

# **National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board**


777 North Capitol Street, N.E., Suite 300, Washington, D.C. 20002-4290 (202)962-3310 Fax: (202) 962-3202 TDD: (202) 962-3213

**Item #5**

## **MEMORANDUM**

July 18, 2007

**TO:** Transportation Planning Board

**FROM:** Ronald F. Kirby   
Director, Department of  
Transportation Planning

**RE:** Additional Letters Sent/Received

The attached additional letters sent/received will be reviewed along with other letters sent/received under item #5 of the July 18<sup>th</sup> TPB agenda.

Attachments


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## **MEMORANDUM**

July 18, 2007

**TO:** Transportation Planning Board

**FROM:** Ronald F. Kirby   
Director, Department of  
Transportation Planning

**Re:** Letter to the region's Congressional delegation  
regarding CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from motor vehicles

As requested by the TPB at its June 20 meeting, the attached letter was e-mailed to the offices of the following members of the Congressional delegation, along with an electronic copy of the PowerPoint presentation entitled "CO<sub>2</sub> Emissions from Cars, Trucks, and Buses in the Metropolitan Washington Region":

Congressman Roscoe Bartlett  
Congresswoman Jo Ann Davis  
Congressman Thomas Davis  
Congressman James P. Moran  
Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton  
Congressman Van Hollen  
Congressman Albert Wynn  
Congressman Steny Hoyer  
Congressman Frank Wolf  
Senator Ben Cardin  
Senator Barbara Mikulski  
Senator Jim Webb  
Senator John Warner

Attachment

## **National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board**

777 North Capitol Street, N.E., Suite 300, Washington, D.C. 20002-4290 (202) 962-3310 Fax: (202) 962-3202

July 17, 2007

The Honorable Chris Van Hollen  
United States House of Representatives  
1707 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Van Hollen:

The National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board (TPB) recently received a staff analysis indicating that carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions from cars, trucks, and buses in the Washington region are projected to increase by almost 50 percent from 2002 through 2030. Carbon dioxide is the primary component of greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to global warming. The TPB seeks your support for federal action that could help reduce this steady growth in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from motor vehicles.

The TPB analysis estimates that the rate of growth of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in the Washington region could be reduced to 22 percent if California's proposed Low Emission Vehicle II (LEV II) standards were adopted throughout the region. Before California or any other states can implement the LEV II program, however, California must obtain a waiver from EPA. The Board was concerned to learn that while California requested such a waiver from EPA in December 2005, the EPA Administrator recently informed Congress that he does not plan to act on that request until the fall of 2008. California has announced its intention to sue EPA to expedite action on its waiver request.

The TPB is encouraged that the Congress is currently considering legislation to strengthen federal fuel economy standards. On June 21 the Senate passed energy legislation that includes new federal Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) standards requiring cars, trucks, and sport-utility (SUVs) to achieve an average fuel economy of 35 miles per gallon by 2020. The TPB analysis indicates that implementation of these new CAFE standards in the Washington region would reduce the rate of growth of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from 2002 to 2030 to around 16 percent. The TPB understands that the House of Representatives will be considering energy legislation later this month, and that while the current version of the House bill does not include new federal CAFE standards, an amendment under development by Representative Edward Markey would include such standards.

**The Honorable Chris Van Hollen**

**July 17, 2007**

**Page 2**

The TPB is pleased to provide its analysis of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in the Washington region for your information as an attachment to this letter. It is clear from this analysis that a significant shift toward a more fuel-efficient vehicle fleet will be essential in order to reduce the rate of growth of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from cars, trucks, and buses in the region. The TPB seeks your support of federal actions that would help achieve that goal.

The TPB analysis and action on vehicle emissions occurs in support of a broader climate change initiative launched this year by the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG). Activities underway include an inventory of both mobile and non-mobile emissions; identification of best practices, such as green buildings; and examination of regional approaches to carbon offset funding. The outcome of this effort will be shared with COG members, including the region's congressional delegation.

Thank you for your consideration of this letter and the attached information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Cathy Hudgins". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Catherine Hudgins  
Chair  
National Capital Region  
Transportation Planning Board


Attachment

# **National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board**

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## **Memorandum**

**TO:** Transportation Planning Board

**FROM:** Nicholas Ramfos   
Director, Alternative Commute Programs

**SUBJECT:** Highlights from the 2007 State of the Commute Survey

**DATE:** July 18, 2007

The Commuter Connections Program conducted a regional telephone “State of the Commute” (SOC) survey in the spring of 2007 to explore regional commute travel patterns and other commute trends. The results of the new survey can be compared with those from similar surveys conducted by Commuter Connections in 2001 and 2004.

The 2007 survey interviewed 6,600 workers in the Washington metropolitan region, with 600 in each of 11 jurisdictions. The samples for all SOC data were expanded to the total worker population in the respective counties. For the region, the worker population was 2,614,990 (Bureau of Labor Statistics, Feb-March 2007).

### **Highlights of Survey Results**

#### ***Teleworking grew substantially between 2004 and 2007, and considerable potential exists for additional telework growth (Table 1)***

- Almost 19% of regional commuters said they teleworked at least occasionally in 2007, a substantial increase from the 2004 level of 13%. Teleworking grew in nearly every demographic and employer segment in which telework is feasible .
- Teleworking among federal agency workers continues to grow. In 2007, 16% of respondents who worked for federal agencies teleworked, compared to 12% in 2004 and only seven percent in 2001. Table 2 shows the incidence of teleworking by type of employer.
- The 2007 survey also found that an additional 24% of commuters who do not telecommute today “could and would” telecommute if given the opportunity. These respondents said their job responsibilities would allow them to telecommute and they would like to telecommute. About two-thirds of these interested respondents said they would like to telecommute “regularly,” while one-third would like to telecommute “occasionally.”

