

Transportation Economic Development and Ridership Act

Creating a safer, more modern transportation system across the entire commonwealth

Chief Sponsor: Carl Sciortino

Co-Sponsors: Senators Jamie Eldridge, Katherine Clark; Representatives Alice Wolf, Denise Provost, Frank Smizik, Will Brownsberger, Ruth Balser, Peter Kocot, John Scibak, Sean Garballey, Carlo Basile, Elizabeth Malia, George Ross, Cory Atkins, Jonathan Hecht, Kay Khan, Chris Walsh, Kevin J. Murphy, James Arciero, Denise Andrews, Brian Ashe, Martha Walz

Community Supporters: Alternatives for Community and Environment (ACE), Appalachian Mountain Club (AMC), Arborway Committee, Bikes Not Bombs, Conservation Law Foundation (CLF), Codman Square Neighborhood Development Corporation, Dorchester Bay Economic Development Corporation, Environmental League of Massachusetts (ELM), Fairmount/Indigo Line CDC Collaborative, Livable Streets Alliance, Mattapan Community Development Corporation, MBTA Advisory Board, Massachusetts Association of Community Development Corporations (MACDC), Massachusetts Smart Growth Alliance (MSGA), Massachusetts Public Interest Research Group (MASSPIRG), Somerville Community Development Corporation, Southwest Boston Community Development Corporation, T Riders Union (TRU), On the Move: Greater Boston Transportation Justice Coalition (OTM), Urban Edge, WalkBoston, Washington Street Corridors Coalition

Transportation Economic Development and Ridership Act builds for the future of the Commonwealth by spurring job creation and economic development through maintaining and repairing roads and bridges; growing public transportation ridership across all transit modes each year; and creating improved regional fairness and equity in the way that we fund transportation across the Commonwealth.

The legislation has three main parts:

- 1) Ridership should be at the center of MassDOT's transportation goals. The legislation includes a mandate for MassDOT to increase ridership by 2% every year for all modes of transportation across the entire Commonwealth.
- 2) It is time to start funding **statewide** transportation. The legislation requires that we look at our current transportation funding formulas to ensure equal recognition for transportation needs across every corner of the state, from the Berkshires to Cape Cod.
- 3) The legislation creates "fix-it-first" priorities so that we use our transportation money more efficiently. Massachusetts needs to invest in maintaining its current infrastructure before committing to wasteful expansion projects.

In order to address all of the Commonwealth's transportation needs, we need to make an investment. The legislation includes innovative ideas for new funding:

- 1) The creation of a Universal Pass Program would require that Universities help support public transportation infrastructure by purchasing transit passes for their students.
- 2) A robust Vehicle Miles Traveled pilot program studies a "pay as you drive" model.

Background:

A better transportation system will increase transportation choice and public transportation ridership; improve the health of Massachusetts residents; reduce energy consumption, congestion, dependence on oil, and greenhouse gas emissions and other air pollution; and promote fairness and equity across the state.

On average, Massachusetts residents waste the equivalent of an entire work week a year just sitting in traffic, representing the third longest commute in the country. Pollution from automobiles has led to some of the highest numbers of childhood asthma rates in the nation. With gas prices on the rise, and transportation the second-highest household expense, we simply cannot afford to maintain the status quo. We also have 475 structurally deficient bridges spanning forests and waterways across the Commonwealth and numerous poorly-maintained roads.

While there have been transportation improvements over the past several years, most notably in the Transportation Reform Act of 2009, we face significant challenges. In its 2007 report, the Transportation Finance Commission projected that Massachusetts will have a \$15-\$19 billion gap in transportation resources over the next twenty years. Many communities across the Commonwealth lack viable or any public transportation, bicycle, or pedestrian options, and our roads and bridges are in a state of disrepair. And in places that have public transportation, the systems suffer from safety and maintenance concerns, inconvenient schedules, and poor service quality.

We need an accessible, efficient, dependable and safe transportation system to promote vibrant communities across the entire Bay State.