

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

WHEREAS, In recognition of a need for a limited federal role in the management of this bridge and the growing local interest, the U.S. Secretary of Transportation has recommended a transfer of authority and ownership from the federal to the local/state level, consistent with the management of other bridges elsewhere in the nation; and

WHEREAS, A commission comprised of congressional, state, and local officials and transportation representatives has recommended transfer of the Woodrow Wilson Bridge to an independent authority; and

WHEREAS, A coordinated approach without regard to political and legal jurisdictional boundaries, through the cooperation of the State of Maryland and the Commonwealth of Virginia by and through an instrumentality and common agency of the Commonwealth of Virginia and the State of Maryland is a proper and necessary step looking towards the alleviation of traffic problems related to the inadequacy of the existing Woodrow Wilson Bridge;]

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

WHEREAS, THE DETERIORATION OF THE WOODROW WILSON MEMORIAL BRIDGE AND THE GROWING POPULATION OF THE METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON, D.C. AREA CONTRIBUTE SIGNIFICANTLY TO TRAFFIC CONGESTION; AND

WHEREAS, THE WOODROW WILSON MEMORIAL BRIDGE SERVES AS A VITAL LINK IN THE INTERSTATE SYSTEM AND THE NORTHEAST CORRIDOR, AND IDENTIFYING ALTERNATIVE METHODS FOR MAINTAINING THE BRIDGE IS CRITICAL TO ADDRESSING TRAFFIC CONGESTION IN THE METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON D.C. AREA; AND

WHEREAS, THE WOODROW WILSON MEMORIAL BRIDGE IS THE ONLY DRAWBRIDGE IN THE METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON, D.C. AREA ON THE INTERSTATE SYSTEM AND THE ONLY SEGMENT OF THE CAPITAL BELTWAY WITH LESS THAN SIX LANES AND A REMAINING EXPECTED LIFE OF LESS THAN 10 YEARS; AND

WHEREAS, THE WOODROW WILSON MEMORIAL BRIDGE WAS CONSTRUCTED BY THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AND IS THE ONLY PART OF THE INTERSTATE SYSTEM OWNED BY THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT; AND

WHEREAS, THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT, IN THE PAST, PAID 100% OF THE COST OF BUILDING AND REHABILITATING THE BRIDGE AND HAS A CONTINUING RESPONSIBILITY TO FUND THE FUTURE COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE UPGRADING OF THE POTOMAC RIVER CROSSING ON INTERSTATE 95, INCLUDING THE REHABILITATION AND RECONSTRUCTION OF THE BRIDGE; AND