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MEDIA STATEMENT

March 12th, 2012

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STATEMENT BY TRANSPORTATION FOR MASSACHUSETTS DIRECTOR KRISTINA EGAN ON THE JOINT TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE OVERSIGHT HEARING

“Transportation for Massachusetts agrees that more reforms and efficient practices can be implemented at MassDOT to make the most out of everyone’s investment in the transportation system, and we look forward to hearing the recommendations that come out of this oversight hearing. However, because Massachusetts faces such a serious crisis with the current state of our transportation system, we cannot rely on using additional reforms or efficiencies to repair the financial and physical damage done to our transportation system from years of neglect and underfunding.

Since 2007, when the independent Transportation Finance Commission released its findings, and as recently as January, when MassDOT released its “The Way Forward” plan, we’ve know that it is going to cost about a billion dollars a year to maintain and modernize our transportation system. There is no way around this, and it can’t be squeezed out through additional reforms and efficiencies. The numbers for our needs make it clear.

Among those needs are:

- \$240 million is needed to stop paying MassDOT salaries on debt that accrues interest at the rate of \$1.76 for every dollar borrowed
- \$115 to \$140 million is needed to close this year’s MBTA operating deficit
- \$100 million is needed to forward fund our regional bus systems and improve service to allow for evening and weekend service to connect people to jobs and education
- \$100 million is needed for capital projects like fixing local roads and bridges covered by Chapter 90 funds
- \$45 million a year is needed for improvements to walking and biking options

The real numbers are before us and there is no way to avoid them. We must now create additional revenues and make the total investment needed in our transportation system to grow our economy, create more jobs, and make Massachusetts more competitive on the national and international stage.

We urge Chairmen Straus and McGee and all of the members of Joint Committee on Transportation to combine to their findings on additional reforms with a long-term plan to generate additional and sufficient revenues that will meet that \$1billion in need and fully fund our transportation system for today and the future.”

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