

January 24, 2024

Representative William Straus, Chair  
Joint Committee on Transportation  
State House, Room 134  
Boston, MA 02133

Senator Brendan Crighton, Chair  
Joint Committee on Transportation  
State House, Room 109-C  
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Chair Straus and Chair Crighton,

On behalf of the Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce and our 1,200 members, I write to offer testimony on H.3397 and S.2214, *An Act to create a mobility pricing commission*. The Chamber enthusiastically supports creating a special commission on mobility pricing to study how the state should finance its transportation infrastructure over the long-term. The commission will serve as a formal planning process for the state, be the first step to replacing more than \$700 million in annual gas tax revenues that fund transportation, and overlay transportation with other key public policy issues like access to affordably priced housing and job opportunities across the state.

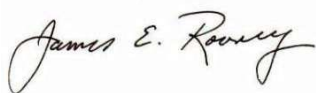
Thankfully, both the House and Senate adopted similar commissions in the previous sessions, and we encourage legislators to support similar language – without significant changes – this year. Attached to our testimony is the Chamber's supported Mobility Pricing Commission language that is substantially like Commission language supported by the Legislature in the past. If executed properly, this commission will help the state transition into a 21st century mobility pricing model while also helping to address widespread congestion, is more geographically equitable, and protects transportation funding when there is less dependence on gasoline. The attached commission has a clear purpose and set of objectives. These include specific tasks like understanding the costs of a new roadway pricing model and potential impacts on traffic. The recommendations will serve as a guideline for further action to move Massachusetts into a 21<sup>st</sup> century transportation pricing system.

The urgency for this commission rises each year: By 2035, only electric and zero-emission vehicles will be sold in Massachusetts, and the related decline in motor vehicle fuel excise revenue will cripple transportation funding in the future. Gas tax revenues provide more than \$700 million in transportation funding annually, and the state has no plan to replace that revenue source. The funding reduction will impact operating and maintenance budgets, as well as the state's ability to secure debt to fund transportation investments.

The Mobility Pricing Commission is a first step to create a long-term, sustainable transportation funding source for Massachusetts. It is both necessary and overdue, and we urge the Committee to report legislation with small modifications attached to our testimony. We also urge the committee to avoid significant changes to previous commission language passed by both branches that depart from the original, focused intent.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



James E. Rooney  
President and CEO