

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
STATE HOUSE, BOSTON 02133-1054

EUGENE L. O'FLAHERTY
REPRESENTATIVE
2ND SUFFOLK DISTRICT

CHARLESTOWN
CHELSEA

Richard A. Davey
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Chairman
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January 17, 2012

RE: Proposed MBTA Service Reductions in the 2nd Suffolk District

Dear Secretary Davey:

Pursuant to the public comment period associated with proposed service reductions by the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA), I write to express my concerns and specific opposition to portions of the announced plans. I respectfully request you reconsider the proposed elimination of the 92 Bus Route in Charlestown, the 112 Bus Route in Chelsea and the ferry service in the Charlestown Navy Yard.

I offer these comments in full appreciation of the enormous fiscal deficit the operation of the MBTA faces. As a legislator, I have worked to reduce the burden and I understand the difficult decisions that will be made in the coming months. I further offer my assistance to work with my colleagues in the Legislature and the Administration in addressing funding mechanisms that will sustain the operation of our public transportation system. In anticipation of what I hope will be a long-term solution, please accept the arguments below for maintaining the current level of service in my district.

The 92 Bus Route travels along Main Street in Charlestown, a route comprised of senior developments, nursing homes and a public housing project. The bus is used extensively by residents to travel to medical facilities, to obtain prescriptions, to commute to work and/or school, for grocery shopping and general errands. The MBTA's Orange Line and the 93 Bus Route are not viable alternatives for them due to their location and the difficulty in traversing to such. If the 92 is eliminated, Charlestown residents will only have one bus line, the 93, for service. In a densely populated neighborhood with the largest public housing project in New

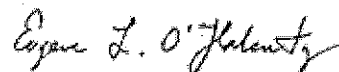
England, this will cause severe disruption and inconvenience many. My constituents, many of whom lack resources for alternative modes of transportation, could potentially be left with only one mode of public transportation that travels in and out of the neighborhood.

The proposed elimination of the 112 Bus Route which runs through the city of Chelsea will have an adverse impact on the elderly, our veterans and working class commuters. Admiral's Hill, with its senior developments and skilled nursing facilities, relies heavily on the bus line. The seniors use the 112 to access shopping facilities and for their medical care. Given the geographical isolation of Admiral's Hill, without a reliable bus route, many seniors will be unable to take care of their basic needs. The commuters and residents, many of whom work in Greater Boston, need the 112 to access their places of employment. The attraction of Admiral's Hill is partly the convenient and reliable accessibility via public transportation to the Greater Boston hub and its employment opportunities. The Massachusetts Soldiers' Home in Chelsea, where our veterans reside and receive hospital care, also provides outpatient services and the bus line is crucial for such access. In addition to Admiral's Hill and the Soldier's Home residents, along the route in Chelsea, the 112 provides many of my working constituents the only affordable means of transportation to their places of employment. An elimination of this route would leave these constituencies with no feasible transportation alternatives.

Residents of Charlestown and surrounding urban municipalities as well as suburban commuters have come to rely greatly on the ferry service. The ferry brings commuters to and from downtown Boston and also services tourists visiting the Bunker Hill Monument, the USS Constitution and many restaurants and shops along its historic streets. Additionally, the ferry is crucial to the newly-constructed Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital that is being opened in the spring of 2013 in the Charlestown Navy Yard. Public transportation was pivotal to the hospital's LEED Green certification and service will be important to many employees and visitors to this world renowned facility. Currently, many residents of the Navy Yard and commuters from surrounding area that park in the Yard's public garages depend on the ferry service for access to their employment and its usage alleviates the congestion associated with downtown rush hour traffic.

Thank you for your time and attention to this important matter. I reiterate my intent and offer to work on developing a solution that addresses the revenue shortfall faced by the MBTA while still allowing for a quality public transportation system. In working towards that goal, I respectfully ask that you hold in abeyance any decisions already made and in so doing rely on the arguments I proffer on behalf of my constituents.

Very truly yours,



EUGENE L. O'FLAHERTY
State Representative, 2nd Suffolk District