

METROPOLITAN MAYORS COALITION

a local initiative facilitated by METROPOLITAN AREA PLANNING COUNCIL

December 7, 2020

Dear Members of the Fiscal and Management Control Board;

ADAM CHAPDELAINÉ
Town Manager of Arlington

MARTIN J. WALSH
Mayor of Boston

CHARLES C. KOKOROS
Mayor of Braintree

MEL KLECKNER
Town Administrator of Brookline

LOUIS A. DEPASQUALE
City Manager of Cambridge

THOMAS AMBROSINO
City Manager of Chelsea

CARLO DeMARIA, JR.
Mayor of Everett

GARY CHRISTENSON
Mayor of Malden

BREANNA LUNGO-KEOHN
Mayor of Medford

PAUL A. BRODEUR
Mayor of Melrose

RUTHANNE FULLER
Mayor of Newton

THOMAS P. KOCH
Mayor of Quincy

BRIAN ARRIGO
Mayor of Revere

JOSEPH A. CURTATONE
Mayor of Somerville, Chair

AUSTIN FAISON
Town Manager of Winthrop

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the proposed MBTA service cuts presented at your November 9th meeting. As a coalition of municipal officials representing 1.4 million constituents in the urban core of metropolitan Boston, **we are writing to express our strong opposition to the service reductions and eliminations proposed.**

The Metropolitan Mayors Coalition has been advocating for a fully funded, safe, and accessible transportation system for over a decade because we know that transportation is the backbone of a thriving economy. Our residents rely on public transit to get to work, go to school, and access needed services. Today, our public transportation system is enabling essential workers to get to their jobs and helping to keep our economy afloat. Reducing service will not only put our residents' livelihoods at risk, but will also stall our economic recovery. We do not believe that the MBTA's assessment of its budget gap is accurate and believe that any surplus should be used to stave off service cuts. Moreover, we do not have confidence that the MBTA will be able to quickly restore service, even if demand is evident.

Our Coalition is firmly committed to reducing transportation emissions, and these services cuts directly conflict with these goals. If transit service becomes unreliable or unavailable and more people turn to driving, we will lose progress toward reducing greenhouse gas emissions from transportation, we will see congestion increase to a level that makes our region undesirable, and we will exacerbate the public health disparities that have become even more evident during the COVID-19 pandemic. Once people start driving, we are very worried about the challenges of getting them back on transit.

Additionally, in October 2018, our Coalition announced a commitment to building 185,000 new units of housing across the region by 2030. One of our priorities is to encourage residential and mixed-use development in transit-accessible areas so people can get around without a car. Our work to advance transit-oriented development will be undermined by these service cuts. To reduce or eliminate service could have serious impacts on the housing market in transit-oriented areas and reduce access to jobs in transit-oriented locations.

Finally, the Metropolitan Mayors Coalition has long been advocating to the Legislature for additional revenue for transportation. The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated an already precarious financial situation at the MBTA. We want the MBTA to address structural deficits and achieve greater financial stability. In the short-term, we have

METROPOLITAN MAYORS COALITION

a local initiative facilitated by METROPOLITAN AREA PLANNING COUNCIL

been calling on the federal government to provide more relief to help get our residents through the pandemic, and this includes aid to transit agencies. Making a decision to reduce or eliminate service now, with the increased likelihood of significant relief at the federal level in the form of new aid or FEMA reimbursement, would be ill-timed and would set our region back. **For all of these reasons, we urge you not to move forward with this proposal.**

Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,



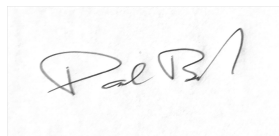
Adam Chapdelaine
Town Manager of Arlington



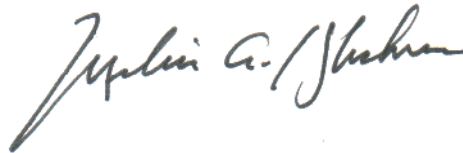
Breanna Lungo-Koehn
Mayor of Medford



Martin J. Walsh
Mayor of Boston



Paul Brodeur
Mayor of Melrose



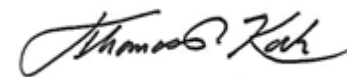
Melvin Kleckner
Town Administrator of Brookline



Ruthanne Fuller
Mayor of Newton



Louis A. DePasquale
City Manager of Cambridge



Thomas Koch
Mayor of Quincy



Tom Ambrosino
Town Manager of Chelsea



Brian Arrigo
Mayor of Revere

METROPOLITAN MAYORS COALITION

a local initiative facilitated by METROPOLITAN AREA PLANNING COUNCIL



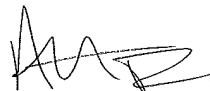
Carlo DeMaria
Mayor of Everett



Joseph Curtatone
Mayor of Somerville



Gary Christenson
Mayor of Malden



Austin Faison
Town Manager of Winthrop