- Among current teleworkers, nearly four in ten (39%) said they teleworked under a formal arrangement. The remaining teleworkers worked under an informal agreement with their supervisor. Formal programs have increased over the past six years. In 2004, 32% of teleworkers had a formal arrangement and in 2001, the percentage was only 27%. This appears to demonstrate greater employer acceptance of formal telework arrangements.
- Days per week teleworked in 2007 was 1.5 days on average, up from the 1.3 days per week estimated in the 2004 survey and the 1.2 days per week estimated in the 2001 survey.
- The impact of teleworking on congestion and air quality has increased significantly: reductions in daily vehicle miles of travel increased by 50% from two to three million between 2004 and 2007 (Table 3).

***Drive alone commuting appears to have fallen somewhat since 2004***

- About 71.0% of weekly commute trips made to worksites outside the home were made by driving alone. This represented a decrease from the 74.1% of weekly trips that were drive alone in 2004 and the 72.6% that were drive alone in 2001.
- Weekly commute trips made by alternative modes appear to have increased from 2004 to 2007, though some of the reported increases are so small that they may not be statistically significant. Train use increased from 12.7% in 2001 and 12.8% in 2004 to 13.5% in 2007 and bus use grew from 4.6% in 2007 and 4.7% in 2004 to 5.2% in 2007. Carpool and vanpool trips increased from 6.1% of weekly trips in 2004 to 7.6% in 2007 which was the same percentage as in 2001. Bike/walk use increased slightly from 2.4% in 2001 and 2.3% in 2004 to 2.7% of weekly commute trips in 2007.

***Availability of worksite commute assistance services remains high (Table 4).***

- Over half of respondents (54%) said their employers offered one or more alternative mode incentives or support services to employees at their worksites, the same percentage as in 2004. This is significantly higher than other metropolitan areas around the country, where typically 30 to 40 percent of employees report access to these types of incentives and support services at their work places.
- The most commonly offered services were Metrochek/transit/vanpool subsidies (33% of employees) and commute information (20%). About one in six respondents said their employers offered preferential parking (16%), services for bikers and walkers (17%), or guaranteed ride home (12%).
- Respondents who worked for federal agencies were most likely to have incentive/support services available (85%), compared with 40-60% of respondents who worked for other types of employers. Respondents also were more likely to have access to all types of incentive/support services if they worked for large firms rather than for small firms. And incentives and support services were far more common among respondents who worked in the core area jurisdictions (Alexandria, Arlington, and District of Columbia); eight in ten of these respondents had access to services compared to about half who worked in Fairfax, Montgomery, or Prince George's Counties, and four in ten of those who worked in jurisdictions outside these areas.

**Most commuters continue to have free worksite parking available.**

- The majority of respondents (65%) said their employers offered free, on-site or off-site parking, about the same percentage as that reported in 2004 (66%) and 2001 (65%).
- Federal agency employees were least likely to have free parking (53%) compared with more than 70% of employees working for private firms and 83% of respondents who worked for state/local governments. Free parking also was much less common in the core area of the region. Only four in ten of respondents who worked in these areas had free parking, compared with at least three-quarters of other respondents.

Table 1  
**Summary of Current and Potential Teleworking**  
 All Respondents who are not Self-Employed/Work at Home  
 (n=6,168)

Teleworking Status	2007	2004
Currently teleworking	18.7%	12.8%
Number of current Teleworkers	456,000	320,000
Average Number of Days Teleworking Per Week	1.5	1.3
- Job responsibilities allow teleworking and INTERESTED in teleworking (“could and would”) for Non-Teleworkers	24%	17%
Number of Non-Teleworkers that “Could and Would” Telework if given the opportunity	570,000	400,000

Table 2  
**Summary of Teleworking by Employer Type**  
 All Respondents who are not Self-Employed/Work at Home

	All Respondents	
	2007	2004
<b>Employer Type</b>		
Private/Non-profit Employer	21%	15%
Federal agency	16%	12%
State/local agency	7%	6%

Table 3  
**Summary of Telework Impact on Congestion & Air Quality**

	All Respondents	
	2007	2004
<b>Impacts</b>		
Daily VMT	3,000,000	2,000,000
Daily Gallons of Gas Saved	133,000	100,000
Daily Tons of NOx Reduced	2 tons	1.5 tons

Table 4  
**Alternative Mode Incentives and Support Services Offered by Employers**  
 2007, 2004, and 2001 SOC Surveys

Alternative Mode Incentives and Support Services	Employer Offered Service *		
	2007 SOC (n=6,076)	2004 SOC (n=6,866)	2001 SOC (n=6,860)
Metrochek/other subsidies for transit/vanpool	33%	31%	29%
Information on commute options	20%	22%	25%
Bike/pedestrian facilities or services	17%	14%	9%
Preferential parking for CP/VP	16%	16%	19%
GRH for emergencies/unscheduled overtime	12%	12%	19%
Financial incentives/subsidies for CP	5%	4%	7%
None – employer doesn't offer any services	46%	47%	49%

\* Might add to more than 100% because multiple responses were permitted.

**Likely Reasons for Changes in Commuting Behavior**

The increases in the number of teleworkers in the region as well as the slight decrease in the drive alone rate and increases in public transportation use can be attributed to a number of different factors: the higher levels of traffic congestion; rising gasoline prices; the importance of commute benefit programs to the business community to attract and retain employees; the formalization of telework programs at employment sites; and the need for business continuity in the aftermath of a natural or man-made disaster.