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News

Impact-fee bill clears Senate

Tuesday, February 14, 2006 5:01 PM CST

Allison T. Williams

State lawmakers moved a step closer Tuesday to helping the city grapple with its growing transportation gridlock.

A bill, introduced by Sen. Fred Quayle, R-Suffolk, that would permit Suffolk to require impact fees from developers building in targeted high-growth areas, passed the full Senate, by a 28 -12 vote Tuesday. That is just one vote more than the 27 needed for passage.

"It was a good day," said Suffolk City Councilman Calvin Jones, one of several lawmakers and city staffers who spent several days in Richmond lobbying in support of the bill "A lot of people worked awfully hard to make this happen."

The bill will now move to the committees in the House, where it will have to pass muster of the Delegates before going before the full General Assembly, Jones said.

Jones said he is hopeful the bill will garner the support of delegates.

"You have to be optimistic," Jones said, praising Quayle's diligence in getting the bill through the Senate.. "He worked hard for us and we appreciate it."

Suffolk n one of the fastest growing cities in Virginia n is in dire need of such legislation, Jones said. Similar legislation was passed for two other rapidly growing northern Virginia counties of Spotsylvania and Fauquier earlier in the session.

Taking action now will prevent Suffolk n unlike its neighbors to the north n from getting in a desperation mode, Jones said.

"This gives us another tool we can respond with."

If approved by the General Assembly, and signed off by Gov. Tim Kaine, it would likely be incorporated into the city's revised 2018 Comprehensive Plan.

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