

**Statement to the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors
5 August 2002**

Dulles Corridor Rapid Transit Project

My name is Art Wells. I am president of the Fairfax County Federation of Citizens Association.

The Federation is a volunteer, non-profit, non-partisan umbrella group for the organized citizenry of Fairfax County. For over 60 years the Federation has represented the interests of civic, homeowners, condominium, and townhouse associations working together with the magisterial district councils of citizens associations.

I am here tonight to reiterate the long-standing Federation position that rail in the Dulles corridor should be the ultimate type of rapid transit in this corridor. However, we are not yet ready tonight to discuss how best to reach this goal.

We are still reviewing the information in the draft environmental impact statement for the Dulles Corridor Rapid Transit Project. We will submit our comments to the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation by the time the public hearing closes on August 28, and will also provide our comments to you.

Our review of the EIS is focusing on a number issues of interest to Federation members, and I would like to mention some of these tonight.

Alternatives considered in the EIS: Have all reasonable alternatives been considered? Have some alternatives been discarded prematurely?

Coordination with other future transportation projects: Is the Dulles corridor project adequately coordinated with other projects that might be built in the future? These include rail in the Beltway corridor, rail from Tysons Corner to Maryland, and extending the Orange Line to Centreville.

Increased density allowed near rail stations: If the rail project is built, landowners can ask to build increased density near the rail stations. If this density is built, there will be additional automobile traffic because not everyone will ride the rail system. Further, these projects will probably be built long before the rail system is completed. This is a direct impact of the rail project, and we want to be sure that this is considered in the traffic analysis.

Tysons Corner: Tysons Corner is the 800-pound Gorilla in all of this. Getting people to Tysons Corner is the main reason—although not the only reason—for opening rapid transit in the Dulles corridor. Any proposal must demonstrate that Tysons Corner is served adequately. Otherwise, what's the point of spending 3 billion dollars? We want to be sure that all reasonable alternatives for serving Tysons Corner have been considered carefully.

Auto and bus access to stations: We want to be sure that the EIS discusses in detail how riders will get to the stations if they do not walk there. Our members want to know about plans for feeder buses and parking at the stations. We want to be sure that the planners have considered a SYSTEM of transportation and not just how to build a railroad in the median of the Dulles Access Road. Federation members want to be sure that we all don't repeat past mistakes regarding adequate parking and feeder bus service. What good is a 3 billion dollar investment if we can't get to the rail stations?

Pedestrian and bicycle access to the rail stations: We believe this is a very important issue and want to be sure that this is discussed adequately in the EIS. We want to be sure that this issue has been considered for an adequate distance away from the stations and not just for the immediate station area. Bicycle storage areas at the stations should also be considered.

Noise: We want to be sure that residential areas are adequately protected from noise from passing trains and from wheel squeal from trains rounding curves.

Light flashes when trains pass over tie breakers in the third rail: A tie-breaker is a gap in the third rail that carries the electricity for train power. A brilliant flash of light often occurs when a train passes over a tie-breaker. We want to be sure that the EIS describes how adjacent residential areas will be protected from this potential nighttime nuisance.

Financing the project: We want to be assured that any financing system is fair and equitable; that everyone who benefits from the project pay their fair share. County citizens should not pay a disproportionate share in taxes or toll road tolls. We also want to be sure that financial support of the system doesn't end up back in the laps of homeowners and other citizens if a tax district or the overall system doesn't generate enough revenue for whatever reason—as happened with the Route 28 tax district.

These are some of the issues that concern us. We hope that you are also considering these issues as well.