

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

December 11, 2020

Steve Poftak
MBTA General Manager
Massachusetts Bay Transit Authority
10 Park Plaza
Boston, MA 02116

Dear Mr. Poftak,

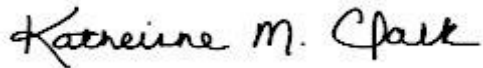
We write to express our concerns regarding the MBTA's Forging Ahead proposal. We recognize the efforts of the MBTA to maintain essential service that ensures the safety of its employees and customers amid significant financial hardships due to decreased ridership. We are, however, deeply concerned about both the short-term and long-term impacts of the proposed service cuts on the communities we represent.

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues, we worry that the proposed cuts will disproportionately impact riders from underserved communities. These riders likely have no other method of transportation and rely on MBTA services and expanded hours of service for their essential travel needs. Many of these riders—and MBTA employees themselves—are essential workers who have stepped up to help us face this public health crisis. The cuts could also add volume to each trip, further exacerbating public health risks for riders and workers alike. Reduce transit options for riders and employment opportunities for MBTA workers at this time is incongruous with the support and recognition they deserve for the risks taken to continue providing the essential services to the Commonwealth.

We consider public transit to be a public good and will continue to fight for federal funding for the Commonwealth's public transportation infrastructure. As such, we request that the MBTA further evaluate this proposal and provide clear evidence demonstrating the need for this degree of service reduction before moving forward with implementation at this precarious time. Additionally, the encouraging recent global developments with respect to the virus further highlight the questionable timing and scale of the cuts. We appreciate the Agency's public engagement efforts with respect to the proposal, and acknowledge that the MBTA has delayed a vote on this issue while it considers potential revisions in light of widespread concern across the Commonwealth about the undue burden these cuts would present. Finally, we want to unequivocally convey our expectation that any and all services that the MBTA deems necessary to cut at this time will be fully restored as soon as is fiscally possible.

We appreciate your time and attention to this, and we thank you for your fair and full consideration of our request.

Sincerely,



Katherine M. Clark
Member of Congress



Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator



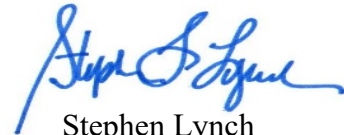
Edward J. Markey
United States Senator



Richard Neal
Member of Congress



James McGovern
Member of Congress



Stephen Lynch
Member of Congress



William Keating
Member of Congress



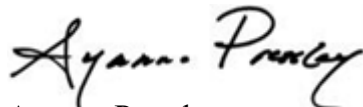
Joseph P. Kennedy, III
Member of Congress



Seth Moulton
Member of Congress



Lori Trahan
Member of Congress



Ayanna Pressley
Member of Congress