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Good morning Mayor Euille and City Council members. My name is Laura Plaze and I'm here today on behalf of the Friends of Winkler. The Friends of Winkler is a grassroots association of people who deeply value the Winkler Botanical Preserve and are working to save it for our community and especially for our children.

We've come a long way since December when so many of us first learned about the threat to the Preserve and came here to ask for your help. Since then, you've seen crowds of Winkler supporters at all the public meetings, you've seen children from all of our schools, you've seen their teachers and their parents and so you know that the love of the Preserve runs wide and deep.

Mayor Euille and Council members, we are truly grateful for your support. We thank you for your unanimous decision last December opposing transportation alternatives that would harm the Preserve. We are relieved that VDOT finally seems to understand that Alternative D, which would build the highway straight through the Preserve, is unacceptable to this City.

We know that you and City staff are working to develop other traffic solutions that will leave the Preserve intact and that you plan to draw Fairfax County and others into this process. This is good news! All of us, including, no doubt yourselves, are alarmed at the prospect of those 6000-plus new commuters hitting I-395 and our local streets without a viable traffic plan in place.

There is a lot of work to be done and we wanted you to know that the Friends of Winkler appreciates all that you are doing for this community.

Thank you.