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Affiliated with The National Cattlemen's Beef Association

December 15, 2025

TO: Mr. DJ Stadtler, Executive Director, Virginia Passenger Rail Authority
FROM: Brandon Reeves, Executive Director, Virginia Cattlemen's Association
RE: Preserving Shenandoah Valley Rail Corridor

Dear Mr. Stadtler:

Please find this letter of support in favor of preserving the Norfolk Southern rail corridor in the Northern Shenandoah Valley. We support the recent proposal at the Commonwealth Transportation Board to advance the Rails with Trails project by transferring funds to the VPRA. We believe that abandoning this infrastructure would be incredibly short-sighted given the potential this rail has to offer.

In Virginia, the production of beef cattle is the Commonwealth's second leading agricultural enterprise in terms of farm gate receipts and support of cattle is the state's largest use of private land in agricultural production. Virginia Cattlemen's Association works to help promote and protect the interests of cattle producers across the Commonwealth. The state's two largest cattle producing counties, Augusta and Rockingham, are located in the heart of the Valley.

The viability of our state's cattle industry depends on having diverse infrastructure and opportunities. We depend on having access to commodities that are not always available or grown in Virginia. We also depend on having the ability to ship our products to other markets in interstate commerce. This rail once helped provide those opportunities and has the potential to develop back into a vital transportation source.

The Virginia Cattlemen's Association supports efforts to maintain and build infrastructure to help sustain and grow our industry. It's time to move forward. We greatly appreciate the consideration of the VPRA, and the CTB in this matter.

Please feel free to contact me if I can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

Brandon Reeves
VCA Executive Director