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For his leadership to expand public transportation service, Governor Kaine received the Virginia Transit Association's Exemplary Public Service Award today in Portsmouth at a transit event to announce the new Portsmouth Loop service provided by Hampton Roads Transit.

The Award recognizes the Governor for "his leadership, persistence and commitment to secure funds for the expansion of public transportation to provide better transportation choices for all Virginians," said John McGlennon, President of the Virginia Transit Association.

The Association applauded the hard work of the Governor and the General Assembly for enhancing public transportation with this year's comprehensive transportation funding plan. VTA President McGlennon cited the Governor's amendments as key to providing a major advance for public transportation. The Governor's amendments added \$105 million annually statewide, virtually doubling state funds available for the transit program. Of this total, beginning in FY09, \$45 million more are dedicated to transit operations with a stable and secure revenue source; a increase of 45 percent. The Governor's amendments also increased transit's share of the bond funds for capital from 15.7 percent to a minimum of 20 percent, equaling at least \$60 million a year. Further, Governor Kaine recommended and the General Assembly endorsed an additional \$70 million in one-time funds for transit capital in FY08.

This major investment in public transportation will have far-reaching benefits. "Beginning next year, communities like Portsmouth that want add or expand transit services will have a reliable investment partner in the Commonwealth," said Governor Kaine. "We will be able to help Virginians of all income levels get to work and save money on fuel. It will help keep elderly and disabled citizens mobile, and able to live independently. Increased transit options also will reduce pollution, help manage congestion, and improves the quality of life in our communities."

"VTA is confident that important improvements and expansions of transit service across the state will be possible because of Governor Kaine's leadership to provide better transportation choices for Virginians", McGlennon added.

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