

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

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PERMIT APPLICATION PUBLIC HEARING
MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
SOUTH COAST RAIL DEIS

MAY 5, 2011
KEITH MIDDLE SCHOOL AUDITORIUM
225 HATHAWAY BOULEVARD
NEW BEDFORD, MASSACHUSETTS
7:00 p.m.

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MR. ROSENBERG: Good evening.

Good evening and welcome to this public hearing on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement regarding the application submitted by the Massachusetts Department of Transportation, for a permit to discharge fill material in wetlands and waterways for the construction of a new passenger rail and other transportation facilities, connecting the terminal stations of Fall River and New Bedford with South Station in Boston.

My name is Larry Rosenberg. I'm the Chief of Public Affairs for the United States Army Corps of Engineers of New England, and I will be your moderator and facilitator this evening.

Our hearing officer tonight is Lieutenant Colonel Steven Howell, the Deputy District Engineer for the Army Corps of Engineers in New England.

Should you need copies of the public notice or any of the other pertinent information, it's available at the registration table, at the entrance to this hall.

1 I should point out that the Corps of
2 Engineers has made no decision regarding the permit
3 application request.

4 Okay. The agenda for this public
5 hearing is following this introduction, Kristina
6 Egan of the Massachusetts Department of
7 Transportation will give a brief overview of the
8 project.

9 Following Ms. Egan, our Hearing Officer
10 Lieutenant Colonel Howell will address this hearing.
11 Colonel Howell will then be followed by the Corps'
12 permit manager who will discuss the Corps' role and
13 an overview of the permit and following that, the
14 Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act Office will
15 review the role of the Commonwealth in this process.

16 Before we begin, I'd like to remind you
17 of the importance of filling out these cards. These
18 cards serve two purposes: First, they let us know
19 that you're interested in the project, so we can
20 keep you informed.

21 Second, they provide me a list of who
22 wishes to speak this evening. If you did not
23 complete a card but wish to speak or receive future
24 information regarding the permit, a card will be

1 provided at the registration desk.

2 Now, as there are many here that have
3 signed up to comment, we will provide three minutes
4 to do so, no more; but as an added convenience, an
5 additional stenographer is available just out the
6 door, to the left, near the registration area should
7 you wish to provide a comment on the record without
8 the imposed time restriction.

9 These statements, along with any other
10 written statements submitted, will receive equal
11 consideration with those presented here this
12 evening.

13 One additional comment: We are here
14 to receive your comments, not to enter into any
15 discussion of those comments or to reach any
16 conclusion.

17 Any questions you have should be
18 directed to the record and not to the individuals on
19 the panel.

20 Thank you.

21 Ladies and gentlemen, I'd like to
22 introduce Kristina Egan who will give you an
23 overview of the proposed project.

24 (Applause.)

1 MS. EGAN: Thank you very much.

2 Good evening to all of you and thank you
3 very much to the Army Corps of Engineers and to the
4 Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act Office for
5 allowing Massachusetts Department of Transportation
6 this opportunity to present the project to all of
7 you tonight.

8 I also want to thank all of you here
9 tonight. The panel, of course, will be listening to
10 your comments but so will Mass. DOT. We'll be
11 taking them very seriously.

12 Tonight I am joined by Frank DePaola who
13 is the Assistant General Manager of Design and
14 Construction at the MBTA and is also doing the other
15 job of being the acting highway commissioner. So
16 we're very lucky to have him tonight.

17 The purpose of my presentation tonight
18 is to give you a very brief overview of the project,
19 and I'll give you a little insight as to how the
20 Massachusetts Department of Transportation is
21 interpreting the analysis that the Army Corp of
22 Engineers has put forward in the Draft Environmental
23 Impact Statement and report.

24 This project, South Coast Rail, is a top

1 transportation priority of the Patrick-Murray
2 Administration because it addresses a long-standing
3 inequity in transportation services within
4 Massachusetts.

5 The Fall River, New Bedford, and Taunton
6 area have been disconnected from the economy of
7 Boston, of the greater Boston area, and there's also
8 been limited mobility due to the congestion on
9 Route 24.

10 So one of the central purposes of this
11 project is to provide more mobility, and we're
12 estimating about eight to 9,000 riders per day will
13 be using the system. This provides economic justice
14 benefits to environmental justice populations as
15 well as the broader communities in New Bedford and
16 Fall River and the surrounding cities and towns.

17 We also estimate that there will be
18 significant economic development benefits. We've
19 done a study that shows that we can have about \$500
20 million in new business sales every year just by
21 connecting the economies of the cities with Boston.
22 Because it's so congested, there is a disruption
23 between the -- disruption between the labor market
24 and employers. So this creates economic value just

1 by putting in mobility connection; and we're also
2 estimating about 3,800 permanent new jobs resulting
3 from the project.

4 The project also has environmental
5 benefits. We're estimating that it will take about
6 300,000 miles that are driven every day off the
7 road. That's significant in air quality terms as
8 well as in climate change terms.

9 An important component of the project is
10 clustering homes and jobs near the transit stations
11 and into downtowns, while preserving the farms, the
12 fields, the forests that make the South Coast so
13 special.

14 with "smart growth," which is what we're
15 calling it, we were trying to implement a plan to
16 help shape the growth that's coming into the area.
17 We're estimating that there will be about 10,000
18 fewer acres that would be developed on residential
19 tracts.

20 We're estimating that about -- of that
21 10,000, about 6,000 will be forest and 3,000 would
22 be farmland that would be saved because of the
23 project.

24 We would also reduce household water

1 consumption by about 21 gallons per day, which is
2 significant in the South Coast region that faces
3 some water issues.

4 In looking at how best to do this
5 project -- where is Joe? Thank you.

6 Looking at how best to do this project,
7 we have looked at a lot of different alternatives.
8 We went out to the public, and we got 65 different
9 alternatives. We looked at everything from running
10 rail up from -- up through the Middleborough line
11 here, to doing monorail and light rail, up the
12 highway as well as the bus system, to using an old
13 right-of-way that went here through Mansfield as
14 well as going into Attleboro, backing up, and going
15 up this way. We looked at 65 all together.

16 The Draft Environmental Impact Statement
17 explores all these 65, but then looks at a narrower
18 set of three corridors. We're looking at three main
19 corridors: One is the Rapid Bus, which would use a
20 zipper lane that goes up this way (indicating) and
21 ties into 93, into South Station.

22 One that would use this rail corridor
23 here, which is the Northeast Corridor, for AMTRAK
24 and for the commuter rail. It goes over a new

1 bypass. This is new rail here, and it goes down to
2 New Bedford and Fall River.

3 The last one is Stoughton. We extend
4 service that's existing to Stoughton right now
5 through an abandoned rail right-of-way down to
6 Taunton, Fall River, and New Bedford. There is a
7 variation on that. It's called the Whittenton
8 Alternative that would go this way, and over this
9 way (indicating), and tie back up into Stoughton.

10 We're looking at electric and diesel
11 as two different options for each of the rail
12 alternatives.

13 In order to start the process of
14 elimination, there are three different questions
15 that have been asked to try and narrow down the
16 alternatives. It's a three-step sequential process.

17 The first question is do these
18 alternatives meet the project purpose? And we know
19 that the bus actually gets caught in congestion, and
20 it's going to be over an hour and a half long ride,
21 which means that fewer riders are going to use it
22 than the rail.

23 We're seeing with the rail alternatives
24 doubling the ridership because the trip time is much

1 faster. In fact, if it was electric rail, it would
2 be about an hour and 15 minutes. For diesel, it
3 would be 10 more minutes. For Whittenton, it would
4 be 11 to 12 more minutes because it is so serpentine
5 as you go through this area of Taunton and up this
6 way (indicating); so you add 10 to 12 minutes in
7 that area. But what we do find is that it doubles
8 the riders for all of the rail alternatives.

9 what you see down here in purple is a
10 quotation from the Army Corps' analysis in the Draft
11 Environmental Impact Statement, which basically
12 indicates that the Rapid Bus does not perform.

13 So we're going to go to the second step
14 in the sequential process of elimination of the
15 alternatives. And the question is is it practicable,
16 which is a technical word, but it basically means
17 can it operate? Is it feasible to run? Is it cost
18 effective?

19 So when we look at this, there are two
20 main differences between the Attleboro Alternative
21 and the Stoughton Alternative. The Attleboro
22 Alternative runs along the Northeast Corridor. It
23 is a heavily congested rail corridor. We would have
24 to add 38 new trains a day to that corridor. In

1 order to do that, we would have to add a third track
2 that runs all this distance (indicating), and then
3 eventually, we would have to run a fourth track to
4 eliminate a traffic jam that comes in this area.

5 when we looked at adding that fourth
6 track, it added \$2.4 billion to the already high
7 price tag of the Attleboro Alternative. We're
8 looking at an over \$4 billion project. We believe
9 at Massachusetts Department of Transportation that
10 this is impracticable. It is not something cost
11 effective. It's not something that we can really
12 invest in.

13 So the last question is which of these
14 alternatives has the least amount of environmental
15 damage. So if you did still have the bus on the
16 table, and you did still have the Attleboro
17 Alternative on the table, how would you compare the
18 different environmental impacts of these?

19 There's been a lot of focus on the
20 environmental impacts of the Stoughton Alternative.
21 Surprisingly the analysis finds that far fewer
22 wetlands acres would be impacted by the Stoughton
23 Alternative. In fact, it's about half, and that is
24 because we -- the other alternatives have to go

1 through wetlands areas also. They're less talked
2 about in the public forum and in the media, but
3 there's a lot of wetland impact that happens in this
4 area and also along this bus corridor to put in a
5 zipper lane.

6 So you get more acres of impact for
7 the -- for the Attleboro Alternative and Bus
8 Alternative. There are other resources that are
9 important to evaluate too. There's species.
10 There's other types of water issues. There's
11 habitat fragmentation. And so you can't look at all
12 acres as being equal; and not all wetland acres are
13 created equal.

14 So, in particular, there's been a lot of
15 focus on the Hockomock Swamp and the impact of the
16 Hockomock Swamp. When we looked at the Hockomock
17 Swamp, we decided that we really wanted to put the
18 rail up on a trestle. The trestle is an elevated
19 structure that will allow for animals to go underneath
20 it. It reduces the fragmentation in the ecosystem.
21 It's already fragmented because the old rail berm
22 was there; so, the hydrology is different on either
23 side.

24 So we want to try to do as much

1 connectivity as much as we can to try to connect
2 the ecosystems and create a good passage for the
3 different species there. We're able to do that
4 through our design, and we found that our acres are
5 really limited to just wetlands that have cropped up
6 on the old right-of-way. We actually don't take any
7 new wetlands in the Hockomock Swamp because we're
8 able to confine our impact to where the right-of-way
9 is right now.

10 I want to say one word about Whittenton
11 versus Stoughton. And Whittenton's the variation on
12 Stoughton. The Massachusetts Department of
13 Transportation does not believe that the Whittenton
14 variation is the best alternative. It takes longer.
15 It serves about the same number of people as the
16 Stoughton Alternative, but it picks up less riders
17 from Fall River and New Bedford, and we really need
18 to serve those riders as well.

19 There are also an additional seven grade
20 crossings, which raise some safety concerns, and
21 there are noise impacts that would impact the
22 environmental justice communities in the center of
23 Taunton.

24 So, in conclusion, the Massachusetts

1 Department of Transportation believes that the best
2 alternative is the Stoughton Alternative, either
3 electric or diesel.

4 And we believe this project is a green
5 project. It's a green project because it will yield
6 air quality benefits. It will be part of the
7 solution that we need for climate change. It will
8 bring many economic development benefits to the area
9 by connecting the economies of the cities with
10 Boston, and it's a project that will yield these
11 benefits for decades to come.

12 Again, I want to thank you all for
13 coming tonight. We're looking forward to hearing
14 your comments.

15 Thank you.

16 (Applause.)

17 MR. ROSENBERG: Ladies and gentlemen,
18 our Hearing Officer Lieutenant Colonel Steven
19 Howell.

20 (Applause.)

21 LIEUTENANT COLONEL HOWELL: I'd like
22 to welcome you today to this public hearing on
23 a request for permit by the Commonwealth of
24 Massachusetts, Department of Transportation, for

1 their proposal to establish passenger rail service
2 between Boston and the communities of New Bedford
3 and Fall River, under Section 404 of the Clean Water
4 Act.

5 Before we begin, I would like to thank
6 you for involving yourself in this environmental
7 review process. Please feel free to bring up any
8 and all topics that you feel need to be discussed on
9 the record. I assure you that all of your comments
10 will be considered during this process.

11 I am Lieutenant Colonel Steve Howell,
12 Deputy District Engineer for the New England
13 District of the United States Army Corps of
14 Engineers. Our headquarters is located in Concord,
15 Massachusetts.

16 Other Corps engineer representatives
17 with me tonight include Jennifer McCarthy, our
18 regulatory -- Chief of Regulatory Division; Alan
19 Anacheka-Nasemann, our Permit Project Manager; John
20 Ashley, our Chief of Counsel; Kate Atwood, our Staff
21 Archeologist; and Larry Rosenberg, our Chief of
22 Public Affairs, who will facilitate tonight's
23 meeting.

24 Tonight's hearing is being conducted as

1 part of the National Environmental Policy Act
2 requirements and the Corps of Engineers' regulatory
3 program solely to listen to your comments.

4 This request before us involves
5 placement of fill in waters of the United States,
6 including wetlands, in order to construct new public
7 transportation facilities connecting the Cities of
8 Fall River and New Bedford with South Station in
9 Boston.

10 The proposed work would be located in
11 wetlands on or adjacent to existing active or
12 inactive rail or highway corridors in several towns
13 in Southeast Massachusetts.

14 wetlands and other waterway impacts
15 would range between roughly 10.3 and 21.5 acres,
16 depending on the alternatives selected. These
17 impacts are dispersed along the roughly 60-mile
18 transportation corridors between Boston and the
19 terminal stations in New Bedford and Fall River.

