



A Better City Calls for Legislative Action on MBTA Deficit

Business Group Releases Paper, Holds Panel on Economic Impacts of Fare Hikes, Service Cuts

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A Better City

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BOSTON – The two scenarios of fare hikes and service cuts proposed by the MBTA to close its \$161 million budget deficit for FY 2013 would have unacceptable impacts on the Massachusetts economy, according to a position paper released by A Better City at a panel event this afternoon at the Omni Parker House in Boston.

Instead, the group called for a more modest packages of hikes and cuts, and for the Patrick administration and the legislature to act to help fill the remaining gap for this year. Elected leaders should also commit now to fixing our statewide transportation finance crisis, of which the T is only one part.

“The business and institutional community rely heavily on our transportation system, including mass transit, to connect the state’s workforce to jobs,” said Richard A. Dimino, President and CEO of A Better City. “We should not be taking steps backwards in providing transit access to jobs while we’re trying to recover from this recent recession.”

The paper was released at a panel discussion attended by well over 100 business leaders and legislators. Panelists included:

- Don Conover, Executive Vice President for Global Real Estate, State Street Financial Corporation;
- Marilyn Swartz-Lloyd, President of MASCO, representing the Longwood Medical Area;
- Rick Mattila, Director of Environmental Affairs, Genzyme;
- Mayor Joseph Sullivan, of Braintree.

State Sen. Thomas McGee, co-chair of the Joint Committee on Transportation, served as respondent to the panel.

Dimino laid out A Better City's position, which had been developed through a series of focus groups and surveys of its member organization. The group is calling for T officials and elected leaders to pursue the following actions:

- **Smart Fare Policy:** Raise fares by no more than 25% this year; institute policy of smaller, regularly scheduled fare hikes going forward;
- **Prudent Service Cuts:** Maintain all service except the least-efficient bus routes; commit to future adjustments informed by service planning across all modes;
- **Minimize Impacts:** Work with the private sector and Transportation Management Associations to maintain ridership levels and prevent additional automobile trips;
- **Continued Reform:** Build on Transportation Reform by strengthen management rights, pursue public-private partnerships on fuel purchasing and commuter rail;
- **Outside Help:** Give MassDOT flexibility to use other transportation revenues to help the T; engage Massport to operate ferry service and contribute to other T services; consider use of rainy day fund or bonding to fill any remaining gap.

ABC also called on Governor Patrick and the legislature to appoint a task force, comprising the Secretaries of Transportation and of Administration and Finance, the chairs of the Ways and Means and Transportation Committees, and a representative from the Governor's office, to develop a comprehensive transportation finance plan for the Commonwealth, to be taken up by the legislature early in 2013.

"ABC proposed fare, service and legislative actions add up to avoiding dramatic service cuts and costs to riders while setting the stage for a comprehensive transportation finance solution, so that we're not facing the same problems next year and the year after."

About A Better City

A Better City is a nonprofit association representing Greater Boston's business and institutional leaders on transportation, land development and environmental sustainability. ABC was founded in 1989 as the Artery Business Committee to represent downtown business and real estate interests during the Central Artery/Tunnel project. Since 1996, ABC has operated a Transportation Management Association serving 80,000 employees in the Financial District and the Back Bay. For more information, please visit <http://abettercity.org>.

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