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July 12, 1997

SHA
Attn: Mr. Lou H. Ege, Jr.
707 North Calvert Street
Mail Stop C301
Baltimore, MD 21202

Re: Intercounty Connector (ICC) Comments

Dear Mr. Ege:

Set forth below are my comments on the ICC. Although I generally believe that the ICC is a fatuous idea -- primarily because it should have been built over 30 years ago prior to the construction of communities that bordered the road alternatives -- I do have a number of constructive ideas that I hope will be considered in choosing the ultimate design of any ICC highway.

Minimum Impact on Existing Communities

The ICC should have as little an impact as possible on existing residential communities. Accordingly, any ICC highway should incorporate appropriate sound deadening techniques and devices, such as grading the roadway as low as possible and installing sound barriers between communities and the road. The roadway also should not become part of an "outer beltway."

In addition, raised roadways should be avoided at all costs. No one wants a bridge behind or near their home. One area in particular that could suffer this fate is the intersection of the ICC and Shady Grove Road. Under both the Master Plan and Northern Alternatives, the ICC would have to go over or under Shady Grove Road. I would anticipate that if either of these alternatives is ultimately adopted, the ICC would be raised over Shady Grove Road because of the significant cost and design difficulties that building the ICC under the road would entail. Thus, because it does not face this potential problem, the Midcounty Highway-MD 198 Alternative is superior to the Master Plan and Northern Alternatives in this regard.

Restrict Parkway to Non-Commercial Traffic

The ICC should be restricted to non-commercial traffic (excluding commuter buses). This would be consistent with the "parkway type design" adopted for each of the major roadway alternatives: parkways typically are restricted to non-commercial traffic. For example, trucks are prohibited from traversing the George Washington Parkway in Virginia.

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Restricting the ICC to non-commercial traffic would also have other beneficial effects. Road repairs would likely be less frequent because of the absence of heavy, damage-causing trucks. In addition, prohibiting commercial traffic would also minimize the impact of the ICC on affected communities, as commercial trucks are the culprits that generate the majority of the insufferable noise and pollution accompanying a major thoroughfare. Moreover, I can tell you based on personal experience, it is not pleasant to wake up on a Sunday morning to the sound of truck traffic.

Sincerely,



Paul Crispino
17105 Amity Dr.
Rockville, MD 20855