20 The project facilities are subject to
21 the jurisdiction of the Corps under Section 404
22 of the Clean Water Act and the United States
23 Environmental Protection Agency under Section 402
24 of the Clean Water Act.

1 The Corps' jurisdiction for this
2 proposed activity is limited to Section 404 of the
3 Clean Water Act, which I will discuss in more detail
4 in a moment.

5 The focus of this comment period and
6 these hearings is to receive comments on the Draft
7 Environmental Impact Statement and the proposed
8 placement of fill material in the wetlands and
9 waterways, the Corps' primary area of jurisdiction
10 for this project.

11 I would like to briefly review the Corps
12 of Engineers' responsibilities in this process.
13 First, the Corps jurisdiction -- the Corps'
14 jurisdiction in this case is Section 404 of the
15 Clean Water Act, which regulates the discharge of
16 dredged or fill materials in waters of the United
17 States, including wetlands.

18 Second, the detailed regulation that
19 explains the procedure for evaluating permit
20 applications and unauthorized work is Title 33, Code
21 of the Federal Regulation, Parts 320 through 332.

22 Third, the Corps' decision rests upon
23 several important factors to include Section 404(b)(1)
24 of the Clean Water Act which stipulates that the

1 Corps can only issue a permit for the Least
2 Environmentally Damaging Practicable Alternative or
3 LEDPA for meeting the overall project purpose.

4 In addition, the Corps must reach the
5 conclusion that issuance of a permit for the LEDPA
6 is not contrary to public interest. Our decision
7 will reflect the national concern for both the
8 protection and utilization of important resources,
9 to include the benefits that may reasonably occur
10 from the proposal must be balanced against its
11 reasonably foreseen detriments, and these factors
12 will be considered in our determination on issuance
13 of a permit; and all factors which may be relevant
14 to the proposal will be considered prior to our
15 making a decision, and those factors include but are
16 not limited to conservation, economics, aesthetics,
17 wetland values, fish and wildlife values, historic
18 properties, recreation, water supply, food
19 production, and, in general, the needs and welfare
20 of the American people.

21 The Corps conducts a broad-based public
22 interest review. This hearing is part of that
23 review. All factors affecting the public will be
24 included in our evaluation. Your comments will help

1 us reach a decision.

2 The DEIS was also prepared to serve as a
3 joint Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act, MEPA,
4 and NEPA document to meet the procedural requirements
5 of both the state and federal law and serve as a
6 combined DEIS, Draft Environmental Impact Report.
7 The State's MEPA review is being conducted
8 simultaneously with the NEPA process.

9 Lastly, to date, no decision has been
10 made by the Corps of Engineers with regard to this
11 permit. It is our responsibility to evaluate both
12 the environmental and socioeconomic impacts prior to
13 our decision, and in order to accomplish that, we
14 need your input.

15 The record of this hearing will remain
16 open, and written comments may be submitted tonight
17 or by mail until 27 May 2011. All comments will
18 receive equal consideration.

19 I would now like to introduce my project
20 manager, Alan Anacheke-Nasemann, who will give you
21 more details on the Corps' role, and the information
22 about the permit.

23 MR. ANACHEKA-NASEMANN: Thank you, sir.

24 Good evening and welcome. Thank you for

1 attending this hearing and participating in the
2 Corps Draft Environmental Impact Statement or DEIS
3 process.

4 My name is Alan Anacheka-Nasemann, and
5 I'm the Senior Ecologist with the Corps, and the
6 Project Manager for review of Mass. DOT's permit
7 application.

8 I'm here to talk to you tonight about
9 the Corps' role in South Coast Rail, the regulations
10 we work under, and our DEIS process.

11 The US Army Corps of Engineers received
12 an application for a permit from Mass. DOT to fill
13 wetlands in order to construct new transportation
14 corridors and facilities. All of the alternative
15 transportation corridors cross wetlands and other
16 waters of the United States.

17 Specifically, they would involve
18 expansion of existing passenger, freight, and/or
19 highway corridors into wetlands; reconstruction of
20 rail lines on existing but abandoned railroad lines
21 that contain wetlands; and/or construction of
22 brand-new rail corridors into wetlands.

23 The Corps of Engineers has authority
24 over this proposal under Section 404 of the Clean

1 water Act. This law requires a Corps permit to
2 discharge fill material into waters of the United
3 States, including adjacent wetlands.

4 In reviewing this permit application, we
5 must determine the Least Environmentally Damaging
6 Practicable Alternative or LEDPA, ensure that that
7 LEDPA will not cause or contribute to significant
8 degradation of waters of the United States, perform
9 a public interest review, and finally determine
10 whether or not to issue a permit for the LEDPA.

11 With regard to South Coast Rail, please,
12 keep in mind that the Corps of Engineers is a
13 regulatory agency. We are not a sponsor of the
14 project. We are a reviewing agency, not a funding
15 agency. We are a neutral party in the review of
16 every permit application we receive. We are neither
17 a supporter, nor a proponent of any particular
18 project.

19 The Corps' regulatory program is funded
20 by Congress, and we are spending taxpayer dollars to
21 review this proposal; however, we are not funding
22 Mass. DOT or the construction of this project.

23 The Corps must determine the Least
24 Environmentally Damaging Practicable Alternative,

1 but we do not have a preferred alternative. At the
2 end of the process, the Corps is required to render
3 a permit decision, but we are not required to
4 resolve every issue or concern that you may have.

5 So, why is the Corps writing an
6 Environmental Impact Statement? Because like all
7 other federal agencies, we are subject to the
8 National Environmental Policy Act or NEPA. This act
9 requires that all federal agencies must ensure that
10 environmental amenities and values may be given
11 appropriate consideration in decision-making, along
12 with economic and technical considerations.

13 Decision-making is the key phrase here.
14 Specifically, a decision we must make is whether or
15 not to issue a permit to Mass. DOT for this proposal.

16 NEPA stipulates that an Environmental
17 Impact Statement is required when the proposal
18 represents a major federal action with potentially
19 significant impacts affecting the quality of the
20 human environment.

21 One other aspect of NEPA is that it
22 encourages the federal government to work with the
23 state and local levels of government to prevent
24 duplication of effort. So the Corps, in cooperation

1 with the Commonwealth, decided to write a joint
2 Federal Environmental Impact Statement and State
3 Environmental Impact Report.

4 The state and federal governments do
5 have different processes, but the outcome is very
6 similar. An environmental review document seeks
7 to fully disclose the impacts of the alternatives
8 under consideration. The major difference is that
9 in a DEIR, the applicant names their preferred
10 alternative.

11 As indicated in this document, DOT
12 provided the preface where they have indicated their
13 preferred alternative, but, again, the Corps of
14 Engineers does not have a preferred alternative.

15 So our DEIS is a discussion of
16 alternatives, but it is not a selection of a
17 particular alternative. It is a full disclosure
18 of the impacts of each alternative, but it is not
19 a decision. Finally, it is a statement of the
20 consequences of a permit to build the project, but
21 it is not a permit itself.

22 Our comment period closes on May 27,
23 2011. After that, the Corps will review all of the
24 comments, request any additional data needed from

1 Mass. DOT to further identify impacts, and at that
2 point write a Final Environmental Impact Statement,
3 at which time we will name the Least Environmentally
4 Damaging Practicable Alternative and provide a more
5 detailed evaluation of that alternative.

6 After that, the Corps will write a
7 Record of Decision and either issue a permit, issue
8 a permit with conditions, or deny the permit.

9 To summarize, Section 404 of the Clean
10 Water Act is our regulatory authority in this
11 matter, and NEPA is our process for reviewing and
12 evaluating the proposal and its environmental
13 consequences.

14 Our proposal must run its full course
15 before we can make a decision on this permit
16 application.

17 I'd like to now introduce Aisling O'Shea
18 from the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental
19 Affairs. Ms. O'Shea will give a brief overview of
20 the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act process.

21 Aisling.

22 MS. O'SHEA: Good evening. I'd like to
23 give you a brief overview of our MEPA process and
24 some information on how to submit comments on the

1 Draft DEIR, and Draft DEIS.

2 The MEPA office is the Massachusetts
3 Environmental Policy Act, and I just wanted to give
4 you, for those that might not be familiar with it,
5 just an overview of the purpose of our office and
6 our review.

7 MEPA requires that state agencies and
8 any other proponents study the consequences of their
9 actions including the potential environmental
10 impacts of the project that's being proposed, and
11 that the proponent also looks at all -- studies
12 alternatives and looks at all possible measures to
13 avoid and minimize impacts to the maximum extent
14 feasible and where impacts are avoidable, to develop
15 appropriate mitigation.

16 Our thresholds for review can be found
17 on our website and in our regulations. Not all
18 projects are subject to MEPA review, but typically
19 there are -- the requirements include that a project
20 trips one of our thresholds and needs a state
21 action. In this case, the proponent is a state
22 agency, and there are a number of state permits
23 required.

24 For -- the other thing I wanted to

1 highlight was the -- part of the MEPA process, of
2 course, is to make sure that there is public input
3 in the process. We don't -- MEPA office doesn't
4 approve or deny a project. The purpose of our
5 review is to ensure full disclosure and public input
6 and an environmental impact assessment that's
7 conducted and that's adequate. The decision that
8 the secretary will make eventually at the end of
9 this part of our review process is on the advocacy
10 of the Draft Environmental Impact Report.

11 Now, the Environmental Impact Report
12 itself is the primary mechanism for collecting the
13 information and for making it available for public
14 review. The Draft Environmental Impact Report, as
15 Alan mentioned, is a combined document that has been
16 submitted to serve both the federal and state
17 information needs.

18 Just to give you a sense of some of the
19 thresholds that are relevant for this project where
20 it requires a mandatory Environmental Impact Report.
21 One of them being the impacts to wetlands and
22 alteration of more than one acre of bordering
23 vegetative wetlands trips a threshold for a
24 mandatory EIR.

1 It also requires a variance from the
2 wetlands Protection Act, and so that's one of the
3 permit requirements; and as many of you are aware,
4 there are some state-listed species potential
5 impacts associated with the project, and the various
6 alternatives that would require a Conservation and
7 Management permit from Natural Heritage and
8 Endangered Species Programs. So the project is
9 subject to review under the Massachusetts Endangered
10 Species Act as well.

11 So just a brief on where we are today in
12 terms of the review. Some of you may have been
13 involved earlier at the Environmental Notification
14 Stage which was a couple years ago. The secretary
15 issued the certificate on April 3, 2009, which laid
16 out the scope of work for the Draft Environmental
17 Impact Report, and this is the document that we have
18 now which we will be reviewing in the context of
19 that scope; and to the extent that all of the
20 requirements from the scope are met, we'll welcome
21 all of your comments that you may have on the
22 document itself, on the alternatives, any comments
23 you may have on them, on mitigation, and other
24 impacts. So that will help feed into our review.

1 As I mentioned earlier, we don't approve
2 or deny a project. The part of this -- the MEPA
3 review will help state agencies in making their
4 decisions and providing information that they need.
5 State agencies -- for projects that are subject to
6 MEPA review and need the EIR, the state agencies
7 have to make a Section 61 finding under MEPA, under
8 the act, to make a statement that, yes, all of the
9 impacts have been avoided and minimized to the
10 maximum extent, and that mitigation's appropriate.
11 So this review process and your input will help in
12 scoping what additional information analysis might
13 be needed for the Final EIR.

14 Now, typically, under MEPA for EIRs,
15 there's a 30-day comment period. There is a
16 provision of the regulation to extend typically not
17 more than 30 days. This project we have a 65-day
18 public comment period, and we've coordinated the
19 dates to coincide with the Corps as well; so,
20 comments to MEPA are also due on May 27, and they
21 should be submitted in writing. Obviously we'll
22 take into account, you know, everything we hear
23 tonight, but under the MEPA regulations, we do
24 require that if you want your comments to be on

1 the record with the Commonwealth, that they are
2 submitted to the secretary in writing.

3 And just in terms of timeline, probably
4 a month, about a month afterwards, we're scheduled
5 for June 29th, that once we've reviewed all the
6 comments and completed our review of the documents
7 and consulted with agencies, et cetera, the
8 secretary will be issuing a certificate, and that
9 will determine, you know, the adequacy of the Draft
10 EIR and lay out the scope of work for Final EIR.

11 So this is information here on where to
12 submit your comments. I also wanted to draw your
13 attention to a handout on the table outside at the
14 DOT's table, which has that information also and my
15 contact information. Feel free to call or e-mail if
16 you have questions afterwards. We take comments by
17 fax, e-mail, or regular mail; and then DOT's
18 brochure, I believe, also has information on
19 submitting comments to MEPA.

20 Thank you.

21 MR. ROSENBERG: Ladies and gentlemen, it
22 is crucial to this public process that your voice is
23 heard, and we're here to listen, to listen to your
24 comments, understand your concerns, and to provide

1 you an opportunity to put your thoughts on the
2 record, should you care to do so.

3 The hearing tonight will be conducted in
4 a manner that all who desire to express their views
5 will be given an opportunity to do so.

6 To preserve the right of all to express
7 their views, I ask, one, there be no interruptions;
8 and two, that all speakers abide by the time
9 restrictions, so that all who wish to speak will
10 have an opportunity.

11 We do not wish to have one individual
12 deny others the rights to express their opinions and
13 their views on the proposed project. Furthermore,
14 in order to make any decisions regarding this permit
15 application, we, the United States Army Corps of
16 Engineers need to have you involve yourself in this
17 environmental review, not just tonight but
18 throughout the entire process.

19 When you came in, copies of the public
20 notice and procedures to be followed this evening
21 were available. If you did not receive these, both
22 are still available at the registration area, at the
23 entrance to the hall. I will not read either the
24 procedures or the public notice, but they will be

1 entered into the record.

2 A transcript of this hearing is being
3 prepared. And the record will remain open, and
4 written comments may be submitted tonight or by
5 mail, up until May -- up and to and including
6 May 27, 2011. All comments receive equal
7 consideration. Anyone who wishes to send written
8 comments should forward those comments to our
9 headquarters in Concord, Massachusetts.

