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**INADEQUATE ROADS COST VIRGINIA DRIVERS ALMOST \$1,000 EACH PER YEAR
- \$4.7 BILLION STATEWIDE- IN DIMINISHED SAFETY, LONGER DELAYS AND
INCREASED VEHICLE WEAR**

**NEW ANALYSIS EXAMINES CONGESTION, PAVEMENT CONDITIONS, TRAFFIC
SAFETY AND TRANSPORTATION FUNDING IN RICHMOND, ROANOKE,
HAMPTON ROADS, WASHINGTON, D.C. AND STATEWIDE**

Roanoke, September 19, 2006 – Virginia’s roadways that lack desirable safety features, have inadequate capacity to meet travel demands or have poor pavement conditions cost the state’s drivers approximately \$4.7 billion annually - \$920 per licensed driver - in the form of traffic accidents, additional vehicle operating costs and congestion-related delays. This is according to new analysis released today by TRIP, a national transportation research group based in Washington, D.C., which indicates an increase of five percent over 2004, when TRIP found that inadequate roads resulted in a cost of \$4.4 billion - \$875 per licensed driver.

“Virginia’s legislators now have an opportunity to provide for a safe, efficient and adequately funded highway transportation system that will save drivers time and money,” said William M. Wilkins, TRIP’s executive director.

In the Roanoke metro area, 59 percent of major roads are in poor or mediocre condition. In fact, 50 percent or more of the roads in the metro Washington, Richmond, Roanoke and Hampton Roads areas are in either poor or mediocre condition. Driving on roads in need of repair costs Virginia’s motorists approximately \$1.3 billion annually in extra vehicle operating costs, including accelerated vehicle depreciation, additional repair costs and increased fuel consumption and tire wear.

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Steady population growth has resulted in increased vehicle travel on Virginia's transportation system, resulting in growing urban traffic congestion and longer commute times. According to the TRIP report, congestion in Virginia costs licensed drivers \$1.7 billion annually in delays and wasted fuel. Vehicle travel in Virginia increased by 31 percent between 1990 and 2004, and is projected to increase by another 30 percent by 2020.

Traffic accidents and fatalities in which roadway design was an important factor cost Virginia motorists approximately \$1.7 billion annually, including medical costs, lost economic and household productivity, property damage and travel delays. An average of 930 people were killed each year in motor vehicle accidents in Virginia from 2000 through 2004. The Roanoke metro area averaged 57 fatalities each year during that time.

"TRIP's findings underscore the fact that Virginia's highway transportation system is in need of immediate attention. However, needed maintenance and repairs cannot take place without a significant investment in the state's transportation infrastructure. Additional transportation funding will facilitate improved safety and increased travel efficiency and will help boost economic development," according to Bev Fitzpatrick, Virginians for Better Transportation (VBT) executive council co-chairman and vice mayor of the City of Roanoke.

A significant and sustainable increase in construction and maintenance funding would allow Virginia to accelerate key transportation projects and improve conditions and service statewide. If transportation funding remains at current levels, however, many critical highway and public transit improvements will be delayed and traffic congestion will get worse, hampering Virginia's economic development. According to Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) data, Virginia's primary, secondary and urban roads, which carry nearly 70 percent of traffic in the state, received more than 28 percent less state funding in fiscal year 2006 than in 1996.