and the rest of the Democrat caucus.

I'm sure your great ideas are just hours or days away from our drop box. I've left instructions with the staff to check it hourly and to call me immediately when we receive them, and the Governor's staff is on standby. I can't tell you how excited I am at the prospect of working with you to solve this pressing problem!

Happy Holidays,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Pat". The letters are cursive and somewhat stylized, with the "P" being particularly large and looping.

Pat Mullins

J. Garren Shipley
Communications Director
Republican Party of Virginia

Paid for and authorized by the Republican Party of Virginia

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