

chuckle & grin CID: crying in disgrace CUL: see you later **YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT YOUR KIDS ARE SAYING** CYO: see you online DBA: doing business as usual DL: dead link DLTBBB: don't let the bed bugs bite DIKU: do you? EMFBI: excuse me for butting in F2F: face to face FC: fingers crossed FISH: first in, still here FMTYEL more than you ever wanted to know FOMCI - falling off my chair laughing FTR0MH- from the bottom of my he



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Lawmakers closer to bill that would allow upgrade fees

By **AARON APPEGATE**, The Virginian-Pilot
© February 8, 2006

RICHMOND — A Senate committee Tuesday narrowly endorsed a bill that would let Suffolk levy fees on builders for road improvements.

“That was a major hurdle for us. We have the edge now,” Suffolk Mayor Bobby Ralph said after the 8-7 vote. Ralph attended the meeting with five other Suffolk city officials who presented their case to members of the Senate Local Government Committee.

Sen. Frederick M. Quayle, R-Chesapeake/Suffolk, who chairs that committee, sponsored the bill, SB225, which still must pass the entire Senate and the House to become law.

The bill would allow Suffolk to charge builders for the cost of road improvements made necessary by their projects. The fees could not be used to fix existing problems.

The bill would add Suffolk to an existing law that permits some Northern Virginia localities to impose such fees.

Previous attempts to get authority for them in Hampton Roads have always died in committee.

The Home Builders Association of Virginia opposed the bill at the committee hearing. “What we fear is if this impact fee statute is expanded beyond northern Virginia and leap frogs into the Suffolk area, it’s just a matter of time before Chesapeake is here, and then Isle of Wight is here, and then James City County is here,” said Michael Toalson, executive vice president for the Home Builders Association of Virginia.

He also said it was unfair to put the burden for road improvements on the “backs

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of new housing.”

The Senate likely will vote on the bill later this week, and the House will take it up after that.

The bill does not include the specific fees the builders would pay.

Those details would be worked out in a city ordinance.

While several Northern Virginia localities have the authority to charge impact fees for roads, only Stafford County is using it consistently. Builders there pay from \$1,600 to \$5,100 per unit, Suffolk's Plans and Policy Officer, Jeryl Phillips, told the Senate Committee.

Reach Aaron Applegate at (757) 222-5555 or aaron.applegate@pilotonline.com.

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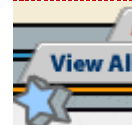
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