

# North Central MASSACHUSETTS

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

November 1, 2019

Mr. Joseph Aiello  
Chair, Fiscal Management and Control Board  
Massachusetts Bay Transit Authority  
State Transportation Building  
10 Park Plaza  
Boston, Massachusetts 02116

RE: Rail Vision Plan

Dear Mr. Aiello,

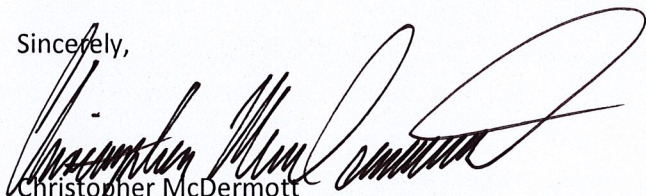
It was recently brought to our attention that the Fiscal Management and Control Board intends to review and potentially vote to select a preferred option from amongst the six recently published Rail Vision Alternatives. As a chamber of commerce, we recognize the economic importance of public transportation for our region and the Commonwealth as a whole. With this in mind, we write you today and ask that you vote to support a system which benefits all of Massachusetts and not simply Greater Boston.

In regards to our own region, North Central Massachusetts consists of twenty seven communities along the New Hampshire border, extending from Groton in the East to as far as Orange in the West. The region is home to roughly 250,000 residents and the largest advanced manufacturing cluster in the state. The more than four hundred firms which constitute this agglomeration are staffed by highly skilled professionals who earn above average wages- often without the need for college degree. Unfortunately, demand for labor has outstripped the region's current ability to fill positions. Increasing the reverse commute to stations adjacent to industrial centers in Devens, Leominster, and Fitchburg would improve the ability of these employers to quickly recruit and train new talent, ensuring this vital sector of the regional economy continues to thrive for another generation.

Expanding rail service beyond Routes 128 and 495 would also benefit Greater Boston, as regular departures to and from the City encourage young professionals to take advantage of lower rent and property costs in communities like Gardner or Westminister. This would relieve the housing pressures which Suffolk and Middlesex Counties presently face and would also remove commuters from the road, alleviating traffic congestion.

For these reasons, we ask that you consider the benefits that uniform, statewide rail service would provide. Though it might be tempting to concentrate service around established population centers, this will do little to address the congestion and pricing issues which currently plague Eastern Massachusetts.

Sincerely,



Christopher McDermott  
Public Affairs Manager