



Massachusetts Department of Transportation Board of Directors
10 Park Plaza, Room 3830
Boston, MA 02116

February 12, 2014

RE: Draft FY14-18 Capital Investment Plan (CIP)

Dear Massachusetts Department of Transportation Board of Directors:

We are writing on behalf of the T Riders Union (TRU) program at Alternatives for Community and Environment (ACE). ACE is an environmental justice organization based in the Roxbury of Boston with over 500 members; www.ace-ej.org. For over thirteen years TRU has worked with MBTA riders to organize and advocate for an affordable and reliable public transit system for all.

As you well know, public transit is a lifeline for our communities. An investment in public transit and the infrastructure that supports it will grow our state economy, slash our greenhouse gas emissions, and increase access to work, educational, civic, and social opportunities.

Earlier this week the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) closed their series of public hearings on two state plans, including the \$12.4 billion draft Capital Investment Plan (CIP). **Despite securing much needed dollars through the Transportation Investment Act passed at the State House last July, transportation officials have inexplicably left out \$272 million over the next five years for critical MBTA bus maintenance and replacement.** Instead, the plan proposes to push bus investment to sometime after 2019. **We cannot wait to make this investment or else we will pay more later.**

We understand that Chief Financial Officer Jonathan Davis has made a commitment to the board to putting \$350 million back into the plan for buses. This is a step towards restoring the investment to buses in last year's CIP. **We ask however, that you restore the full \$450 million and give the growing MBTA ridership the service they need and deserve.**

Here are some numbers to consider while making your decision:

- By 2019, 85 percent of the MBTA's buses will be beyond their useful life and the remaining 15 percent will be 11 years old. Buses have a useful life of 12 years before needing an overhaul. This maintenance is critical for safety and operations, but the story does not end there. After 18 years, buses should be replaced altogether.
- Today, 11 percent of MBTA buses are 20 years old and on average, have racked over 500,000 miles, which is enough to ride around the earth 20 times. Without investment in the next five years, these buses will have to stay in service until the summer of 2022 or else there will be noticeable cuts to service due to bus shortages.

Finally, we know the money must come from somewhere. **We ask that you protect the following investments in the CIP:** \$191M to regional bus service in other RTAs, \$835M for replacement of Red Line and Orange Line vehicles, \$1.34B for Green Line Extension, \$2.6M to replace Green Line cars, \$190M for Diesel Multiple Units on the Fairmount Line, \$62M for Silver Line expansion to Chelsea, \$31M for permanent Cape Flyer expansion and \$130M for bike and pedestrian paths across the Commonwealth. **We also ask that you remove from the CIP** \$10M to fund the widening of Melnea Cass Boulevard. This is in support of our allies from the Friends of Melnea Cass [Boulevard].

It's time to act on behalf of the bus riders who account for over 385,000 daily rides on the MBTA, on behalf of the low-income people and working-class families that have no other option to get around than public transit. If you have any questions or need to reach us, please contact Lee Matsueda at lee@ace-ej.org or 617.442.3343 x229.

Thank you. Sincerely,

Nancy M. Chery

Stuart Spina

Louise Baxter

Ralph Walton

Danny Porras

T Riders Union (TRU)

cc: MassDOT Secretary of Transportation Richard Davey, MBTA General Manager Beverly Scott, Co-Chairs of the Joint Committee on Transportation Senator Thomas McGee and Representative William Straus, Co-Chairs of the MBTA Legislative Caucus Senator Patricia Jehlen and Representative Sean Garballey, Boston Delegation Chair Representative Nick Collins, MassDOT Project Manager Scott Hamwey, Boston Transportation Department Senior Planner Patrick Hoey