

V. ROAD TO RUIN

In a report released in September 1996, Taxpayers for Common Sense and Friends of the Earth selected the proposed Route 29 Bypass as one of the most wasteful highway projects in the nation. The *Road to Ruin* report targeted 22 proposed highway projects that were unnecessary, harmed local communities, and damaged the environment. The report recommended terminating the Route 29 Bypass. It stated that, as currently designed, the Bypass would:

- Endanger the community's largest drinking water impoundment with reservoir siltation, runoff pollution, and hazardous materials spills;
- Harm six neighborhoods, pass in close proximity to five schools, and result in the taking of more than 30 residences;
- Substantially increase noise levels for schools and residences;
- Carry only about 2200 vehicles per day of north-south through traffic in the year 2010.

The report stated:

- The Albemarle County Board of Supervisors unanimously opposed this road;
- Public comment opposing any bypass was 3212 to 51 at the 1990 Location Public Hearing;
- The road would cost at least \$180 million or \$30 million per mile;
- VDOT chose to ignore its own traffic studies which established that the proposed Bypass would not significantly improve traffic on Route 29, its primary purpose according to the *FEIS*;
- On an A to F scale, the level of service on Route 29 would be grade "F" (whether the bypass is built or not) unless other projects approved by the Commonwealth Transportation Board in 1990, which were scheduled to be built before the bypass, were constructed. (None are currently scheduled for construction).

A second *Road to Ruin* report was released in June 1997. This report repeated the comments from the earlier version and advocated giving local communities more control over road projects. Four of the 37 projects selected for the report were in Virginia. In addition, the report stated that public comment was overwhelmingly opposed to the bypass by 7,105 to 1,101 at the Design Public Hearing in February 1997.

A third *Road to Ruin* report was released in April 1999. The Route 29 Bypass was once again featured as an example of one of the 50 most wasteful highway projects in the nation.

SEE APPENDIX "V" FOR SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

