

EEA/MassDOT LISTENING SESSIONS

HIGH LEVEL TALKING POINTS

We would like to thank Secretaries Beaton and Pollack for hosting these sessions and for inviting our ideas on cleaning up and improving the transportation system.

Also, thank you for being one of the states to **maintain a commitment to the Paris climate accords** and to the commitments Massachusetts has made as part of the coalition of Northeast Governors and Eastern Canadian Premiers. Further, we appreciate your efforts towards meeting the requirements of the Global Warming Solutions Act.

The Transportation System Isn't Performing Well Enough

- You have been striving to improve the Commonwealth's transportation system, but we can't pick up a newspaper today without reading about some of the challenges affecting transportation in the state: our public transportation services are underfunded and overcrowded, our roads are among the most congested in the country, our transportation agencies are broke, low income communities are poorly served by transit, communities near public transportation are increasingly unaffordable. Clearly, it isn't working well for many citizens.
- Report highlights commuter frustration¹. According to statewide focus groups, more than 80 percent of Massachusetts residents express dissatisfaction with the current transportation system.
- Our transportation system and commutes surfaced as a concern over the location for the second Amazon headquarters in the recent press. If we want to attract businesses to Massachusetts, we need to provide employees with clean, efficient, accessible transportation options.
- A report by Mass Taxpayers Foundation finds that "Climate change has emerged as one of the most pressing problems [to our transportation system] as both a long-term trend and a short-term shock."
- Massachusetts needs a public transportation system that businesses and workers can rely on to connect people to jobs and opportunities. As recent storms have demonstrated, we need to protect our transportation system from the impacts of a changing climate by keeping our infrastructure in good repair. And to achieve our climate goals, we need to transition our vehicle fleet to cars and trucks that do not pollute.

¹ One recent example may be found at: <https://www.bostonglobe.com/metro/2017/09/26/report-highlights-commuter-frustration/8hWqPVPqAgFs9lr5MoXNQJ/story.html>

- Massachusetts needs a transportation system that is reliable and safe and can accommodate more people, and better meet the needs of poor, young, elderly, and rural citizens.

We are Paying the Price in Time, Frustration, Limited Access and Health

- Massachusetts needs a transportation fleet and system that doesn't injure our health: we currently bear high costs from the use of petroleum-based fuels. According to the American Lung Association, every year², pollution from transportation causes over 3,000 asthma attacks, 500 preventable deaths and \$1.3 billion in combined health costs in the state. While emissions from electricity are overall down by 58%, transportation emissions are about the same as they were in 1990 and are now the largest source of our total emissions.
- We could achieve billions of dollars in annual savings (an estimated \$2.7b per year American Lung Association ZEV Study) from reduced health and climate harm by transitioning to ZEVs and other advanced clean cars.
- We have Electric Vehicle programs in the state but they could be much more robust. According to Northeastern University Professor Joan Fitzgerald our efforts to promote electric vehicles (she focuses on Boston) “pale in comparison to those of Los Angeles, Portland, and other US cities, and we lag far behind Europe.”
- We can make the health and climate benefits grow each year as conventional vehicles are switched out and ZEVs and advanced technologies increase in the transportation sector transition to zero emissions. In addition, using more renewable energy to charge ZEVs will substantially boost climate and health benefits.
- We no longer accept being forced to breathe the cigarette smoke of others, but we readily accept the pollution from millions of vehicles on our roads. It is time to stop.
- Low-income communities and communities of color face disproportionate impacts from transportation pollution.
- We need, in short, dramatic and transformative change in our transportation system.
- There is a critical set of inter-related issues between transportation, equity, and the environment and we must solve these problems in a coordinated and urgent manner.

² <http://www.lung.org/local-content/california/documents/2016zeroemissions.pdf>

- Cities and towns need more resources to improve the quality of the transportation system and offer more choices and they have ideas about what is needed to boost the quality of life for their residents.

We import 100% of our transportation fuels, sending \$11.6B out of our economy annually. We can keep that money in the region by buying less fuel.

- In Massachusetts, we send our hard earned cash to the oil companies out of state with each fill up, currently \$11.6³ billion per year (2014), more than all state expenditures on education in that year (\$8.0 billion⁴). As we use less fuel and more locally made electricity from solar and wind, we can keep more money in our state's economy. While oil companies that profit off of us might not like it, this would be good for Massachusetts.

We Have Solutions at Hand

- Look at what has already worked for the state and the region. We can build on the success of the electric sector (Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative—RGGI) which taught us that by thinking across programs, and collaborating among states, we can find creative solutions that protect our climate while creating funding streams for reinvestment in clean and efficient energy ...and it's good for our economy.
- A regional cap-and-invest program, such as RGGI, would also be a good approach that could transfer fairly easily to the transportation system.
- A cap and market-based price coupled with wisely chosen investments would give us many of the tools that would correct the problems with our transportation system.
- Investments could and should be used to ensure that benefits are shared equitably.
- We can solve transportation problems together with our environmental challenges, but it will take political leadership to move forward on this.
- There is a huge opportunity here to boost jobs, reduce emissions and improve public health and our quality of life state-wide. We urge you to have that courage and foresight to take bold action.
- The Baker Administration needs to lead—we can't wait for the federal government or other states to lead. We need to start now.

³ [http://www.mass.gov/eea/energy-utilities-clean-tech/energy-dashboard/mass-energy-profile/- 2](http://www.mass.gov/eea/energy-utilities-clean-tech/energy-dashboard/mass-energy-profile/-2)

⁴ <http://massbudget.org/browser/index.php>