10 Lastly, I'd like to reemphasize that
11 the Corps of Engineers has made no decision with
12 regards to this permit. It is our responsibility
13 to fully evaluate the Massachusetts Department of
14 Transportation's proposed activity and its impact
15 on the aquatic resources prior to any decision.

16 Please note that the Corps does not have
17 a preferred alternative and has not yet selected a
18 permitable transportation route at this time.

19 The Corps must first identify the Least
20 Environmentally Damaging Practicable Alternative.
21 That's where it starts. The process will not be
22 completed until the Final Environmental Impact
23 Statement is released.

24 Now, although the Massachusetts

1 Department of Transportation has a very ambitious
2 schedule for the completion of the necessary
3 environmental reviews and the permitting, the Corps
4 of Engineers has not developed a schedule for the
5 preparation of the Final EIS. The timing of the
6 Final EIS and our Record of Decision are contingent
7 upon the public comments we receive and the data
8 that needs to be gathered to fill any data gaps.

9 Again, we are here to receive your
10 comments and not to enter into any discussion of
11 those comments or to reach any conclusion.

12 Any questions you have should be directed
13 to the record and not to the individuals on the
14 panel.

15 So if there's no objection from the
16 Hearing Officer, I will now dispense with the
17 reading of the public notice of this hearing, and
18 I'll have it entered into the record.

19 LIEUTENANT COLONEL HOWELL: (Nods.)

20 MR. ROSENBERG: Thank you, sir.

21 * * * * *

22
23 **PUBLIC NOTICE**
24

1 US Army Corps of Engineers®
2 New England District
3 696 Virginia Road
4 Concord, MA 01742-2751
5

6 Comment Period Begins: March 23, 2011

7 Comment Period Ends: May 27, 2011

8 File Number: NAE-2007-00698

9 In Reply Refer To: Alan Anacheka-Nasemann

10 Phone: (978) 318-8214

11 E-mail: SCREIS@usace.army.mil

12 -----
13 **Department of the Army Permit Application, Notice of**
14 **Availability of Draft Environmental Impact Statement**
15 **and Announcement of Public Hearings: Proposed South**
16 **Coast Rail Project, Massachusetts Department of**
17 **Transportation.**

18
19 The District Engineer has received a permit
20 application from the applicant below to conduct work
21 in waters of the United States as described below.
22

23 **APPLICANT:** Massachusetts Department of Transportation,
24 10 Park Plaza, Boston, Massachusetts 02116

1
2 **ACTIVITY:** Discharge fill material into waters of the
3 United States, including adjacent wetlands. All
4 work is incidental to installation of transportation
5 infrastructure (rail and/or road grades) for
6 proposed commuter passenger public transportation
7 service. A detailed description of the proposed
8 activity is provided below. This work is proposed
9 in waters of the United States, including adjacent
10 wetlands, along existing active or abandoned
11 railroad, new track on lands currently not used as a
12 transportation corridor, and/or highway grades
13 between Boston and the Cities of New Bedford and
14 Fall River, Massachusetts.

15
16 **AUTHORITY**

17 Permits are required pursuant to:

18 ____Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899

19 XXSection 404 of the Clean Water Act

20 ____Section 103 of the Marine Protection, Research
21 and Sanctuaries Act).

22
23 The New England District, US Army Corps of Engineers
24 (Corps) has prepared a Draft Environmental Impact

1 Statement (DEIS) to evaluate the proposed
2 establishment of commuter passenger transit service
3 between Boston and the cities of New Bedford and
4 Fall River, MA. The DEIS has been prepared pursuant
5 to section 102(2)(c) of the National Environmental
6 Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as implemented by the
7 Council on Environmental Quality regulations (40 CFR
8 parts 1500-1508), in response to this Department of
9 the Army permit application.

10
11 The DEIS has also been prepared to serve as a Draft
12 Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) to satisfy the
13 requirements of the Massachusetts Environmental
14 Policy Act (MEPA; 301 CMR 11.00 et seq.). The MEPA
15 review is being conducted simultaneously with the
16 NEPA process.

17
18 The joint DEIS/DEIR evaluated a range of alternative
19 transportation routes. Alternative routes evaluated
20 in detail included three principal rail routes and
21 one bus route: (1) the "Attleboro Alternative," (2)
22 the "Stoughton Alternative," (3) the "Whittenton
23 Alternative," and (4) the "Rapid Bus" Alternative.
24 A No Build/Transportation Surface Management

1 alternative was also evaluated. Additional
2 permutations, including a "Middleborough Rail -
3 Rapid Bus Hybrid" and an "Attleboro Fourth Track"
4 configuration were also examined.

5
6 **Two Public Hearings will be held, as follows:**

7
8 **1. Wednesday, May 4, 2011, 7:00 P.M., Qualters**
9 **Middle School, 240 East Street, Mansfield, MA**

10 **2. Thursday, May 5, 2011, 7:00 P.M., Keith Middle**
11 **School, 225 Hathaway Blvd, New Bedford, MA**

12
13 **Registration for each hearing will begin at**
14 **6:00 P.M. on the dates and locations listed above.**

15
16 In order to properly evaluate the proposal, we are
17 seeking public comment. Anyone wishing to comment
18 is encouraged to attend one of the hearings noted
19 above or submit written comments. **Written comments**
20 **must be received no later than: Friday May 27, 2011.**

21 written comments can be sent to Mr. Alan
22 Anacheka-Nasemann, Project Manager, US Army Corps of
23 Engineers, New England District, Regulatory
24 Division, 696 Virginia Road, Concord, MA, or by

1 email to: SCREIS@usace.army.mil. Written comments
2 any also be turned in to Corps staff during the
3 public hearings noted above. All comments will be
4 considered a matter of public record. Copies of all
5 comments will be forwarded to the applicant.

6
7 FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Alan
8 Anacheka-Nasemann, (978) 318-8214, email:
9 SCREIS@usace.army.mil.

10
11 **Background.** Section 404 of the Clean Water Act
12 requires a Department of the Army (DA) permit for
13 the discharge of dredged or fill material into
14 waters of the United States, including adjacent
15 wetlands. MassDOT has submitted an application for
16 a DA permit to discharge fill material into waters
17 of the U.S. incidental to establishment of commuter
18 public transportation service between Boston and the
19 cities of New Bedford and Fall River, MA, and known
20 as "South Coast Rail." Impacts to waters of the
21 U.S. would range in area from approximately 10.3
22 acres to approximately 21.5 acres, depending on the
23 alternative selected. The overall project purpose
24 is to more fully meet the existing and future demand

1 for public transportation between Fall River/New
2 Bedford and Boston, MA and to enhance regional
3 mobility. The cities of New Bedford, Fall River and
4 Taunton, Massachusetts are reportedly the only
5 cities within 50 miles of Boston not currently
6 served by commuter passenger rail service. The
7 project envisions up to approximately 9600 passenger
8 daily trips between Boston and New Bedford/Fall River.

9
10 The DEIS is intended to provide the information
11 needed for the Corps to perform a public interest
12 review for the Section 404 permit decision.

13 Evaluation of impacts of the various alternatives
14 will include application of the guidelines of
15 Section 404(b) of the Clean Water Act. Issues
16 analyzed in the DEIS include impacts to water of the
17 U.S. (including vernal pools and other wetlands);
18 transportation, land use; socioeconomics,
19 environmental justice, visual effects, noise,
20 vibration, cultural resources; air quality; open
21 space; farmland, hazardous materials, biodiversity;
22 threatened and endangered species; and water
23 resources. Several alternatives were evaluated for
24 comparative purposes, including the No-Action

1 Alternative under which no new transportation would
2 be built.

3
4 **Alternatives.** The "Attleboro Alternative" would add
5 new service via the existing AMTRAK® Northeast
6 Corridor, with added capacity, new track and
7 existing freight lines, from Boston via Attleboro
8 and Norton to Taunton. The new track ("Attleboro
9 bypass") would be laid in the Town of Attleboro,
10 near Chartley Pond in the vicinity of an existing
11 National Grid electrical line right-of-way. This
12 alternative would add approximately 20 new trains to
13 the existing Northeast Corridor between Attleboro
14 and Boston. Eight new commuter rail stations would
15 be constructed (Barrowsville, Downtown Taunton,
16 Taunton Depot, King's Highway, Whale's Tooth,
17 Freetown, Fall River Depot, and Battleship Cove) and
18 major reconstruction would occur at three existing
19 commuter rail stations (Canton Junction, Sharon,
20 Mansfield).

21
22 The "Stoughton Alternative" would extend the
23 existing Stoughton commuter rail line from its
24 current terminus in Stoughton along presently

1 abandoned railroad rights-of-way through Easton and
2 Raynham to Taunton. This would follow an existing,
3 abandoned railroad grade that crosses Hockomock
4 Swamp and Pine Swamp to the east side of Taunton.
5 This alternative would add 4 new trains and would
6 otherwise extend existing trains farther south from
7 Stoughton to New Bedford and Fall River. Ten new
8 commuter rail stations would be constructed (North
9 Easton, Easton Village, Raynham Place, Taunton,
10 Taunton Depot, King's Highway, Whale's Tooth,
11 Freetown, Fall River Depot, and Battleship Cove) and
12 major reconstruction would occur at two existing
13 commuter rail stations (Canton Center and
14 Stoughton).

15
16 The "Whittenton Alternative" is a variant of the
17 Stoughton Alternative, and would extend the existing
18 Stoughton commuter rail line from its current
19 terminus in Stoughton along presently abandoned
20 railroad rights-of-way through Easton and Raynham to
21 Taunton. This would follow the existing, abandoned
22 railroad grade that crosses Hockomock Swamp and then
23 an abandoned, serpentine (winding) railroad grade to
24 the west side of Taunton. This alternative would

1 add 4 new trains and would otherwise extend existing
2 trains farther south from Stoughton to New Bedford
3 and Fall River. Ten new commuter rail stations
4 would be constructed (North Easton, Easton Village,
5 Raynham Place, Downtown Taunton, Taunton Depot,
6 King's Highway, Whale's Tooth, Freetown, Fall River
7 Depot, and Battleship Cove) and major reconstruction
8 would occur at two existing commuter rail stations
9 (Canton Center and Stoughton). The Whittenton
10 Alternative was the most recent route for passenger
11 rail service between Stoughton and Taunton, last
12 used in ca. 1958.

13
14 Continuation of all three rail alternatives from
15 Taunton would follow existing, active freight lines
16 through Lakeville and Freetown to New Bedford and
17 Fall River. These links between Taunton and New
18 Bedford/Fall River are common to all three rail
19 alternatives identified above.

20
21 The "Rapid Bus" Alternative would provide commuter
22 bus service, in lieu of rail, from New Bedford, Fall
23 River and Taunton to South Station via I-93, Route 24,
24 and Route 140. North of I-495, buses would use a

1 combination of new zipper bus lanes, new reversible
2 bus lanes, two-way bus lanes, existing zipper HOV
3 lanes and existing HOV lanes, along with a short
4 section in mixed traffic. South of the I-495
5 interchange in Raynham, buses would travel in the
6 general purpose lanes with mixed traffic. Bus
7 Stations would be located at Whale's Tooth and
8 King's Highway in New Bedford, and in Fall River,
9 Freetown, Downtown Taunton and Galleria (Taunton).

10
11 The approximate locations of the proposed build
12 alternative transportation alignments and rail
13 station locations are shown on the enclosed plan
14 entitled "Figure 4.15-11:South Coast Rail Project
15 Alternative Alignments," and details of the proposed
16 impacts to waters of the United States are identified
17 in the DEIS/DEIR, Chapter 4.16 (wetlands).

18
19 The No-Build Alternative would provide enhancements
20 to existing bus services with limited improvements
21 to the existing transit and roadway system, but
22 otherwise no major infrastructure improvements.

23
24 The decision whether to issue a permit will be based

1 on an evaluation of the probable impact of the
2 proposed activity on the public interest. That
3 decision will reflect the national concern for both
4 protection and utilization of important resources.
5 The benefit which may reasonably accrue from the
6 proposal must be balanced against its reasonably
7 foreseeable detriments. All factors which may be
8 relevant to the proposal will be considered,
9 including the cumulative effects thereof; among
10 those are: conservation, economics, aesthetics,
11 general environmental concerns, wetlands, cultural
12 value, fish and wildlife values, flood hazards,
13 flood plain value, land use, navigation, shoreline
14 erosion and accretion, recreation, water supply and
15 conservation, water quality, energy needs, safety,
16 food production and, in general, the needs and
17 welfare of the people.

18
19 The Corps of Engineers is soliciting comments from
20 the public; federal, state, and local agencies and
21 officials; Indian Tribes; and other interested
22 parties in order to consider and evaluate the
23 impacts of this proposed activity. Comments
24 received will be addressed in the Final

1 Environmental Impact Statement and considered by the
2 Corps of Engineers to determine whether to issue,
3 modify, condition or deny a permit for this
4 proposal. Comments are used to assess impacts on
5 endangered species, historic properties, water
6 quality, general environmental effects, and the
7 other public interest factors listed above.

8
9 **Mitigation:** Implementation of a mitigation plan to
10 compensate for unavoidable losses to aquatic
11 resource functions will be required if a permit is
12 issued. The DEIS/DEIR provides a conceptual outline
13 of MassDOT's proposed mitigation program; however
14 specific mitigation measures have not been
15 identified at this point.

16
17 **Section 106 Coordination:** All of the proposed
18 alternative routes would affect historic and
19 cultural resources, including properties eligible
20 for listing on the National Register of Historic
21 Places, National Historic Landmarks, and historic
22 districts that have cultural importance in the
23 affected communities. Consultation with the State
24 and Tribal Historic Preservation Offices on the

1 extent of the impacts on these resources is ongoing
2 as part of the NEPA and §404 review processes,
3 pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic
4 Preservation Act, as amended.

