

August 21, 2014

Hampton Roads Accountability Commission
Retreat

Good Morning

My name is Donna Sayegh

I'm from Portsmouth

Principles of Liberty 15: The highest level of prosperity occurs when there is a free market economy and a minimum of government regulations. As you know, Virginia is no longer a free market economy because of all the government regulations. Why is that?

The federal government has so many Military and federal facilities in Virginia that the Legislators are Advocating for Federal Investments in our region. Legislators Wagner, Lucas and Chris Jones two bills demonstrates this.

Senate Bill 513 created the Hampton Roads Transportation Authority. The Patron of this Bill was Senator Wagner.

This Law will move the responsibility for approval of projects and the priority of projects from the Hampton Roads Planning Organization to the Hampton Roads Transportation Authority

Effective on July 1, 2015.

The Hampton Roads Transportation Fund was established in the State Treasury by House Bill 1253 sponsored by Delegate Chris Jones. The Hampton Roads Transportation Fund is removed from the HRTPO to the HRTAC authority.

Both laws, SB513, and HB1253 are to divest the HRTPO of any authority to function.

What is going to happen to the Planning District Commission in the future seeing what is outlined in HB1253. The law states that HRTAC can develop a long-range plan that is not limited to congestion reduction and safety, or transit and high occupancy vehicle (HOV) usage, or job-to-housing ratios, or job and housing access to transit and pedestrian facilities, or air quality, and/or per capita vehicle miles traveled in addition to what the NoVA Transportation Authority established.

In addition to the above, HB1253 stipulates that The Fund is to be used solely for new construction projects on new or existing highways, bridges, and tunnels in Planning District 23 as approved by HRTAC (not the HRTPO).

The law goes on to say that the Composition of the Commission will be 21 members, an Auditor of Public Accounts, and staff for the Commission to include a Chief Executive officer and staff to carry out its duties and responsibilities.

Other things stated are: that VDOT and the Department of Rail and Public Transportation will make their employees available to assist the Commission upon request. What about the PDC or TPO staff?

The law provides information about the adoption of an annual budget and the development of a funding plan. The goal of the funding plan is to provide for the expenditures of funds over a four-to-six year period and align with the Statewide Transportation Plan.

The law stipulates that the Commission needs to solicit public comments on its budget and funding plan by posting a summary of it on its website and to hold a public hearing. The public hearing needs to be advertised on the Commission's website and a newspaper of general circulation in Planning District 23.

In Conclusion:

These laws are enacted to take away the people's individual liberty.

This Commission has done nothing to encourage citizens'

engagement. From the moment these laws were introduced into the General Assembly, the Legislators and staff have assumed an adversarial role to intimidate the people to pass these laws.

Legislators attitude to continue to intimidate the people is still occurring.

Here's 2 examples for you:

The first example: On July 17th after the HRTAC, I went to have a conversation with Senator Lucas. Two of her body guards approached me. I heard Senator Lucas state the meeting was torture. The female body guard turned her back on me and kept pushing me away. Senator Lucas then said that I could tell the newspaper.

The second example:

On Tuesday, I went to speak with the City Manager of VB after the Finance meeting adjourned. One of the staff told me that I did not have a right to be behind the roped off area and she was going to call the Security Guard if I didn't leave. She went over to a fellow and he walked past me but didn't say anything. I finally got to give the City Manager feedback. He then turned and walked away.