

CONTACT:
For T4MA: Rafael Mares, CLF, (617) 850-1739
T4MA.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

T4MA: 'T NEEDS MORE THAN FARE INCREASES'

**Transportation for Massachusetts Coalition Says Proposed
Fare Hikes Are Unfair**

BOSTON, MA January 3, 2012 -- T4MA, a broad coalition of Massachusetts organizations working to promote a reliable, affordable, and environmentally sustainable transportation system for people across the Commonwealth does not support the fare hike proposed today by the MBTA, saying that a stand alone fare increase is the wrong solution to the T's financial troubles. The group issued the following statement:

“The MBTA’s proposal to increase fares and cut service attempts to solve a much larger problem of insufficient funding for the MBTA exclusively on the back of transit riders, who are traveling in ways that reduce traffic and benefit the environment. Any fare increase should be part of a comprehensive financial plan that addresses not only the MBTA's operating deficit for at least the next several years, but also provides the funds needed to address the T's maintenance and capital needs without further driving up debt service costs.

Moreover, the proposed across-the-board fare increase is unfair. A blanket fare increase affecting the bus, subway, and commuter rail system at the same rate takes into account neither the different needs of different transit users nor the varied costs of providing transit for buses, the subway, and commuter rail. The result would be to disproportionately burden the transit users who can least afford it, particularly bus riders.”

Transportation for Massachusetts (T4MA), a diverse coalition of Bay State organizations, seeks to promote an environmentally sustainable, reliable, and affordable transportation system for people across the Commonwealth. T4MA believes that a strong and competitive Massachusetts economy requires a transportation system that supports and connects communities while reducing greenhouse gases and other pollution and providing greater choices to users of the state’s rails and roads. Through research, advocacy, and organizing, T4MA works to spur investment in transportation improvements and to obtain the best return on those investments for travelers and taxpayers. T4MA members promote better transportation, regional planning, affordable housing development, public health, environmental protection, environmental justice, and smart growth.