5
6 **Endangered Species Consultation:** The New England
7 District, Army Corps of Engineers has reviewed the
8 list of species protected under the Endangered
9 Species Act of 1973, as amended, which might occur
10 at the project site. It is our preliminary
11 determination that the proposed activity for which
12 authorization is being sought is designed, situated
13 or will be operated/used in such a manner that it is
14 not likely to adversely affect any federally listed
15 endangered or threatened species or their designated
16 critical habitat. By this Public Notice, we are
17 requesting that the appropriate Federal Agency
18 concur with our determination.

19
20 **Coastal Zone Management Act:** The State of
21 Massachusetts has an approved Coastal Zone
22 Management Program. Where applicable the applicant
23 states that any proposed activity will comply with
24 and will be conducted in a manner that is consistent

1 with the approved Coastal Zone Management Program.
2 By this Public Notice, we are requesting the State's
3 concurrence or objection to the applicant's
4 consistency statement.

5
6 **Availability of the DEIS/DEIR:** Interested parties
7 may view and download the DEIS/DEIR online at:
8 [http://www.nae.usace.army.mil/projects/ma/
9 southCoastRail/southcoastrail.htm](http://www.nae.usace.army.mil/projects/ma/southCoastRail/southcoastrail.htm). A printed copy
10 of the document is also available to review at each
11 of the following locations:

- 12
13 1. State Transportation Library of Massachusetts
14 10 Park Plaza, 2nd Floor, Boston, MA
- 15 2. Russell Memorial Library, 88 Main Street,
16 Acushnet, MA
- 17 3. Attleboro Public Library, 74 North Main, Attleboro,
18 MA
- 19 4. Berkley Public Library, 3 North Main Street,
20 Berkley, MA
- 21 5. Boston Public Library, Central Library,
22 700 Boylston Street, Boston, MA
- 23 6. Thayer Public Library, 798 Washington Street,
24 Braintree, MA

- 1 7. Canton Public Library, 786 Washington Street,
2 Canton, MA
- 3 8. Dedham Public Library, 43 Church Street, Dedham, MA
- 4 9. Ames Free Library, 15 Barrows Street, North
5 Easton, MA
- 6 10. Fall River Public Library, 104 North Main
7 Street, Fall River, MA
- 8 11. Boyden Library, 10 Bird Street, Foxborough, MA
- 9 12. James White Memorial Library, 5 Washburn Rd.
10 East Freetown, MA
- 11 13. Lakeville Public Library, 4 Precinct Street,
12 Lakeville, MA
- 13 14. Mansfield Public Library, 255 Hope Street,
14 Mansfield, MA
- 15 15. Milton Public Library, 476 Canton Avenue,
16 Milton, MA
- 17 16. New Bedford Free Public Library, 613 Pleasant
18 Street, New Bedford, MA
- 19 17. Norton Public Library, 68 East Main Street,
20 Norton, MA
- 21 18. Thomas Crane Public Library, 40 Washington
22 Street, Quincy, MA
- 23 19. Turner Free Library, 2 North Main Street
24 Randolph, MA

- 1 20. Raynham Public Library, 760 South Main Street,
2 Raynham, MA
- 3 21. Sharon Public Library, 11 North Main Street,
4 Sharon, MA
- 5 22. Stoughton Library, 84 Park Street, Stoughton, MA
- 6 23. Taunton Public Library, 12 Pleasant Street,
7 Taunton, MA
- 8 24. West Bridgewater Public Library, 80 Howard
9 Street, West Bridgewater, MA

10

11 The following authorizations have been applied for,
12 or have been, or will be obtained:

13

14 (X) Permit, License or Assent from State.

15 (X) Permit from Local Wetland Agency or
16 Conservation Commission.

17 (X) water quality certification in
18 accordance with section 401 of the Clean water Act.

19

20 **THIS NOTICE IS NOT AN AUTHORIZATION TO DO ANY WORK.**

21

22 **Jennifer L. McCarthy**
23 **Chief, Regulatory Division**

24

* * * * *

1
2
3 MR. ROSENBERG: A transcript of this
4 hearing is being made to assure a detailed review of
5 all the comments. A copy of the transcript will be
6 available in our Concord, Massachusetts headquarters
7 for review, on our website for your use, or you may
8 make arrangements with the stenographer for a copy
9 at your own expense.

10 Individuals speaking today will be
11 called to the microphone in the order they signed in
12 and as provided by our hearing protocol that was
13 distributed in the reception area.

14 When making the statement, come forward
15 to one of the microphones. One's located on each
16 aisle. State your name, and then the interest you
17 represent.

18 And as I said, as there are many who
19 wish to provide comment, you will be provided three
20 minutes to speak, no more. Once again, please keep
21 to this time restriction, so you will avoid denying
22 others the right to speak.

23 Thank you.

24 Now, this traffic signal behind me

1 indicates the following: The green light -- when
2 the green light comes on, it will indicate that you
3 have two minutes remaining. When the amber light
4 comes on, you have one minute left, and, of course,
5 when the red light comes on, that indicates your
6 time has expired.

7 Please identify if you're speaking for
8 or representing a position of an organization. If
9 you speak for yourself, just say that.

10 I want to emphasize again that all who
11 wish to speak will have the opportunity to do so;
12 and once again, we have an additional stenographer
13 located outside the hearing room should you wish to
14 dictate an individual statement for the record
15 without the time restrictions.

16 We will now begin to receive your
17 comments according to our hearing protocol.

18 Our first speaker tonight will be Mayor
19 Scott Lang, and Mayor Lang will be followed by
20 Senator Mark Montigny.

21 MAYOR SCOTT LANG: Good evening. Thanks
22 very much for coming to New Bedford. We sincerely
23 appreciate it. We welcome the Army Corps and all
24 the officials that are here tonight.

1 I want to speak in favor of the South
2 Coast Rail Project. I want to speak in favor of the
3 Hockomock Route. I want to lay it out very, very
4 quickly for you.

5 The first thing that I want to emphasize
6 is that this is a very important economic development
7 project for our area. It is also an important
8 project for the state.

9 This will provide immediate jobs in the
10 planning and building of the rail and then provide
11 jobs along the rail itself. It will allow us to
12 move individuals rapidly north and south.
13 Eventually we would hope that the United States
14 would continue to build and will go east and west as
15 well.

16 We believe it moves passengers as well
17 as freight. We have looked at this project for a
18 very long period of time. We are now one of the
19 fastest growth areas in the state, and it's
20 absolutely something that's vital to continue this
21 economic development.

22 The second thing that I would like to
23 say is that this is a matter of social, economic,
24 and environmental justice for everyone in the state.

1 If you traveled on 195, 140, 24, 93, you know that
2 that -- that these roadways, in essence, will be
3 obsolete with \$4-a-gallon gasoline, with the fact that
4 we have tremendous concerns about the environment,
5 and the fact that it is nearly impossible to move,
6 without denigrating the quality of life of all our
7 citizens because of the time frames involved. Having
8 rapid mass transportation by way of rail from our
9 section of the state, north/south is extremely
10 important.

11 The last or the number of other things
12 that I want to say is that we don't believe an
13 extension is warranted. We've been waiting for this
14 project for decades, and we believe a May 27th
15 deadline is completely appropriate. This entire
16 project has been open, transparent, and public
17 engagement has started from the first day, about
18 four years ago.

19 I've been to so many meetings in which
20 the public's been involved, in which routes have
21 been vetted, checked, that it would not be right to
22 continue with an extension.

23 The other thing that I will say -- and
24 I've got a yellow light now -- is that we don't want

1 an iron horse built. This is the 21st Century. We
2 believe electric, fast start, fast stop, get us to
3 Boston or get us north quickly.

4 Environmentally friendly is appropriate.
5 This rapid mass transit by way of rail, to go by
6 diesel continues to have us depend on oil, have us
7 continue to pollute the environment. It doesn't
8 make sense, and 10 years later we'll be looking to
9 try and convert to electric trains.

10 So let's build a 21st Century product
11 with the tech that has people, as I've said before,
12 from Tokyo saying I want to ride the rail from
13 New Bedford to Boston.

14 So I thank you. This is of utmost
15 importance for our region, and we hope that you will
16 act expeditiously and favorably to this project.

17 Thanks very much.

18 MR. ROSENBERG: Thank you, sir.

19 (Applause.)

20 MR. ROSENBERG: Our next speaker is
21 Senator Mark Montigny who will be followed by State
22 Representative Antonio Cabral.

23 SENATOR MARK MONTIGNY: Thank you,
24 folks. For the record, I am Senator Mark Montigny.

1 I represent about 160,000 folks, not only their
2 aspirations, but in this case, several thousand of
3 whom I think I represent tonight their frustrations.

4 I want to say first to you, Lieutenant
5 Colonel, thank you for your service to the United
6 States of America; and to all the staff of the Army
7 Corps, we appreciate your indulgence.

8 (Applause.)

9 SENATOR MARK MONTIGNY: I understand
10 last night that there was some folks who did what we
11 all tend to do express some frustration. I think
12 not in my backyard is a natural instinct. I'd like
13 to suggest tonight that you'll hear from folks that
14 are passionate and are saying, please, put it in our
15 backyard.

16 We've been saying it for decades, some
17 of us, in my case, longer than I care to admit. I
18 will just cite a couple of instances so you'll
19 understand that although we're excited and passionate,
20 we're also frustrated.

21 In 1991, Governor Weld looked at me at a
22 podium when I was President of the Fall River
23 Chamber of Commerce and said if you don't have
24 commuter rail by 1997, sue me. I've been looking to

1 sue his trust fund for over a decade. It hasn't
2 worked.

3 In two thousand -- excuse me -- in 1993,
4 the Secretary of Transportation said sure, Senator,
5 if you can earmark the money for a study, we will
6 gladly study the Attleboro Alternative, and then two
7 years later, you can do it again if that doesn't
8 work, and we'll study the Stoughton Route, and I
9 said, no thank you and earmarked three and a half
10 million dollars, and we studied these alternatives
11 that you are looking at tonight, in 2011. So we are
12 frustrated.

13 A succession of governors didn't include
14 the Army Corps unfortunately. This governor, a true
15 champion of the project, was wise enough to understand
16 that it required cooperation.

17 I want to say one thing very clearly.
18 It's been studied to death. We ask you not to
19 extend the comment period. We ask you to do as
20 you're capable. We know you're thorough, and we
21 will win from that, but we ask you to do this within
22 the year, and we know that you can do it in even
23 less time.

24 There is no question in our minds

1 because we've participated in literally hundreds of
2 meetings and watched this study after study by very
3 competent environmental experts. The Stoughton
4 Route is the alternative. The Whittenton -- I'll
5 call it the Whittenton Delay Option is not a
6 feasible alternative.

7 And the only thing that we would ask
8 understand that we truly believe that this is not
9 only an issue of economic justice. We understand
10 what it will do, and I will say to you unequivocally
11 it is the most important economic project for this
12 region. I would suggest also looking at the
13 environmental aspects. There is nothing that will
14 do more to take thousands of cars off the road every
15 day than this project.

16 And, lastly, quoting economists that sat
17 before me as the Chairman of Ways and Means in the
18 Senate and suggested the singular -- singularly the
19 biggest challenge to the economic development of
20 Massachusetts, not the South Coast, was, in fact,
21 the lack of growth in the workforce because of a
22 congested capital city and a cost of living that was
23 unbearable for most; and they suggested, without
24 provocation from me as a champion of this project,

1 that commuter rail to the South Coast for a variety
2 of reasons would help solve that issue.

3 so I close by again thanking you for
4 your indulgence, but I ask that you expedite the
5 process. We have waited far too long. The project
6 works. It is necessary, and we need it quickly.

7 Thank you very much for your time.

8 MR. ROSENBERG: Thank you, sir.

9 (Applause.)

10 MR. ROSENBERG: Thank you, sir.

11 The next speaker is Representative
12 Antonio Cabral, who will be followed by State
13 Representative Stephen Canessa.

14 REPRESENTATIVE ANTONIO CABRAL: Thank
15 you. For the record, it is State Representative
16 Antonio Cabral, from the City of New Bedford.

17 Good evening and welcome to New Bedford
18 and thank you for your extraordinary thorough Draft
19 Environmental Statement and your report.

20 I'm here to support the South Coast
21 Rail. We've been working on this project, as the
22 Senator said, for several decades now. We don't
23 believe that the date of May 27 should be extended,
24 and we believe strongly that the Stoughton Route is

1 the most effective, the most cost-effective, the
2 most fastest route for us to get to Boston, and we
3 don't need any buses. We have already buses from
4 New Bedford and I believe from all the other cities
5 in Southeastern Mass.

6 This project would mark a turning point
7 for us. It's certainly, as the Mayor said, one of
8 the biggest economic projects that we could have in
9 our region and in our city, particularly, New
10 Bedford. As you know, the Cities of New Bedford,
11 Fall River, and Taunton are the only cities of their
12 size in the eastern half of Massachusetts without
13 rail service of any kind.

14 How can you have cities like ours not
15 connected to the biggest city, not only in
16 Massachusetts, the biggest city in New England, the
17 biggest economic engine of New England. It's like
18 we were saying all roads used to lead to Rome, but
19 we need to be connected to Boston by rail.

20 There's no other -- there is no
21 coincidence why we have some of the highest
22 unemployment rates in New England. This project
23 will allow our cities to take advantage of our many
24 strengths, to build our prosperity, based on our

1 strengths, as the mayor has said and others have
2 said before.

3 I want to briefly address the concerns
4 you heard last night in Mansfield. I can understand
5 the disappointment of someone who took the risk of
6 purchasing a home along existing railroad tracks,
7 hoping that the tracks wouldn't be used. They used
8 to be used only a few years ago. The last time the
9 rail was used was 1959.

10 No one likes to lose the battle, but I
11 believe the opposition of those living along the
12 tracks, the northern stretch of the proposed
13 Stoughton Route, does not reflect views even of a
14 majority of those community residents, much less the
15 majority of our region's residents.

