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**NEWS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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Virginia Transit Association Recognizes Outstanding Leaders in Public Transit

State legislators and transit properties are commended for their efforts to improve and expand transit in Virginia.

Norfolk, Va. -- At the **Virginia Transit Association's annual fall legislative meeting**, several state leaders and organizations were honored for their roles in enhancing public transit in Virginia with **awards presented by VTA and the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (VDRPT)**.

VTA 2000 Outstanding Contribution by a Public Official Award

Two awards were given to bi-partisan teams of legislators for their efforts during the 2000 General Assembly Session.

- **Delegate Kenneth Plum and Delegate Vincent Callahan** were recognized for their successful team effort on behalf of the *Dulles Corridor Rapid Transit Program*. As co-chairs of the Dulles Rail Corridor Association, both legislators demonstrated leadership in the General Assembly to provide funds for this important new transit project, which will establish high-quality, convenient transit in the largest commercial corridor in the nation that is not currently served by transit.
- **Delegate Flora Crittenden, Delegate Phillip Hamilton and Senator Kenneth Stolle** were honored for their achievements during the 2000 Session. Their collective perseverance led to increased funding for *Hampton Roads Transit* in order to improve and expand existing services. These increased services will make transit more convenient and accessible and will manage congestion in the area.

VDRPT 2000 Outstanding Achievement Award to a Public Transportation Provider - Non-Urban Area

Bay Transit was founded in 1996 in Gloucester County, and since then has *aggressively expanded and increased ridership*. Since its inception, Bay Transit's service has grown from one bus to 15 vehicles and provides more than 5000 rides per month in this rural area of northeast Virginia. In addition to the public transit service, Bay Transit has also been involved in providing Welfare Reform "journey to work" public transportation services and coordinating with "Ride Share" Programs.

VDRPT 2000 Outstanding Achievement Award to a Public Transportation Provider - Urbanized Area

Virginia Railway Express (VRE) has gone through a *phenomenal period of growth* in the past year with monthly ridership increases of 15-20% over the previous year. VRE is the second fastest growing commuter rail operation in the country. VRE is also a customer-oriented organization that has introduced several innovative programs to compensate passengers for late trains. This is rarely necessary due to VRE's excellent record for being on time. VRE reached the *90% on-time percentage* in July. VRE has also recently purchased state-of-the-art equipment that doubles the capacity per coach while increasing the comfort for the commuter.

VTA 2000 Outstanding Public Transportation Marketing Award

VTA commended **Potomac and Rappahannock Transportation Commission (PRTC)** for their accomplishments in *promoting public awareness* of their expanded Omni-Link service and *increasing ridership*. PRTC's marketing plan was well thought-out and focused, specifically targeted to the populations they serve and successfully implemented by staff at all levels in their organization. They used both tried-and-true methods and innovative, creative activities to reach their customers.

VTA 2000 Innovative Program Award

VTA recognized **Hampton Roads Transit (HRT)** for their accomplishments in collaborating with diverse non-transportation groups to *assist area youth* through their "Community Partnerships for Youth" program. The program helps area youth to access crisis services and educational opportunities, as well as raising awareness of public transit. HRT's efforts to reach out to Hampton Roads youth demonstrates that public transit systems do more than provide transportation, they play integral roles in improving communities.

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VTA is a trade association based in Richmond, VA representing transit agencies of all sizes throughout Virginia and businesses that support public transportation. VTA's members provide a wide range of services to the communities in which they operate. www.vatransit.com