From:	Alex Epstein
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Subject:	Reject the Boston Region MPO 2012 – 2015 TIP and MassDOT"s request to delay Green Line Extension
Date:	Friday, September 09, 2011 10:22:33 PM

Ms. Jerome Grafe, Ms. Christine Kirby, Mr. David Mohler, and Ms. Katherine Fichter:

I am submitting my public comments in response to the Boston Region MPO review of the 2012-2015 TIP and the LRTP, as well as regarding MassDEP's review of the MassDOT request to delay the construction and commencement of the Green Line Extension (GLX) to 2018-2020.

Specifically, I am writing to urge:

- The Mass Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to **reject** MassDOT's request to delay the Green Line opening to 2018-2020
- The Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to **reject** the same delays that are contained within the 2012-2015 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP).

The tortured history of the GLX in the State Implementation Plan, legal obligations under the Clean Air Act, dates to 1990. It has been the state's single largest Transportation Control Measure (TCM) obligation under the State Implementation Plan (SIP) for twenty years. Federal Transportation Conformity Regulations require that SIP TCMs like the Green Line Extension must be given funding and completion priority by the region and state. Thus the 30-year delay is beyond unacceptable--it is illegal.

Failing to contruct the GLX on time as required by the SIP deprives clean transit to the state's most health-burdened city, with regard to highway and rail pollution. Currently only 15% of Somerville residents have access to rail; this will become 85% with the GLX. East Cambridge, Medford and Arlington are also on the line with this project. The Community Path, providing safe access to Green Line stations and completing a bike and pedestrian route from Bedford to downtown Boston depends on the GLX's timely construction.

Moreover, the GLX is the epitome of the GreenDOT commitment: "GreenDOT will be driven by three primary goals: reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions; promote the healthy transportation options of walking, bicycling, and public transit; and support for smart growth development." Failure to fund the on-time opening of the GLX belies the validity of GreenDOT. How can Fast14 and the Route 128 mega-highway widening be funded while the most important GreenDOT project, the Green Line Extension, is yet again delayed?

Also note that failure to prioritize the GLX above all other transportation projects in the TIP may jeopardize the State's federal transportation funding, a loss of $650 million per year. And delaying the GLX will increase the project cost by at least $200 million, needlessly costing taxpayers statewide. Governor Patrick committed to build the Green Line Extension during his term in office, and it is imperative that this commitment be fulfilled.

Again, I urge MassDEP and the Boston Region MPO to REJECT MassDOT's request to delay the GLX opening, and to REJECT the 2012-2015 TIP and LRTP.

Sincerely,
Alex Epstein
Somerville, MA 02143

cc:

Ms. Anne Arnold, Manager, EPA Region 1 Air Quality Planning Unit

Mr. Donald Cooke, Conformity and mobile monitoring, EPA Region 1 Air Quality

Ms. Rosemary Monahan, EPA Region 1 Smart Growth Coordinator

Ms. Pamela Stephenson, MA Division Administrator, Federal Highway

Mr. Michael Chong, Federal Highway Planning and Environ. Program Manager

Ms. Mary Beth Mello, Regional Director, Federal Transit Region 1