16 In 2007, the residents of both Raynham
17 and Easton voted against opposing this project
18 through a local referendum, directed their elected
19 leaders to instead work with the state to mitigate
20 any impact to their communities.

21 As for Environmental Impacts, your
22 report makes clear that the actual impact to the
23 land and wetlands are much smaller than even the
24 projects' strongest supporters, like myself,

1 believe. You point out, for instance, that the
2 project would affect only, only half of an acre of
3 wetlands in the Hockomock Swamp.

4 On the other hand, the project would
5 take more than 8,000 cars off the roads of
6 Southeastern Massachusetts every day and eliminate
7 62,000 tons of CO₂ from our atmosphere.

8 MR. ROSENBERG: Thank you, sir. Thank
9 you very much.

10 Since you have a longer statement, I
11 invite you to use the stenographer out there, but,
12 please, sir, make sure that we get a copy of that
13 statement.

14 REPRESENTATIVE ANTONIO CABRAL: I will
15 be submitting written comments before the 27th both
16 to you and to MEPA.

17 MR. ROSENBERG: Thank you, sir.

18 REPRESENTATIVE ANTONIO CABRAL: Thank
19 you.

20 MR. ROSENBERG: Thank you.

21 (Applause.)

22 MR. ROSENBERG: Our next speaker is
23 State Representative Stephen Canessa, and he will be
24 followed by State Representative Christopher Markey.

1 REPRESENTATIVE STEPHEN CANESSA: Good
2 evening. And first I want to thank you for this
3 important public hearing. I know it's a very
4 critically important part of this process; so, I do
5 want to thank you and acknowledge you for hosting a
6 hearing in New Bedford.

7 I'm going to be brief because I know
8 that you've heard from us, and when I say us, the
9 delegation on several occasions regarding our
10 position on this issue.

11 You'll undoubtedly hear from many people
12 on this issue. I know you've heard from several
13 last night. You'll hear from several tonight, and
14 as this process unfolds through May 27th, I'm sure
15 you'll hear from quite a few; and those who you'll
16 hear from will have a variety of views, for a
17 variety of reasons. They will be opposed. They
18 will be in favor, and they will express their
19 opinions.

20 Please keep in mind that when -- there
21 are some folks who may be opposed in this process
22 who already benefit from rail service. The New
23 Bedford, Fall River, and Taunton region currently do
24 not benefit from this service, and I certainly think

1 that is something that our region does deserve.

2 We've expressed the frustration at times
3 regarding the length of time of this process;
4 however, I do want to very sincerely thank you and
5 show my extreme appreciation for the thoroughness
6 and the detail that you put into this, what as I
7 think have been a --

8 MS. EGAN: DEIS.

9 REPRESENTATIVE STEPHEN CANESSA: -- the
10 two-year DEIS project. I do think that in the long
11 run, that will be an extreme benefit for all of us
12 in this region.

13 I do want to go on record in support of
14 the Stoughton Extension for a variety of reasons,
15 which includes economic development, accessibility
16 for the residents of this area, and also educational
17 opportunities, which could be achieved for the
18 residents of this area in the greater Boston region.

19 I do also want to publically thank
20 Kristina Egan who has been absolutely wonderful in
21 this process as well.

22 Thank you.

23 MR. ROSENBERG: Thank you, sir.

24 (Applause.)

1 MR. ROSENBERG: Our next speaker is
2 State Representative Christopher Markey who will be
3 followed by Mayor Charles Crowley, Mayor of Taunton.

4 REPRESENTATIVE CHRISTOPHER MARKEY:
5 Thank you for the opportunity to be here this
6 evening.

7 I'm educated as a lawyer, and I look at
8 things and try to be as logical as I can, and I know
9 you, your group, the Army Corps has taken a lot of
10 heat for the extension of the time of your
11 evaluations and your report. However, I must say
12 that that time, I think, in the end -- at the end of
13 the day is going to be the savior and the effort
14 that you put into it in preventing significant
15 litigation for this case -- this project.

16 The thoroughness of that, the ability
17 for you to dissect the entire project in bits and
18 pieces, and at the end of the day when you look at
19 the Stoughton line, and you realize that it's only
20 impacting one half acre of wetlands is significant.

21 And I think that everyone should be
22 grateful for the opportunity that you have given
23 us to review those documents and to take a look at
24 the opportunity -- the opportunities that exist; and

1 I would just say to you the environment will not
2 be hindered or would not be affected to the degree
3 if it went down to the Attleboro line or the
4 Middleborough line. The most effective, both
5 environmentally and economically, is the Stoughton
6 line; and I would just say from the history of the
7 Army Corps and if anybody understands the economic
8 impact of a significant state and federal
9 infrastructure development it is the Army Corps.

10 I said it during my most recent campaign,
11 if you look about 25 miles to the east of us, the
12 Cape Cod Canal, those bridges were built before we
13 even had highways, before most people even had cars.
14 The idea now that we're going to develop some type
15 of commuter rail all the way down to New Bedford
16 when every other area has it, it's not novel. It is
17 simply the most effective way for our state to
18 develop, and it's the most effective way for our
19 community to seek serious, serious economic
20 development, something that will tie us into Boston.

21 I hope that you seriously consider the
22 Stoughton line. I think it's the most effective way
23 environmentally and economically; and I gratefully,
24 on behalf of my constituents, thank you for making

1 such a thorough document that's going to push this
2 thing forward. Thanks again for your time and
3 efforts.

4 And, Kristina Egan, I can't thank you
5 enough for your efforts and your ability to be fair
6 and impartial throughout the whole process.

7 MR. ROSENBERG: Thank you, sir.

8 (Applause.)

9 MR. ROSENBERG: The next speaker is
10 Mayor Charles Crowley. The Mayor will be followed
11 by Jean Fox.

12 MAYOR CHARLES CROWLEY: Thank you very
13 much. It's a pleasure to be here to speak to you
14 again on my support, my enthusiastic support for
15 South Coast Rail for Southeastern Massachusetts.

16 It is -- we look forward in Taunton to
17 be the gateway to the South Coast because the one
18 thing that I've emphasized here everyone talks about
19 it having the benefit it will be for us here down
20 in the South Coast to get to Boston to enjoy the
21 amenities there, but I think there's so many
22 qualities in Southeastern Massachusetts that we
23 believe that many people from Boston should be able
24 to come down to enjoy those qualities that we have

1 down here, the attractions down here. Let's expose
2 those elements in here, in southeastern Mass., to
3 the people in Boston, and I think they'll enjoy what
4 we have down here.

5 But I'm enthusiastically in support,
6 along with my constituents, for the Stoughton Route,
7 the direct Stoughton Route. It has been a railroad
8 bed, a railroad coming through there since 1845, all
9 the way down to the last train in 1959, the last
10 passenger train. It's gone through the Hockomock
11 Swamp. It's not like we're putting a path through
12 the swamp that has been, you know, on a virgin type
13 of swamp area. It's been there since 1845, and far
14 more detrimental locomotives, from an environmental
15 standpoint, than they have today. So we believe
16 that's the most attractive route.

17 If it takes me an hour and 15 minutes to
18 go through one of these obscure routes like Attleboro
19 and the Whittenton Alternative to get to Boston, and
20 it's quicker for me to get the car, I'm going to
21 still take the car; so, all the investment will be
22 worth nothing.

23 It makes sense to build the direct route
24 through the Stoughton Route, and that's the one we

1 enthusiastically endorse. The Attleboro Route has
2 15 grade crossings. If we were to take that, plus
3 the time element there, it would devastate our
4 community as it would crisscross the area where -- a
5 highly congested area where the houses are virtually
6 as close as if you put the train down the corridor
7 here. The houses are right there. You can stick
8 your hand out the train, you'll probably hit the
9 houses. The mitigation efforts on that would be
10 enormous, in my opinion.

11 The Whittenton Alternative is 14 grade
12 crossings in our city and crisscrosses the city. It
13 would interfere with public safety response
14 vehicles, ambulances, and so forth like that in our
15 community.

16 The Stoughton Route only has five grade
17 crossings, and it adds two stations, one for the
18 downtown area, the historic district, where it would
19 be, as well as the regional station behind the
20 Target store. It would allow people to be able to
21 take advantage of this, not only locally but
22 regionally.

23 I think it's the best thing that's ever
24 happened there. I applaud the Governor for taking

1 the initiative to put his efforts and his money
2 where his mouth is. He's been very refreshing.

3 And also, Kristina Egan, she's been a
4 champion of this project, and I applaud her efforts
5 too.

6 I thank you, and count me as absolutely
7 in favor of this, along with our 56,000 people from
8 the City of Taunton.

9 Thank you.

10 MR. ROSENBERG: Thank you, sir.

11 (Applause.)

12 MR. ROSENBERG: Our next speaker will be
13 Jean Fox, who will followed by Jane Gonsalves.

14 JEAN FOX: Thank you. I am Jean Fox,
15 Freetown Selectman, resident of Freetown, and I'm
16 also with the Greater New Bedford Workforce
17 Investment Board.

18 I want to thank you very much for
19 inviting us all here, for having this hearing. I am
20 personally in favor of an electric train along the
21 Stoughton Route.

22 I'm not in favor of any extension of the
23 public comment period as all salient information has
24 been available since the fall of 2009, with little,

1 if any, new information since that time being made
2 available. Any delay will negatively impact access
3 to important federal funding.

4 South Coast Rail is South Coast
5 Renaissance. It's the rebirth of this nation's
6 vitality and promise. It means accessibility. It
7 means jobs. It opens up the region to tremendous
8 economic development potential, connecting employers
9 and businesses to our most noteworthy resource, our
10 human resource. For the first time in close to a
11 century, it provides a public link between the South
12 Coast and the rest of the state.

13 For the region's workforce and economy,
14 commuter rail is a boon. It offers jobs,
15 transportation options, reciprocal connectivity,
16 and an important economic shot in the arm with
17 implications that stretch far beyond the South
18 Coast.

19 For station sites, South Coast Rail has
20 a chance to undertake smart growth -- smart growth
21 strategies that weave development with cultural
22 heritage all within the parameters of community
23 engagement and environmental stewardship, through
24 the identification of priority development and

1 priority protection areas.

2 South Coast Rail has already proven its
3 mettle, bringing key stakeholders to the table,
4 promoting smart growth, assessing public transit in
5 the aggregate, rather than in silos, encouraging
6 extensive public comment and input. Technical
7 assistance support has allowed Freetown and other
8 communities to move ahead with transit-oriented
9 design and development.

10 New Bedford has three bridges that are
11 being renovated and readied for the train thanks to
12 TIGER grant funding, obtained through South Coast
13 Rail, and for the 31 communities involved, extensive
14 examination of impacts and benefits has been
15 accomplished.

16 Thanks to the efforts of the Governor,
17 the Lieutenant Governor, Kristina Egan, SRPEDD and
18 the South Coast Rail Task Force, as well as all the
19 communities, we are where we are, and we need to
20 continue the momentum.

21 I am strongly in favor of the Stoughton
22 Alternative, and I thank you for this extensive
23 study, and we're ready to move forward.

24 MR. ROSENBERG: Thank you, ma'am.

1 (Applause.)

2 MR. ROSENBERG: Next speaker, Jane
3 Gonsalves who will be followed by David Kennedy.

4 JANE GONSALVES: Good evening. I'm Jane
5 Gonsalves. I'm a member of the New Bedford City
6 Council.

7 I'm here to speak in favor of South
8 Coast Rail, and, in particular, the Stoughton Route.
9 I'd like to advise you that the New Bedford City
10 Council has already gone on record in support of
11 South Coast Rail and the Stoughton Route, and if you
12 haven't seen the letters yet, you should be seeing
13 them shortly. We took a vote on that at our last
14 City Council meeting, one of many votes.

15 The City Council of New Bedford has been
16 a strong, staunch supporter of the rail extension to
17 Southeastern Massachusetts. It certainly is an
18 important economic development tool for this area.
19 It will give us the ability to seek more work
20 opportunities in the Boston area. The route, as you
21 know, according to the documents that have already
22 been published, has less environmental impact than
23 other routes and also a quicker travel time.

24 It is a critical, critical piece of our

1 economic recovery in this area, and I consider it a
2 matter of economic justice for this area, since New
3 Bedford/Fall River are the only cities of their size
4 that do not have access to mass transportation in
5 the form of rail in the State of Massachusetts.

6 I'd also say that the City Council is
7 not in favor of an extension of time for this
8 process. We believe that those documents having
9 been available on the website since the fall of 2009
10 have given the public adequate opportunity to make
11 comment at this time; and, further, that the delay
12 and extension of time would affect South Coast
13 Rail's ability to access federal transportation
14 funding, and we appreciate your meeting with us in
15 New Bedford, so we can give you our comments here.

16 And I also want to comment on Kristina
17 Egan's wonderful ability to work on this project and
18 gather support and work to make it a reality.

19 Thank you.

20 MR. ROSENBERG: Thank you, ma'am.

21 (Applause.)

22 MR. ROSENBERG: The next speaker is
23 David Kennedy, who will be followed by Derek Santos.

24 DAVID KENNEDY: Good evening, and thank

1 you. My name is David Kennedy, and I appear this
2 evening as a life-long resident of New Bedford,
3 currently serving as the City Planner.

4 I wish to express my strong support for
5 the recently completed South Coast Rail DEIR,
6 prepared by the Army Corps. This report is probably
7 the most thorough evaluation of a proposed
8 transportation initiative that I have ever reviewed
9 in my 35 years of public service.

10 Fifty years ago, the intent of public
11 rail service was simply to connect New Bedford to
12 Boston. The current proposal seeks to establish new
13 economic opportunity along the entire 50-mile
14 corridor. The proposed commuter rail service is
15 being intentionally planned to maximize economic
16 benefit to all 31 communities along its route. This
17 initiative overcomes long-standing environmental
18 justice issues by reestablishing transportation
19 equity to the South Coast just as other gateway
20 communities have benefitted from statewide.

