



P.O. Box 2277, Harrisonburg, VA 22801

## **Virginia Poultry Federation Statement on Rails-with-Trails Proposal in Northern Shenandoah Valley**

December 31, 2025

Virginia Poultry Federation (VPF) is a member of the Shenandoah Rail Corridor coalition that seeks to preserve the Norfolk Southern rail corridor in the Northern Shenandoah Valley for potential future use while advancing a recreational trail through the corridor. The proposal before the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) offers an opportunity to advance the trail concept together with preservation of the railroad corridor for potential future rail service.

VPF is the statewide trade association representing the poultry industry in Virginia. According to a recent economic study<sup>[i]</sup>, the poultry and egg industry in Virginia employs as many as 20,451 people across the Commonwealth on family farms and at processing plants, feed mills, hatcheries, and other operations and generates an additional 39,907 jobs in supplier and ancillary industries. The study shows the industry has a direct economic impact of \$8.3 billion and overall contribute \$17.8 billion in economic activity in the Commonwealth. Much of this economic activity is in the Shenandoah Valley.

Rail infrastructure is critical to the Valley's poultry industry, delivering corn and soybean meal from the Mid-West. The Norfolk Southern line running north from Broadway, VA once delivered feed ingredients for poultry operations, and while the line is not currently in service, the coalition envisions reestablishing rail service that could benefit agriculture, tourism, and potentially passengers. We believe it would be a mistake to abandon permanently rail infrastructure that could potentially benefit commerce, including the poultry and ag sector in the future.

VPF asks the CTB to approve the proposal before it during its meeting on January 6, 2026.

Attributable: Hobey Bauhan, President, (540) 478-8199, [hobey@vapoultry.com](mailto:hobey@vapoultry.com)

Virginia Poultry Federation, founded in 1925, is a nonprofit trade association that promotes the interests of Virginia's poultry and egg industry through public and government relations and educational programs.

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<sup>[i]</sup> [2022 Poultry and Egg Economic Impact Study](https://www.poultryfeedsamerica.org/#:~:text), Prepared for U.S. Poultry & Egg Association by John Dunham and Associates, Inc., Brooklyn, New York (<https://www.poultryfeedsamerica.org/#:~:text>