COALITION FOR A WORLD-CLASS PUBLIC TRANSIT SYSTEM

June 29, 2015

Dear Legislator:

The Coalition for a World-Class Public Transit System came together this spring to fight for drastic improvements to our public transit system following the inexcusable collapse of the MBTA this winter. The Coalition calls upon lawmakers to enact a bill that will meaningfully address the problems plaguing the T, and to do so swiftly.

The Coalition is comprised of nearly 40 organizations and municipal leaders from all areas of the state, representing employers of all sizes and from many industries and sectors of our economy: healthcare, technology, biotech, manufacturing, engineering, real estate, construction, retail, lodging and hospitality, among others.

Collectively, we represent 1.5 million individuals who are united in a common quest to Fix Our T. These individuals – workers, customers, patients and students - experienced firsthand the loss of productivity, foregone wages and sales, and missed classes or medical appointments that resulted from the MBTA’s collapse. We have joined together to ensure it doesn’t happen again.

Despite efforts over the past decades, previous reforms have failed and the T continues to deteriorate, threatening our vibrant economic recovery. Bold action is urgently needed. Five months after the T’s complete shutdown, we cannot lose the sense of urgency around fixing something that is severely broken. Our top priority must remain the interests of the working and commuting public.

The Coalition urges the legislature to focus on comprehensive reforms that restructure the T’s operations and finances to optimize MBTA operations. The Governor’s comprehensive plan contains three indispensable reforms that must be included in legislative action:

1. **A strong, independent Fiscal Management and Control Board (FMCB)** with clear authority to restructure the operations of the T.

2. **Relief from the Pacheco law** – so that the MBTA, like the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority, can improve its service delivery through a competitive procurement process.

3. **Approval of arbitration awards** – so that the unfettered discretion of the arbitrator does not drive up MBTA labor costs to unsustainable levels that exacerbate the T’s existing budget challenges and brings the MBTA closer in line with the benefits that all state and municipal employees enjoy.
We must fix the T now. The stakes are too high for too many of our consumers, workers, taxpayers and residents of the Commonwealth who rely on a dependable, working, world-class public transit system. They expect and want change.

Join us at FixOurT to send your message to lawmakers that this time we have to get it right.

Members of the Coalition for a World-Class Public Transit System

**Mayors:**
Mayor Jim Fiorentini – Haverhill
Mayor Dan Rizzo – Revere
Major Joe Sullivan – Braintree
Mayor Kim Driscoll – Salem
Mayor Rob Dolan – Melrose (Coalition Co-Chair)

**Business groups:**
495/MetroWest Partnership
Affiliated Chambers of Commerce of Greater Springfield
American Council of Engineering Companies of Massachusetts (ACEC)
Associated Industries of Massachusetts (AIM)
Associated Subcontractors of Massachusetts
Blackstone Valley Chamber of Commerce
Boston Municipal Research Bureau
Construction Industries of Massachusetts (CIM)
Corridor Nine Area Chamber of Commerce
Environmental Business Council of New England
Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce
Greater Boston Real Estate Board
Massachusetts Biotechnology Council
Massachusetts Chemistry & Technology Alliance
MassEcon
Massachusetts High Tech Council (MHTC)
Massachusetts Lodging Association
Massachusetts Petroleum Council
Massachusetts Restaurant Association
Massachusetts Taxpayers Foundation (MTF) (Eileen McAnneny, MTF President, Coalition Co-Chair)
Massachusetts Technology Leadership Council (MTLC)
Massachusetts Business Roundtable (MBR)
Merrimack Valley Chamber of Commerce
Metro South Chamber of Commerce
NAIOP Massachusetts
Nashoba Valley Chamber of Commerce
National Federation of Independent Businesses (NFIB)
Neponset Valley Chamber of Commerce
North Shore Chamber of Commerce
Pioneer Institute
Retailers Association of Massachusetts
Salem Chamber of Commerce
South Shore Chamber of Commerce