21 The DEIR examines, in great detail, how
22 the most practicable environmental alternative, the
23 proposed Stoughton Electric Alternative is the least
24 damaging solution in creating job access, lessening

1 urban and suburban sprawl, and anticipating the
2 consequences of impending climate change on a
3 regional level.

4 with the uncontrollable rise in fuel
5 prices, there's no better time in American history
6 than the present to move this transportation project
7 forward.

8 The Corridor Planning Study underwent
9 a robust civic engagement process, meeting in over
10 100 different settings while examining dozens of
11 alternative routes, economic variables, and
12 scenarios.

13 It appears that the Stoughton
14 Alternative has risen as the preferred, most
15 practical alternative, affording convenient,
16 reliable Boston access within 70 minutes.

17 New Bedford has recently completed a
18 comprehensive master plan. Consistent with this,
19 plan abundant reference to the reestablishment of
20 commuter rail is acknowledged in the transportation,
21 economic, and educational sections. This particular
22 rail project will complete the City's intermodal
23 port to rail capacity.

24 The City has also begun a long-awaited

1 rezoning process to become consistent with this
2 proposed rail corridor plan. This effort has
3 produced two transit-oriented development sites here
4 in New Bedford.

5 In closing, I respectfully urge you and
6 the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental
7 Affairs to support this Stoughton Alternative as the
8 Corps continues onward towards the initiation and
9 swift completion of a Final EIR.

10 MR. ROSENBERG: Thank you, sir.

11 (Applause.)

12 MR. ROSENBERG: Our next speaker will be
13 Derek Santos, who will be followed by George Smith.

14 DEREK SANTOS: Good evening. My name is
15 Derek Santos.

16 I'm here speaking tonight not only as a
17 life-long resident of New Bedford but an incredibly
18 proud resident of the City, on behalf of Matthew
19 Morrissey, the Executive Director of the NBEDC, who
20 is this evening with an expert team from the EDA,
21 who are here in New Bedford exploring the connection
22 of our fishing industry and its impact on our
23 overall economic environment and growth here in New
24 Bedford.

1 The New Bedford Economic Development
2 Council would like to take this opportunity to
3 provide comment on the Draft Impact Statement for
4 the South Coast Rail Project, proposed by the
5 Massachusetts Department of Transportation.

6 The EDC fully supports South Coast Rail,
7 and specifically supports the proposed Stoughton
8 Electric Alternative as the most viable alternative,
9 with the least impact to wetlands and wildlife.

10 As the lead economic development agency
11 for the City of New Bedford, the NBEDC has a mission
12 to work in partnership at the city, state, and
13 federal levels to promote sustainable job retention
14 and creation for New Bedford citizens.

15 To achieve this mission, we are
16 implementing a balanced, aggressive, and
17 multifaceted growth strategy of which the
18 reestablishment of commuter rail service to Boston
19 is a critical component.

20 As such, this project is a central
21 element to our transportation goals outlined in the
22 city's master plan, New Bedford 2020, and will serve
23 as a catalyst for private investment and job
24 creation for decades to come.

1 The proposed Stoughton Electric
2 Alternative will spur targeted economic growth along
3 the entire corridor, creating 2,000 jobs and 228
4 million in private investment in New Bedford alone
5 by the project's completion in 2030.

6 Today we are now constructing three rail
7 bridges for the project through TIGER grant program
8 funds and are implementing new zoning in the areas
9 of two New Bedford station locations that will
10 promote the development of more than 1,700 new
11 housing units, as well as 750,000 square feet of new
12 commercial space.

13 New Bedford and Fall River have long
14 been an underserved region of the state, and the
15 proposed Stoughton Electronic Alternative will
16 support smart growth in urban centers, help protect
17 green fields from development, and provide faster
18 service that serves the greatest amount of
19 passengers.

20 Finally, this project has been fully
21 studied, is well planned, and under the leadership
22 of Governor Patrick, has had a thoughtful civic
23 engagement as a central element to its advancement.

24 We urge that the Final EIS and EIR

1 address only the Stoughton Electric Alternative, as
2 we begin to focus hopefully on the construction of
3 this line from New Bedford to Taunton as soon as
4 possible.

5 Thank you.

6 MR. ROSENBERG: Thank you, sir.

7 (Applause.)

8 MR. ROSENBERG: Next speaker, George
9 Smith, followed by Raymond Medeiros.

10 GEORGE SMITH: Good evening. Welcome to
11 this great City of New Bedford. My name is George
12 Smith, currently last eight years, Chairman of the
13 Planning Board of the City of New Bedford. Prior to
14 that, I was City Council for eight years, and a
15 citizen of this terrific city.

16 My comments would be probably before any
17 of the lights come on, but I just want to thank you
18 again for being here. This is a really, really
19 important issue for this City of New Bedford.

20 First of all, I'd like to put my support
21 behind -- strongly support the Stoughton Electric
22 Alternative. A 70-minute trip is critical to ensure
23 ridership and the success of a commuter rail service
24 to the South Coast.

1 The South Coast is not just about
2 getting to jobs in Boston. It's about connectivity
3 and opening the South Coast region for everyone to
4 enjoy.

5 We have a terrific university, the
6 University of Massachusetts here. We have Bristol
7 Community College. We probably have some of the
8 best beaches besides Cape Cod in the area. There's
9 so many things in New Bedford that people can't get
10 to because we do not have the rail.

11 I don't want to give you my age. I'm
12 67 years old. I'm probably not the oldest guy in
13 the building, but I can remember going down to the
14 old train depot we had in New Bedford many years ago
15 and seeing the train there. So it goes back some
16 time. But the train did come through New Bedford,
17 and we're looking forward to it coming again.

18 As we mentioned, and it's been mentioned
19 by several people, the master plan, 47 years this
20 city was without a master plan. It was adopted by
21 the planning board in November of 2010.

22 So we do have a master plan, and in that
23 master plan, rail was discussed; and the next step
24 of the master plan, the planning office will

1 undertake a complete revision of the city's zoning
2 code, including the recommendation to establish a
3 transit-oriented development at whale's Tooth and
4 King's Highway, New Bedford's two local station
5 locations, a recommendation from the South Coast
6 Economic Development and Land Use Corridor Plan that
7 will protect and preserve our priority preservation
8 areas while enhancing our priority development
9 areas.

10 Again, I want to thank you very much for
11 coming to this great City of New Bedford, and I
12 appreciate anything you can do ahead of time to get
13 this passed.

14 Thank you.

15 MR. ROSENBERG: Thank you, sir.

16 (Applause.)

17 MR. ROSENBERG: Next speaker, Raymond
18 Medeiros who will be followed by Roy Tridib.

19 Raymond Medeiros.

20 Thank you, sir.

21 Sir, you will be followed by Roy Tridib.

22 RAYMOND MEDEIROS: Good evening. My
23 name is Ray Medeiros. I've been a citizen of New
24 Bedford all my life.

1 And I think the only route is a
2 Stoughton Route through the Hockomock Swamp. That's
3 the only route. The Attleboro route, forget it, and
4 the buses, they shouldn't be considered. Nobody
5 wants to go to Boston in a bus.

6 Another thing I'd like to say is that
7 these people that use the environmental excuses in
8 the Hockomock Swamp, no matter what they do there,
9 Mother Nature has its way of protecting it and
10 bringing everything back the way it was.

11 And as far as animals go, soon as you
12 make noise in there with big equipment, these
13 animals, they're gone.

14 Now, there was a woman she wrote in
15 tonight's paper she mentioned the trains are going
16 to affect the wells. How's that going to be?
17 Everybody's well's near the railroad tracks? And
18 she also complained, of course, of the environmental
19 problems in the swamp.

20 These people from Easton, they're just
21 against this thing coming to New Bedford. They're
22 all using excuses, and I don't think we should put
23 up with it.

24 I just hope that this is successful. I

1 don't think I'll live to see it. I'm too old, but
2 my grandchildren will. So that's why I come in here
3 to give my pieces of mind because I don't think I'll
4 see it. I'm too old.

5 Thank you.

6 MR. ROSENBERG: Thank you, sir.

7 (Applause.)

8 MR. ROSENBERG: Our next speaker is
9 Roy Tridib, who will be followed by Ronald
10 R-E-H-E-A-U-M-E, Rheaume.

11 RONALD RHEAUME: Rheaume.

12 TRIDIB ROY: Thank you. I am T.K. Roy
13 Tridib or Tridib is my first name. I am a retired
14 faculty of U. Mass. Dartmouth, and I am speaking on
15 my behalf, but I know in my heart, I represent the
16 sentiments of thousands of residents through the
17 faculty, the families, students, and the parents,
18 and other community members of this area.

19 AS I -- I sincerely thank both the
20 committees for having these public hearings on the
21 South Coast Rail Project to collect information
22 regarding the impact of the project on the
23 environment and the economy and other implications.

24 AS a resident of this area for more than

1 three decades, I honestly and strongly believe that
2 the South Coast Rail is not only a need but a
3 necessity for this region to grow and continue with
4 its full potential to the States of Massachusetts,
5 Rhode Island, and the nation as a whole.

6 why I believe so. Well, I have a few
7 points that I have written down, and I have to watch
8 the light there, but it is off right now, but
9 I -- just remind me when my time is over. If I
10 have -- if I need extra time, I'll give it to the
11 other committee.

12 Number one, it will provide an
13 environment friendly and economic transportation
14 system between this region and Boston, Route 128
15 belt and beyond. It will reduce pollution from the
16 thousands of commuting vehicles now burning fossil
17 fuel. That means less carbon emissions and less
18 footprint.

19 Number two, it will also reduce the
20 dependence of imported oil, which is a scarcity
21 these days, and it will save millions of gallons of
22 gasoline each year that is used currently by the
23 commuters in cars and buses.

24 Number three, South Coast has a large

1 population of skilled workers such as trained
2 plumbers, carpenters, welders, electricians, masonry
3 workers, painters, landscapers, house estimating
4 experts, electronic and computer technology trained
5 technicians, graduating from the local vocational
6 schools and community colleges of this area.
7 There's a valuable human resource. The workforce
8 will be available to work in Boston and Route 128
9 belt area, where there is a dire need of these
10 services of such a hard-working and skilled
11 workforce.

12 These workers will have a better earning
13 from such employment, and spending their money in
14 this area will inject more economic power to the
15 community of this area, and it will improve the
16 quality of life.

17 This is a win-win situation for both
18 Boston and the Route 128 belt as well as the
19 community of this city.

20 Number four, it will bring tourists from
21 different areas. South Coast is endowed with
22 beautiful sight-seeing attractions, with its nice
23 clean city beaches, rivers, and creeks, ponds, and
24 parks, strewn over --

1 MR. ROSENBERG: Thank you, sir. Thank
2 you. I would like to invite you to go see our
3 stenographer in the hallway --

4 TRIDIB ROY: Sure.

5 MR. ROSENBERG: -- so you may finish
6 your statement.

7 TRIDIB ROY: Thank you.

8 MR. ROSENBERG: And I'm pleased if you
9 have a written statement, please send it on before
10 May 27th.

11 Thank you.

12 TRIDIB ROY: Thank you.

13 (Applause.)

14 MR. ROSENBERG: The next speaker will be
15 Ronald Rheaume. Please pronounce your name for me
16 and set me straight, sir, and you will be
17 followed --

18 RONALD RHEAUME: I will set you
19 straight. Ronald Rheaume.

20 MR. ROSENBERG: Rheaume. Thank you,
21 sir.

22 And you will be followed by Peter Hanes.

23 RONALD RHEAUME: Okay. Thank you for
24 this opportunity. My name is Ron Rheaume. I'm a

1 representative with the New England Regional Council
2 of Carpenters. I'm also a person who is a
3 representative of the Southeastern Mass. Building
4 Trades here.

5 I don't know if you know, but there are
6 thousands of people every day who drive to Boston.
7 I personally drove to Boston for two years straight
8 every single day, leaving my home at 4:30, 5:00 in
9 the morning, to get to work at 7:00 in Boston, and
10 facing a two-hour ride home at night when I left
11 Boston at 3:30 in the afternoon.

12 During that time, in those two years,
13 talk about stress, driving with people doing
14 80 miles an hour, drinking coffee, putting on
15 makeup, and talking on the phone is not something
16 that is very conducive to a smooth day. The ride
17 home was equally as stressful, hours and hours, or
18 if there was an accident on the road or if it was
19 raining or snowing it was just terrible.

20 I literally quit my job after two years
21 of that, after seeing a number of deaths on the
22 highway, I just could not deal with that.

23 So this is personally to me it's a
24 quality of life issue for the people of the South

1 Coast. Being able to sit on a train, read the
2 paper, drink a coffee, for the ladies put their
3 makeup on, talk on the phone, all much safer than
4 doing it driving 80 miles an hour, up Route 24.

5 We talked about the environmental
6 impact. I want to talk about the economic impact as
7 well. The South Coast here is poised for great
8 growth. There's a 300-acre bio park opening up in
9 Fall River. First construction should probably
10 start in the fall, and there are a number of
11 projects that, you know, are lined up for the future
12 for the South Coast.

13 I just think it's totally important and
14 extremely important that we receive the economic
15 justice and the respect that we should have to be
16 able to go anywhere like anyone else in the state on
17 a train, an electric train, through Stoughton.

18 Thank you.

19 MR. ROSENBERG: Thank you, sir.

20 (Applause.)

21 MR. ROSENBERG: Next speaker, Peter
22 Hanes, who will be followed by Brian Gomes.

23 PETER HAWES: Peter Hawes, New Bedford.
24 Yes, I'd like to support the electric

1 rail through the Stoughton Route, and I don't see
2 really any reason for any more delay. I think if
3 we're -- we can save 300,000 car miles a day, that
4 we need to think seriously about that and get this
5 approved as soon as possible.

6 MR. ROSENBERG: Thank you, sir.

7 (Applause.)

8 MR. ROSENBERG: The next speaker, Brian
9 Gomes who will be followed by Michael Jolliffe.

10 BRIAN GOMES: Thank you very much. I'm
11 Brian Gomes, and I'm a Councillor-at-Large here in
12 the City of New Bedford. It's my home. It's been
13 my home all my life.

