

November 21, 2016

Governor Charlie Baker
Massachusetts State House
Office of the Governor
Room 280
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Governor Baker:

We are writing this letter in support of Citizens for a Palmer Rail Station, and their efforts on behalf of our region to restore passenger rail from Boston to Springfield, with a stop in Palmer.

We endorse this effort both as a necessary infrastructure project to connect our region to other parts of the state, and as an economic engine for regional development. Like our fellow citizens in the Quaboag region, we feel we have long been left out of major state public transit planning, while areas both east and west of us have seen the benefits of improved transportation options. The time has come to address this regional inequity.

Last summer, a plan to expand passenger rail in New England, the Northern New England Intercity Rail Initiative (NNEIRI) released its environmental impact statement, and recommended going forward with this plan, which would include restoring passenger rail from Boston to Springfield, with a stop in Palmer.

Additionally, a state study that would have examined high-speed rail options between Boston and Springfield was passed by the state legislature and vetoed by you in spite of enormous popular support. Not only is the Massachusetts Turnpike already over capacity, with frequent traffic jams, numerous studies show that intercity bus service does not provide the same local economic benefits associated with rail.

We ask that you adopt the restoration of Boston to Springfield passenger rail service as part of the 5-year Massachusetts State Rail Plan. We cannot wait another 20 years for the state to invest in our region.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Ware Business and Civic Association
P.O. Box 602
Ware, MA 01082

cc: Stephanie Pollack, Secretary of Transportation
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