

WHEREAS, THE VOLUME OF TRAFFIC IN THE METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON, D.C. WASHINGTON METROPOLITAN AREA IS EXPECTED TO INCREASE BY MORE THAN 70% BETWEEN 1990 AND 2020; AND

WHEREAS, THE DETERIORATION OF WOODROW WILSON BRIDGE AND THE GROWING POPULATION IN THE METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON, D.C. WASHINGTON METROPOLITAN AREA ACCOUNTS FOR A LARGE PART OF TRAFFIC CONGESTION, AND IDENTIFYING ALTERNATIVES TO THIS VITAL LINK IN THE INTERSTATE HIGHWAY SYSTEM AND THE NORTHEAST CORRIDOR IS CRITICAL TO ADDRESSING THE AREA'S TRAFFIC CONGESTION; AND

WHEREAS, THE WOODROW WILSON BRIDGE IS THE ONLY DRAWBRIDGE ON THE REGIONAL INTERSTATE NETWORK, THE ONLY PIECE OF THE CAPITAL BELTWAY WITH ONLY SIX LANES AND THE ONLY SEGMENT WITH A REMAINING LIFESPAN OF ONLY TEN YEARS; AND

WHEREAS, THE EXISTING WOODROW WILSON BRIDGE IS THE ONLY PART OF THE INTERSTATE SYSTEM OWNED BY THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT, AND THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT HAS A RESPONSIBILITY TO FUND IMPROVEMENTS TO THE FACILITY; AND

WHEREAS, WHILE THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, MARYLAND, AND VIRGINIA MAINTAIN AND OPERATE THE BRIDGE, NO ENTITY HAS EVER BEEN GRANTED FULL AND CLEAR RESPONSIBILITY FOR ALL ASPECTS OF THIS FACILITY; AND

WHEREAS, CONTINUED FEDERAL GOVERNMENT OWNERSHIP OF THE WOODROW WILSON BRIDGE WILL IMPEDE COHESIVE REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING AS IT RELATES TO IDENTIFYING ALTERNATIVE SOLUTIONS FOR RESOLVING PROBLEMS OF THE EXISTING WOODROW WILSON BRIDGE CONTINGENT UPON THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT'S CONTRIBUTION OF FUNDS TO UPGRADE THE FACILITY, IT WOULD BE IN THE INTEREST OF THE REGION, THE STATES, AND THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO TRANSFER OWNERSHIP OF THE FACILITY TO AN INDEPENDENT AUTHORITY; AND

WHEREAS, ANY CHANGE IN THE STATUS OF THE WOODROW WILSON BRIDGE MUST TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE INTEREST OF NEARBY COMMUNITIES, THE COMMUTING PUBLIC, AND OTHER INTERESTED GROUPS, AS WELL AS THE INTEREST OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AND STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS INVOLVED; AND

WHEREAS, THE WOODROW WILSON BRIDGE COORDINATING COMMITTEE, ESTABLISHED BY THE FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION AND COMPRISED OF REPRESENTATIVES OF FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS, IS UNDERTAKING PLANNING STUDIES PERTAINING TO THE WOODROW WILSON BRIDGE, CONSISTENT WITH THE PROVISIONS OF THE NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ACT AND OTHER APPLICABLE FEDERAL LAWS; AND