14 New Bedford deserves to have the rail
15 here. The people of this city have waited so long.
16 We've been deprived of things that other communities
17 have that have such a rail system. The City of New
18 Bedford can be a showcase to those that live in
19 Boston and outside as they come to the Commonwealth
20 of Massachusetts.

21 For too long has the rail been talked
22 about and not achieved. You have that opportunity.
23 We are asking you. It is so important to our
24 recovery. As we progress in this economic situation

1 that has hit the whole country, we look to recover.
2 It's part of our plan.

3 I know the administration has worked
4 very hard under the direction of Mayor Lang, and
5 there's been others before that. There was dates
6 that have been set. The dates should be set now to
7 bring the train to the City of New Bedford. The
8 City of New Bedford deserves it.

9 And while I have the opportunity I stand
10 here, Kristina Egan, if you're here, the City
11 Council would like to thank you or whoever is
12 responsible for the wall that we talked about when
13 you came to City Council along Purchase Street that
14 now will have the look of a rail the way it's
15 supposed to be and whoever was responsible for that,
16 thank you very much and those of your party.

17 Again, the City of New Bedford deserves
18 that rail. We would hope that you would move and do
19 the things that have to be done in order to bring it
20 here because, you know, there's some frogs that may
21 be relocated or some animals or whatever, but,
22 again, as the gentleman said that spoke, the elderly
23 gentleman just a moment ago so many people back, he
24 said that he would like to ride that rail, but he's

1 not sure that it will be here, but he wants it for
2 his grandchildren. We want it for him. He deserves
3 that, to ride on that rail. He's waited a long
4 time. The City of New Bedford has.

5 Thank you very much for the opportunity.

6 (Applause.)

7 MR. ROSENBERG: Thank you, sir. Next
8 speaker Michael Jolliffe, who will be followed by
9 Richard Connor.

10 MICHAEL JOLLIFFE: My name is Michael
11 Jolliffe. I actually am a civil -- trained as a
12 civil engineer, and I want to raise some issues
13 which have come up.

14 And, first of all, I'm certainly in
15 favor of the Stoughton Electric Line. There's no
16 question an electric train, as is demonstrated in
17 your presentation, is -- accelerates and decelerates
18 much faster than a diesel train, and if you look at
19 the timing between Boston and various locations, in
20 fact, it is considerably longer to go on the diesel
21 train than the electric train.

22 On top of that, really speed is an
23 important issue as I hear it from my friends who
24 travel to Boston every day. If you go up in the

1 morning during rush hour, it's going to take you
2 anywhere from an hour and 30 minutes to even two
3 hours. My wife, in fact, took two hours getting up
4 there at -- leaving at eight o'clock in the morning.
5 So it is a problem. So speed is an issue.

6 So one of the big issues is the number
7 of stops you have. A friend of mine in France tells
8 me it takes seven minutes for a stop on the TGV.
9 Here I would think every stop is worth five minutes,
10 which means if you stop ten times between New
11 Bedford and Boston, that's 50 minutes, which is a
12 lot of time.

13 So I think there are approaches where,
14 in fact, you do have faster trains and then shuttles
15 between the stations to the transfer stations, which
16 are at high speed that you have an opportunity for
17 everyone to get to Boston in less than 50 minutes,
18 somewhere between 60 and 50 minutes if you follow
19 the speeds and so on that are recorded in your
20 document, the EIR.

21 On top of that, as you look at
22 the -- between the diesel and the electric, the
23 number of passengers that would take the electric
24 are more than the diesel, and that's a very

1 important factor. So you will get more passengers
2 which, in fact, will be a more economical approach
3 to creating this connection between Boston and New
4 Bedford, so. So that, from an economic point of
5 view, because of the number of those passengers you
6 attract, you'll be much better off.

7 One of the issues I think that is
8 important in your -- in the environmental issue is
9 only having one track in certain portions of this
10 rail connection. You need two tracks, and you're
11 talking really about 14 feet of dimension, as I read
12 it, on your report.

13 So it seems to me that that 14 feet of
14 the pond or whatever it is is a very, very small
15 proportion of the amount of wetlands that we have.

16 And, in fact, if you look at --

17 MR. ROSENBERG: Thank you, sir. Thank
18 you very much.

19 (Applause.)

20 MR. ROSENBERG: Our next speaker is
21 Richard Connor who will be followed by James Mathes.

22 RICHARD CONNOR: I'm Richard Connor. I
23 live in New Bedford, and I'm just speaking for
24 myself.

1 I want to commend Mass. DOT for their
2 careful analysis and conclusion that the Stoughton
3 Rail -- the Stoughton Rail is the way to go. I'm
4 convinced, and it has to be electric. That's a
5 no-brainer. That shouldn't even be open to debate.

6 And it will be used. I often want to go
7 up to Boston for this or that event, and then I sit
8 there and I think about that drive and the traffic
9 and the parking, and I don't go, you know, because,
10 you know, is the event worth all the stress of going
11 up there the three hours at least, going and coming?
12 And if there's a comfortable train that's reasonably
13 fast, I'm on it. I'm on board, and I think a lot of
14 other people will be on board. So we will get the
15 riders, and I hope you expedite this, and we get it
16 soon.

17 Thank you.

18 (Applause.)

19 MR. ROSENBERG: Thank you, sir.

20 The next speaker is James Mathes who
21 will be followed by Joseph Lopes.

22 JAMES MATHES: Hi, my name is Jim
23 Mathes, 303 Brownell Avenue in New Bedford.

24 I'm here tonight to offer my support for

1 the extension of commuter rail service to New
2 Bedford and Fall River, specifically for the South
3 Coast Rail Project.

4 Additionally, when you reach the
5 appropriate point in this process, I urge you to
6 select the so-called Stoughton Route because it will
7 provide the fastest commuter trip time and the most
8 environmentally -- and it's the most environmentally
9 sound alternative.

10 Further, I hope you will endorse the use
11 of electric trains as opposed to diesel-powered
12 engines so as to maximize the potential of our new
13 rail service.

14 Among my reasons for publicly commenting
15 on this project is because I'm a member of a
16 community that is doing everything it can to pick
17 itself up by its boot straps and improve our lot in
18 life, not only for ourselves, but also for future
19 generations. We are doing everything we can with
20 the resources available to us to make our part of
21 Massachusetts a better place to live, work, and
22 raise a family.

23 For too long now the South Coast region
24 of Massachusetts has been without the vital

1 transportation services afforded by commuter rail
2 service. This lack of service has adversely
3 impacted our region's economy and quality of life.

4 Ironically, the primary opponents of
5 South Coast commuter rail are people living north of
6 us who already have commuter rail service available
7 to them. For decades now they've mounted efforts to
8 deny our region from having a primary transportation
9 system they have been using and enjoying for years.

10 we've listened to their complaints about
11 not wanting South Coast commuter rail trains passing
12 through their towns, yet scores of residents from
13 those very towns who seek to block our efforts climb
14 aboard commuter rail trains every day, trains that
15 pass through other communities on their trips to and
16 from Boston.

17 To be blunt, it's annoying to be on the
18 receiving end of their rather unsophisticated do as
19 I say and not as I do message. Personally, I don't
20 care what they say, but I'm determined to be able to
21 do the same things they're able to do. Nothing
22 more; nothing less.

23 Transportation systems are primary
24 assets that support a community's economy. The

1 Cities of New Bedford and Fall River suffer some of
2 the highest unemployment rates in Massachusetts.
3 There are literally tens of thousands of people who
4 are out of work in our region. These are good,
5 hard-working people who want and deserve the same
6 opportunities to access jobs that are currently
7 available to our northern neighbors presently
8 enjoying the benefit of commuter rail service.

9 It's been a long time since residents
10 have had an opportunity to become involved in an
11 effort to bring commuter rail to our region. That's
12 why there's so many of us here tonight. By every
13 measure commuter rail will be the same powerful
14 economic tool for us as it is in every other Eastern
15 Massachusetts city and town that already has it. We
16 want it too. We need it, and we deserve it.

17 Thank you for visiting our community,
18 for requesting our input, and for listening to what
19 we have to say.

20 Thank you.

21 MR. ROSENBERG: Thank you, sir.

22 (Applause.)

23 MR. ROSENBERG: The next speaker, Joseph
24 Lopes, who will be followed by Randall Kunz.

1 JOSEPH LOPES: First of all, I want to
2 thank you for coming down here, Army Corps of
3 Engineers, and, Kristina Egan, for all that you've
4 done. You've really championed Governor Deval's
5 promise to bring commuter rail to the South Coast.

6 As a life-long resident and member of
7 the New Bedford City Council, if you live in New
8 Bedford for a great time, you're dealing with the
9 largest inequality, and that is the ability to take
10 a train to Boston. As James Mathes said and other
11 people have said, if you live in communities that
12 have it, you don't care about the have-nots. Well,
13 we're the have-nots, and this is for our voice to be
14 heard. So please bring commuter rail to the area.

15 Thank you.

16 MR. ROSENBERG: Thank you, sir.

17 (Applause.)

18 MR. ROSENBERG: Next speaker, Randall
19 Kunz, who will be followed by Melinda Ailes.

20 RANDALL KUNZ: Good evening. I'm
21 Randall Kunz. I chair the Southeastern Regional
22 Planning District. That's 27 towns from North
23 Attleboro down through Wareham.

24 The Commission unanimously approved a

1 letter, which will be forwarded to you, brief
2 extracts of which are SREPPD, which is the
3 Southeastern Regional Planning District. SREPPD has
4 been deeply involved in this project for a long,
5 long time.

6 SREPPD supports the Stoughton Route,
7 highly recommends electric, recommends against the
8 Whittenton Alternative, and commends speedy completion
9 of the analysis.

10 Thank you.

11 MR. ROSENBERG: Thank you, sir.

12 (Applause.)

13 MR. ROSENBERG: The next speaker Melinda
14 Ailes, who will be followed by Jeffrey Pontiff.

15 MELINDA AILES: Hi. I'm Melinda Ailes.
16 I'm from Mattapoisett and just speaking as a
17 citizen.

18 Thank you very much for being here
19 tonight and listening and thank you to Kristina for
20 all you've done over the many, many years.

21 I've heard that there have been requests
22 for an extension for the review period. I would
23 respectfully ask that you deny that request. We've
24 been waiting a very, very long time, and the

1 information has been available public and
2 transparent for well over a year.

3 I'd like to voice my support for the
4 South Coast Rail Project and the Stoughton Electric
5 Alternative.

6 As your report shows, the Stoughton
7 Alternative is clearly the Least Environmentally
8 Damaging Practicable Alternative for a project that
9 is critical for the economic development throughout
10 the entire region.

11 We need the rail as a key component of
12 smart growth and economic development, and to
13 rectify the decades of economic injustice that has
14 been obvious in this region.

15 Thank you.

16 MR. ROSENBERG: Thank you, ma'am.

17 (Applause.)

18 MR. ROSENBERG: The next speaker,
19 Jeffrey Pontiff, who will be followed by Kreg
20 Espinola.

21 JEFFREY PONTIFF: Jeff Pontiff, Brownell
22 Avenue, New Bedford. Good evening.

23 I grew up in Fall River. I lived in
24 Plymouth for 25 years. Prior to the commuter rail

1 coming into Plymouth, I listened to the NIMBY
2 rhetoric for years, and then I was able to enjoy the
3 quality of life that came when that line came into
4 Kingston. I also was one of those commuters that
5 went back and forth every day on Route 3 by myself.

6 Thirteen years ago, I moved to New
7 Bedford. I'm a commercial real estate broker. I've
8 watched over a hundred million dollars been invested
9 in just our downtown over the last 13 years. I've
10 watched our store front vacancy rates go from
11 70 percent of vacancy to 90 percent of occupancy.

12 I've watched this city go from, for me
13 personally, it was why would you ever move to New
14 Bedford to becoming one of the coolest -- and I can
15 use that, Jim, because I've got gray hair -- coolest
16 cities on the South Coast, and certainly in
17 Southeastern Massachusetts.

18 My point is this: I brokered probably a
19 good portion of the transactions that have occurred
20 in this city revolving -- involving those
21 developments, and I don't say that as bragging but
22 maybe just to give some credence to my comments.

23 I firmly believe -- and this is the
24 point I want to make -- that we will not sustain the

1 growth that we have had over the last 10, 13 years
2 unless we get a more affluent populous here, and the
3 only way -- and it's been proven by the other
4 gateway cities, as has previously been mentioned
5 tonight -- the way to do that is through commuter
6 rail; so, for me, it's plain and simple. For us to
7 continue on our success, we need that commuter rail.

8 So thank you.

9 Colonel, I might add seeing the castles
10 there, you're very welcome in New Bedford. I don't
11 normally mention this, but I'd like to take the
12 opportunity to say that I privately served the Corps
13 as a platoon leader and a company commander with the
14 39th Combat Engineers in Vietnam.

15 So thank you.

16 MR. ROSENBERG: Thank you, sir.

17 (Applause.)

18 MR. ROSENBERG: The next speaker is
19 Kreg Espinola, which will be followed by Candace
20 Heel -- Heald.

21 KREG ESPINOLA: Hi. I'm Kreg Espinola.
22 I'm a resident of the City of New Bedford. I think
23 that's kind of a tough act to follow there, but I'll
24 do my best.

1 I'd just like to start out by thanking
2 you all for coming today. It's incredibly important.
3 As you can hear from the testimony, this project is
4 incredibly important to the South Coast. I think
5 it's equally important to the rest of the state so
6 that they can be connected to us, as important it is
7 for us to be connected to them.

8 I'd like to mention about approximately
9 ten years ago, I think, I testified in Taunton at a
10 hearing for South Coast commuter rail. The issue
11 has been vetted. You know, I think Senator Montigny
12 had indicated it was 20 years ago that the issue had
13 come up. We vetted the issue over and over and over
14 again, and I think that the support is clear from
15 the testimony that you've heard today.

