

Albert Burckard, 64th District

2009 Virginia House of Delegates Candidate Questionnaire

1. Specifically, what unique qualities and/or qualifications will you bring to the office you seek?

I am not in this election to seek political office but only to bring visibility to my light rail proposal to connect the Virginia Peninsula to the Southside through Isle of Wight County. Political visibility is necessary for my proposal because the Virginia Department of Transportation is a political bureaucracy that distributes our tax money based on the decisions of elected officials.

2. What transportation changes or improvements do you advocate and how specifically would you pay for them?

My light rail proposal is an above-grade (about 20 feet high) monorail-design passenger system that requires only a small ground footprint with no dangerous traffic grade level crossings and minimal obstruction to farmers as the system traverses open rural areas. Much of my proposed rail route is in the already existing center median strip of routes 17 and 32. No public funds should be expended on this project. I envision a public-private partnership similar to the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel wherein government enables rights of way and easements but private enterprise constructs and operates the railway for profit.

3. What do you believe are two other important challenges facing the Commonwealth?

Government funded and controlled primary and secondary education is a failure at all levels from the dismal academic record in inner cities to ridiculously low teacher pay. I would reduce the Virginia Department of Education to nothing more than SOL administrators who would test all Virginia students annually. Government schools would be limited, by proven income level, to only those students whose parents are unable to pay for a private education. Current tax levels to support education will be great reduced.

I would dramatically reduce the mandate of the Virginia Department of Transportation to make all road construction and maintenance the responsibility of each county and city. Computerized "smart pass" electronic readers will be placed on each mile of "public" roadway and each citizen who uses the roadway would receive a quarterly invoice for miles travelled on these roads. VDOT would become a small computerized bureaucracy to send out invoices, receive payment and distribute the proceeds to the counties and cities based on usage.

Emergency vehicles and tourists would be exempt and commercial vehicles would receive discounts to encourage business throughout the Commonwealth. Current tax levels to support private transportation will be greatly reduced.