Albemarle County

Legislation Text

File #: 20-115, **Version:** 1

AGENDA DATE: 1/8/2020

TITLE:
Resolution in Support of Traffic Incident Management Legislation

SUBJECT/PROPOSAL/REQUEST: Adoption of a resolution of support for an upcoming bill in the Virginia General Assembly session concerning safety on our highways.

ITEM TYPE: Consent Action Item

STAFF CONTACT(S): Richardson, Walker, Kamptner

PRESENTER (S): N/A

LEGAL REVIEW: Yes

REVIEWED BY: Jeffrey B. Richardson

BACKGROUND: The Loudoun County Board of Supervisors sent a letter dated November 5, 2019 (Attachment A) requesting the Board of Supervisors consider adopting a resolution of support for an upcoming bill in the Virginia General Assembly session concerning safety in congested Interstate corridors.

STRATEGIC PLAN: Infrastructure Investment: Prioritize, plan, and invest in critical infrastructure that responds to past and future changes and improves the capacity to serve community needs.

DISCUSSION: Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) safety service patrol vehicles, also known as traffic incident management (TIM) vehicles, operate on the I-95, I-495, I-295, I-81 and I-64 Interstate corridors. TIM vehicles are dispatched by VDOT Transportation Operation Centers or Virginia State Police dispatchers to support first responders by clearing major accidents. VDOT currently uses amber lights for TIM vehicles, and are frequently delayed in responding due to traffic which does not yield the right of way to amber lighted vehicles. Proposed legislation would authorize TIM vehicles to be:

(i) equipped with flashing red or red and white warning lights,
(ii) exempt from certain traffic regulations in particular situations, and
(iii) equipped with a siren, exhaust whistle, or air horn.

The proposed legislation would also add TIM vehicles to the list of stopped vehicles for which the operator of a motor vehicle must move over or proceed with caution. The legislation would also require TIM drivers to undergo an emergency vehicle operators' course from an approved list by the Department of Fire Programs, Office of Emergency Medical Services, or equivalent agency and be recertified as an emergency vehicle operator every five years. Similar legislation, HB 2594, passed the House of Delegates 99-0 during the 2019 General Assembly Session and narrowly failed by one vote in the Senate Transportation Committee.

BUDGET IMPACT: No direct budget impact is anticipated.

RECOMMENDATION:
Staff recommends that the Board adopt the attached Resolution of Support (Attachment A).

ATTACHMENTS:
Attachment A - Letter from Loudoun County Administrator
Attachment B - Resolution of Support