



## PAYING FOR THE BIG DIG, ONE FARE INCREASE AT A TIME



Ridership on MBTA bus, subway, and commuter rail lines has reached an all time high, but the T is not generating the money needed to offset its own high fuel costs and **highest-in-the-nation transit debt**. As a result, another fare increase or service cuts will likely be announced soon.

### What Can You Do About It?

Call Governor Patrick (617-725-4005) and your state legislators (617-722-2000) and urge them to support MBTA debt relief.

### Why Are T Riders Paying For The Big Dig?

The MBTA has \$5.2 billion of principal debt. This year nearly 30% of its total budget, or \$444 million, will be dedicated to paying down that debt. That's more money than the T generates in fares!

About \$1.8 billion of MBTA debt is from Big Dig transit improvements and projects (such as the Silver Line bus and Greenbush Commuter Rail Line) that the state was required to do to offset the increased air pollution from cars and trucks using the Big Dig.

The costs of those projects should have been part of the Big Dig's overall budget and not dumped by the state on the MBTA and T riders in the form of ever increasing fares, service reductions, and service failures.

As a result, the T's finances are stretched to the breaking point. Since 2000, T riders have seen three big fare increases—the last one in January 2007—that have gone to help fill MBTA budget gaps caused by the annual debt payment, with few service improvements.

With gas prices at an all time high, it's important for people to have affordable and efficient transportation choices, especially low and moderate income riders who depend on public transportation to get around. Now is the time to increase T ridership, not curb it with higher fares or decreased service.