



## **FUTURE INTERSTATE DESIGNATION: RALEIGH, NC TO NORFOLK, VA**

### Background:

There are two ways a highway segment or corridor can be designated as a future Interstate. One is an administrative process whereby a State requests the Federal Highway Administration to present a corridor as a logical addition to the Interstate system, coordinates with other states and MPO's along the corridor, and makes a commitment to complete the route to Interstate design standards within 25 years. The other path is a Congressional designation mandated by law. There are certain advantages, financial, and otherwise, to a Congressional Interstate designation.

In the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA), Congress created the High Priority Corridor program to identify high priority corridors on the National Highway System. ISTEA designated 21 corridors, including: "Raleigh-Norfolk Corridor, Raleigh, North Carolina to Norfolk, Virginia." 1105 (c)(13). In this same law, earmarked funding of \$17.8 million dollars was included for "Upgrading I-64 and Route 17 Virginia and constructing a new highway from Rocky Mount to Elizabeth City, North Carolina as part of the Raleigh-Norfolk High Priority Corridor Improvements" (Section 1105(f)(13)). Also in ISTEA, Congress designated some of the high priority corridors or segments of them as future parts of the Interstate system. Through the years, Congress has added additional corridors and segments of corridors as future part of the Interstate system and even designated the Interstate # for particular corridors.

In December of 2013, a portion of the corridor in North Carolina, US 64 between I-440 to I-95 near Rocky Mount was administratively designated as I-495 and part of the Interstate by the Federal Highway Administration. The section of US 64 between I-540 to I-95 was designated as future I-495 until NCDOT widens the inside and outside shoulders to meet Interstate standards. This work will be done as part of future reconstruction activities along the route. Therefore, part of the corridor is already designated as part of the Interstate and future Interstate.

Issue:

North Carolina DOT is seeking language in the reauthorization of surface transportation programs legislation to enhance the description of the Raleigh-Norfolk Corridor to include the route via Rocky Mount/ Elizabeth City for clarity, and to designate the entire route from Raleigh to Norfolk as a future part of the Interstate system as Interstate 44 or 50.

Support:

Resolutions in support of Interstate/Future Interstate designation for all/portions of the corridor from Raleigh to Hampton Roads via Rocky Mount and Elizabeth City have been supported by the Regional Transportation Alliance, Research Triangle Regional Partnership, Carolinas Gateway Partnership of Rocky Mount, Northeast North Carolina Commission, Capital Area MPO, Kerr-Tar RPO, Upper Coastal Plain RPO, Rocky Mount Area MPO, Franklin County Board of Commissioners, Franklin County Chamber of Commerce, Raleigh Chamber of Commerce, Knightdale Chamber of Commerce, and Garner Chamber of Commerce

Amendments:

Suggested draft language to accomplish the goals set forth above follows:

Section 1105(c)(13) of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 is amended as follows: “Raleigh-Norfolk, via Rocky Mount/Elizabeth City, North Carolina.”

Section 1105(e)(5)(A) of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 is amended by striking the “and” after “(c)(54)” and inserting after “(c)(57) the following: “and subsection (c)(13)”