

MASSACHUSETTS
HIGHTECHNOLOGYCOUNCIL

Dedicated to Growth... Committed to Action

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MASS. HIGH TECH COUNCIL STATEMENT ON TRANSPORTATION FINANCE DEBATE

The Mass. High Tech Council is focused on improving Massachusetts' quality of life and maintaining its economic prosperity by advancing impactful responses to the Commonwealth's transportation opportunities and challenges and prioritizing systemic innovation, not new revenue generation.

Meeting Massachusetts' current and future transportation needs will require the Commonwealth's leaders to fully embrace and demand the most innovative and impactful approaches and solutions and to make them available to the public agencies responsible for building and operating our transportation infrastructure and systems.

The Commonwealth's most pressing need is to equip public transportation agencies with the innovative and enhanced project delivery tools and capacity they need to succeed, and this should be our most urgent collective focus.

As the Council has advocated [throughout 2019](#), the General Court's highest transportation policy priority should be the timely enactment of the Transportation Bond Bill (House 4002) and the innovative policies included in it, not the pursuit of a multi-year, multi-pronged and multi-billion-dollar toll, tax and TNC fee regime that will be directly imposed on or passed through to commuters and make Massachusetts a more costly place to live and work.

The Commonwealth is poised to invest more than \$20 billion in transportation infrastructure and improvements over the next 5 years using identified and available funding sources, according to approved Capital Improvement Plans for MassDOT and the MBTA.

The Transportation Bond Bill presents a critically important opportunity to effectuate these historic levels of investment and advance long-overdue policy changes that will equip Massachusetts transportation agencies with the project-delivery and procurement tools they need to succeed.

With state revenues up more than \$10 billion (or 60%) over the past decade, identifying and imposing an array of new taxes and costs on individuals and businesses in order to provide ever more revenue is not the most pressing need facing the Commonwealth's transportation system, despite unrelenting calls for additional taxes and dire warnings about a revenue crisis.

Irrespective of whether transportation-dedicated resources and revenues increase or decrease in the future, the Commonwealth must choose to innovate in its approach to transportation governance, finance and procurement; optimize the utility of existing assets; and eliminate tolerance for waste and inefficiency. The failure to do so will simply push more public resources into a system that

transportation agencies and experts agree is not sufficiently equipped or empowered to efficiently and effectively put them to use.

The proposed Transportation Climate Initiative (TCI) is the type of targeted, solution-focused policy worthy of continued consideration by our Commonwealth's leaders and has key advantages differentiating it from other more revenue-centric revenue proposals currently under public discussion, including its regional scope and targeted investment of resources directly in the meaningful reduction of transportation-related greenhouse gas emissions.

The Council believes that any and all revenues raised for the specific purpose of funding transportation investments and improvements, including those that may be generated by TCI, must be dedicated to such uses, in a specific and enforceable manner, particularly when assurances of exclusive usage are made to Massachusetts taxpayers and citizens.

Today, innovative technologies and approaches (many of which are being developed right here in Massachusetts) are revolutionizing how citizens and governments plan, design, construct, maintain, operate and use transportation systems and resources.

Council leaders look forward to continuing to work policymakers, transportation agencies and stakeholders to advance pro-growth transportation policies that harness and apply innovative approaches to the challenges we face and the opportunities before us.

About the Massachusetts High Technology Council – www.mhtc.org

MHTC is an organization of CEOs and senior executives representing technology companies, professional services firms, and academic and research institutions dedicated to creating and sustaining conditions that support investment and job growth in Massachusetts. Our members are growth-oriented, knowledge-intensive employers and institutions that develop, deliver and depend on technology products, services and innovations to advance their organizational objectives.

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