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Mark C. Montigny  
Chairman  
Joint Committee on Bonding  
State House Room 511A  
Boston, MA 02133

David L. Flynn  
Chairman  
Joint Committee on Bonding  
State House Room 466  
Boston, MA 02133

**Re: HB 4409, the Transportation Bond Bill**

Dear Senator Montigny and Representative Flynn,

I write today to express A Better City's steadfast support for the swift passage of the proposed Transportation Bond Bill, HB 4409. A Better City (ABC) advances infrastructure investments and projects that are vital to sustaining and growing the Boston area's economy and ensuring that Boston remains one of the most dynamic and unique cities in the world. Our Board of Directors is comprised of leaders from over 100 major businesses and institutions in the greater Boston region, all of whom care deeply about this bill. This bill is essential in securing federal dollars for transportation, and contains bond authorization for a project our constituency cares deeply about – the Urban Ring.

**Federal Dollars at Risk**

In early December, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) rejected the Commonwealth's 2008-2011 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). As you may know, the STIP is a compilation of the thirteen Transportation Improvement Programs (TIPs) prepared annually by regional Metropolitan Planning Organizations, and is a listing of priority projects to be funded with a federal contribution. An approved STIP is required by the FHWA and the FTA to receive federal funding.

The rejection letter sent by these agencies (attached) cites that the STIP is not "fiscally constrained" – indicating that the state level funding needed to support the program was not committed. Essentially, the state has not authorized enough funding to match federal dollars for road, bridge and transit projects for Massachusetts. This rejection only underscores the severity of the state's transportation finance challenges.

The passage of HB 4409 was specifically cited as a key way to address the issues raised in the STIP rejection letter. Without passage of the bond bill, federal agencies will not approve the STIP and, without federal approval, the state cannot advance these projects – projects that are planned in virtually every corner of the Commonwealth. We cannot afford to turn away over \$1.8 billion in federal dollars at this time. For this reason, we hope you take speedy action to pass this bill.

**Looking Toward the Future, While Managing Today's Challenges**

While grappling with the Commonwealth's on-going transportation finance challenges, it is equally critical that we continue to invest incrementally in strategic expansion and enhancement projects that are imperative to the state's future economic development. ABC has prioritized the Urban Ring as a key investment that will realize considerable future return for the Commonwealth in the form of economic development and growth.



The Governor included funding for the planning, design, permitting and engineering for the Urban Ring in line 6001-0804, together with the Blue Line to Lynn and the South Coast Rail project, and the Joint Committee of Transportation recommended this line. I urge your help in ensuring the continued inclusion of this line as well. I have enclosed for you letters sent to the Joint Committee on Transportation from businesses and institutions throughout the alignment that feel this line in particular is critical to the future economic stability and vibrancy of this state.

Thank you for your consideration and continued leadership.

Sincerely,

Richard A. Dimino  
President & CEO

Cc: Senator Brian A. Joyce  
Senator Cynthia Stone Creem  
Senator Richard T. Moore  
Senator Dianne Wilkerson  
Senator Michael E. Knapik  
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