



Latest T breakdown has groups demanding gas tax hike to fund transit improvements



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BOSTON (WHDH) - Passengers frustrated by the latest MBTA breakdown and other transportation advocates are calling for a gas tax hike to fix Massachusetts' transit woes.

Dramatic video showed sparks flying and smoke blowing out from under a Red Line train at Broadway station Monday night, causing passengers to evacuate the station and the train to be taken out of service. On Tuesday, a coalition of 90 organizers said the harrowing scene was yet another reason for spending more on the state's public transportation, as well as its roads and bridges.

“I don’t need to tell you we are in a transportation crisis, you experience it every single day,” said Stacy Thompson, executive director of Livable Streets. Her organization is one of several dozen comprising Transportation For Massachusetts, which is pushing for increases to the gas tax.

Gov. Charlie Baker has proposed an \$18 billion spending bill to address infrastructure, but Transportation for Massachusetts director Chris Dempsey said that wouldn’t fix the problem, and called on the Legislature to come up with a bill that included a gas tax.

“If it were easy we would’ve done it before, you have to have policies like the gas tax on the table,” Dempsey said. “The governor’s bill requires more borrowing, it means pushing the problem down the road. We think the Legislature is ready to show some leadership and take some action.”