16 At the time, ten years ago I was
17 commuting to law school. It would have been great
18 to have commuter rail then. I was going to law
19 school in Boston. I don't think that I'd like to be
20 here ten years from now with no rail or 20 years
21 from now with kids that don't have the ability to
22 take rail to Boston. So we'd prefer the Stoughton
23 Alternative.

24 Thank you for coming down to New Bedford.

1 we appreciate it.

2 MR. ROSENBERG: Thank you, sir.

3 (Applause.)

4 MR. ROSENBERG: Next speaker, Candace
5 Heald followed by Bruce Duarte.

6 CANDACE HEALD: Good evening. Good
7 evening.

8 I read the executive summary of the
9 disseminated report from February 2011 with great
10 interest. For my reading the electric train to the
11 Stoughton pathway seems the clear alternative both
12 for the economic impact, the population served, with
13 the least disruption to domestic and business
14 pursuits.

15 I live in Mattapoisett. There's this
16 wonderful story about Oliver Wendell Holmes who was
17 a great jurist and a summer resident of
18 Mattapoisett. It's said that he took the train at
19 nine o'clock and ended up in his Cambridge office by
20 eleven, did his business, had lunch, and started
21 back at three, and arrived back at five. There was
22 this wonderful train called the Dude Special that
23 served this area, and that would be virtually
24 impossible to do now. There's not the technology.

1 There's not the time, and even if you use your car,
2 it would be virtually impossible to do that.

3 And the point is that the linkages
4 between residents, commerce, and cities of all size
5 has really been fractured; and so in this time of
6 great economic and environmental concern, I would
7 really urge the pathway, the Stoughton pathway and
8 the electric rail to kind of reconnect this area of
9 the South Coast with areas of commerce in cities
10 that were in the 19th century. We're not really
11 moving forward unless we do this. We've regressed
12 entirely.

13 Thank you very much.

14 (Applause.)

15 MR. ROSENBERG: Thank you very much.
16 Bruce -- I know I mispronounced your name, sir. I'm
17 sorry.

18 BRUCE DUARTE: You did a little bit.

19 MR. ROSENBERG: You will be followed by
20 Stephen Smith.

21 BRUCE DUARTE: The name is actually
22 Bruce Duarte, Jr. I'm a New Bedford City
23 Councillor. I represent -- proudly represent the
24 good folks from ward 4.

1 And I just wanted to say that I support
2 obviously this rail for everything that's been
3 stated, including the economic impact, including
4 jobs, including environmental justice, but for me,
5 more than that. I support it because not only do I
6 believe that this rail will connect the South Coast
7 to Boston, but also I believe that it will connect
8 Boston to the South Coast.

9 I believe that we have so much to offer
10 down here, with everything from festivals, to our
11 working waterfront, to the -- to me, the most
12 beautiful city in the South Coast. That's what I
13 believe, we and this project can do is connect the
14 state where it has not been connected before.

15 Thank you.

16 MR. ROSENBERG: Thank you, sir.

17 (Applause.)

18 MR. ROSENBERG: The next speaker,
19 Stephen Smith who will be followed by Joshua
20 Freeman.

21 STEPHEN SMITH: My name is Steve Smith,
22 and I'm Executive Director of Southeastern Regional
23 Planning District. Randall Kunz made the official
24 statement of our agency earlier, but I wanted to add

1 some personal observations.

2 Senator Montigny talked about studies
3 that have been done on this project looking at
4 various alternatives, going back to the early 1990s,
5 and I read all those studies. I've been involved
6 with all those studies, and they all at that time
7 raised hopes which turned out to be false in terms
8 of this project coming soon.

9 They had -- they studied different
10 alternatives, but there was one constant among all
11 of them, and that was they pointed out the
12 long-standing inequity, as Kristina referred to, if
13 this region was not served by commuter rail.

14 When Governor Patrick came in 2007, four
15 years ago, and announced that he was restarting the
16 process and -- and inviting the Corps of Engineers
17 to be involved, there was a collective groan in this
18 region that here we go again. We've been down this
19 route before. He did relieve our anxiety a little
20 bit by naming Kristina Egan as project manager; but
21 it's been four years now, you have released your
22 study, and I will say the wait has been well worth
23 it. The study is thorough. It may tell us what we
24 thought we knew, but you have left no stone unturned

1 and really looked at the alternatives very well.

2 A couple of points: One is you make it
3 very clear that from an operational standpoint, the
4 Stoughton Alternative is really the only one that is
5 feasible. The Attleboro, Middleborough, Rapid Bus
6 Alternatives simply do not work; and, secondly,
7 you've told us that the Stoughton Route has the
8 lowest environmental impact. We've been hearing a
9 lot to the contrary to that from our neighbors up in
10 the north, but, frankly, we should have known that
11 because as we would remind you, the trains ran that
12 route as recently as 1958.

13 So I want to applaud the work you've
14 done so far, but I want to make three points going
15 forward. First of all, in selecting your LEDPA,
16 please give great consideration to travel time and
17 an alternative that has the lowest travel time.

18 We don't, as Mayor Lang referred to,
19 want another iron horse, and there's a strong
20 correlation between travel time and ridership.

21 Secondly, you would think from what
22 we've heard the last couple of decades that the only
23 environmental issue associated with this project is
24 the Hockomock Swamp. Don't forget -- and -- and the

1 important other impacts: the greenhouse gas
2 emissions, the smart -- the important smart growth
3 benefits, and the urban revitalization benefits that
4 you've heard about this evening.

5 And, finally, don't delay any longer.
6 We've waited a long time. Please move forward as
7 quickly as possible.

8 Thank you.

9 MR. ROSENBERG: Thank you, sir.

10 (Applause.)

11 MR. ROSENBERG: Our next speaker is
12 Joshua Freeman who will be followed by Anne Louro.

13 JOSHUA FREEMAN: That's fine. Hi. I'm
14 Joshua Freeman. I'm from Raynham, born in Taunton,
15 and I'm speaking for myself.

16 I'd like to see a -- well, I applaud
17 Kristina. I'm glad you helped get the Army in here.
18 The Army gets things done.

19 And I'd like to see the US Congress show
20 a financial support of this. I want to see the
21 money here so it can get done.

22 I've been trying to start a new business
23 for a long time. I'm having an extremely difficult
24 time. I'd like to see financial support from

1 Congress for people like me to get stuff done.

2 I support the Stoughton Route. You
3 should get to New Bedford as quick as possible. The
4 electric train -- Mayor Lang was talking about the
5 Tokyo. They have a fast train there. I know when I
6 was -- after college I went to -- graduated U. Mass.
7 Dartmouth. I went to Spain, and when I was in
8 Madrid, I wanted to go to Seville. I took a train,
9 and it was -- I'm not sure if it was electric or
10 what it was, but all I know is I got there fast. It
11 was far superior to the train system here. I don't
12 see any reason why you can't build an advanced train
13 system like some parts of the world have.

14 Thank you.

15 MR. ROSENBERG: Thank you, sir.

16 (Applause.)

17 MR. ROSENBERG: Our next speaker, Anne
18 Louro who will be followed by Roger Stanford.

19 ANNE LOURO: Good evening. My name is
20 Ann Louro. I'm the Preservation Planner for the
21 City of New Bedford. I'm also a New Bedford native
22 and lifetime resident.

23 New Bedford strongly supports the
24 Stoughton Electric Alternative. Its 70-minute trip

1 is critical to ensure ridership and the success of
2 commuter rail service to the South Coast.

3 New Bedford also prefers the electric
4 alternative because it is the most flexible fuel
5 source as it can be converted from solar, wind, and
6 other potential energy sources in the future.

7 South Coast Rail is an issue of equity.
8 New Bedford and Fall River are the only cities of
9 their size and population that do not have commuter
10 rail access; yet, we continue to pay taxes, thus
11 supporting public transit for all other regions of
12 the Commonwealth.

13 South Coast Rail is not about just
14 getting to Boston. It's also for folks to get here
15 as well. New Bedford has many great historical,
16 cultural, and architectural assets, including but
17 not least the New Bedford Whaling National
18 Historical Park, the New Bedford Whaling Museum, the
19 Feast of the Blessed Sacrament, which is the largest
20 Portuguese feast in the world, and the Buttonwood
21 Park Zoo, one of America's finest small zoos,
22 according to the American Zoological Association.

23 If you go to any thriving community with
24 a strong sense of community in place, you will note

1 that public transportation is critical as it ensures
2 access for everyone to our special places.

3 This year, New Bedford was named a Dozen
4 Distinctive Destination by the National Trust for
5 Historic Preservation, and South Coast Rail is the
6 key to providing public transportation to these
7 significant historical and cultural resources.

8 In November of 2010, the New Bedford
9 Planning Board adopted the first city master plan
10 since 1964. It's called New Bedford 2020. With an
11 eye on the future, yet valuing our past, this
12 document strongly supports the South Coast Rail
13 Project and both the economic and transportation
14 sections.

15 Over 1,100 people participated in the
16 civic engagement process for this plan, across all
17 ages, races, and ethnicities, continually showing
18 support for commuter rail service to our region.

19 Lastly, I want to stress that this
20 project is about equity, regional connectivity, and
21 access for residents and visitors to experience our
22 unique, authentic, and distinctive region, not just
23 getting to Boston.

24 We firmly support the Stoughton

1 Alternative and urge the Army Corps not to extend
2 the comment period, as the technical documents that
3 are the core of the DEIS and DEIR were completed and
4 posted online in the fall of 2009.

5 Further delays continue to limit the
6 project's asset -- excuse me -- access to federal
7 transportation funding since South Coast Rail has to
8 be permitted in order to be eligible to apply for
9 such funding.

10 I thank you for this opportunity this
11 evening.

12 MR. ROSENBERG: Thank you, ma'am.

13 (Applause.)

14 MR. ROSENBERG: Our next speaker, Roger
15 Stanford will be followed by Irene Schall.

16 ROGER STANFORD: Good evening. My name
17 is Roger Stanford. I live here in New Bedford and
18 with my wife and law partner, Irene Schall, I
19 practice law here in New Bedford.

20 I want to relate a personal experience.
21 A couple months ago Irene and I went to Philadelphia
22 for a long weekend. We arrived at the
23 Philadelphia --

24 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Into the mike, please.

1 ROGER STANFORD: We arrived at the
2 Philadelphia Airport, and we proceeded from the
3 terminal to the baggage claim. We picked up our
4 bags and between the terminal and the baggage claim,
5 Philadelphia had commuter rail service that serviced
6 every one of the terminals. We boarded the train,
7 which took us in a fast and efficient manner into
8 Philadelphia. We exited at a train station that was
9 about a block from our hotel.

10 The purpose of what I'm saying is
11 twofold. Number one, this is not just an issue of
12 the South Coast cities and towns. It's also an
13 issue for the Boston metropolitan area. In order
14 for a city like Boston to thrive and grow, there
15 must be a way of getting people into and out of that
16 city.

17 Next, it's also not just an economic
18 issue, it is a quality of life issue. The
19 availability of the cultural, sporting, entertainment,
20 and educational opportunities need to be available
21 to people that can get there quickly, and that's the
22 Stoughton Rail Alternative.

23 The environmental alternative to
24 building the Stoughton Rail Alternative line is to

1 dump more and more cars onto Route 24, with a
2 negative environmental impact of requiring more and
3 more parking facilities in Boston, expanding the
4 number of lanes on Route 24, burning more and more
5 expensive gasoline, and polluting the air with that
6 gasoline.

7 Thank you.

8 MR. ROSENBERG: Thank you, sir.

9 (Applause.)

10 MR. ROSENBERG: Next speaker, Irene
11 Schall, who will be followed by David Dennis.

12 IRENE SCHALL: Thank you. My name is
13 Irene Schall. I'm a resident of New Bedford.

14 Thanks everyone for being here and
15 allowing us all to participate so constructively and
16 actively in tonight's hearing.

17 I'd like to echo the support for the
18 Stoughton line, for that route as well as for the
19 electric train.

20 And I'd like to simply put a face on
21 some of the comments that I think we all have shared
22 and the concerns we have about the economics and the
23 equality issues.

24 I've recently had the opportunity to

1 travel to both Fitchburg and Lawrence and see in
2 both of those communities their lovely commuter rail
3 stations. Of course, we don't have one.

4 I have also had the opportunity to speak
5 to public officials in the City of Quincy; and for
6 those of you who may not know, the City of Quincy
7 was right behind us in this last census count, and I
8 joke that they were nipping at our heels, so to
9 speak, and the officials said to me, well, it's all
10 about rail, and it's all about the Red line. It's
11 all about connectivity to Boston, and that's what we
12 want, and that's what we deserve.

13 On a personal note, I can say I have a
14 son who has traveled to and from Boston for three
15 years. He works actually just a little bit south of
16 Boston, in Quincy. Unfortunately for me, as his
17 mother, he is going to be moving to that area
18 because the commute is horrendous.

19 I, like most other parents, would love
20 to have my children settle close to me. New Bedford
21 is a wonderful place. He has commuted this way for
22 three years, and this was not his choice. It simply
23 is a reality of life. His work draws him to Boston.
24 He would love to be here. The rail would help him

1 do that and would help other people make the same
2 choices. Perhaps they'd like to work in Boston and
3 live in New Bedford or alternatively perhaps we can
4 attract more people to move to New Bedford who
5 haven't yet realized the tremendous advantages that
6 our area brings.

7 Thank you very much.

8 MR. ROSENBERG: Thank you, ma'am.

9 (Applause.)

10 MR. ROSENBERG: Next speaker, David
11 Dennis who will be followed by Jon Mitchell.

12 DAVID DENNIS: Hi. My name is David
13 Dennis, and I'm a local attorney in the other great
14 city just down the road here, Fall River.

15 I want to just to lend my voice to the
16 support here of many others that you've already
17 heard from tonight by supporting the project and
18 supporting the Hockomock Route for the electric
19 train coming down to the South Coast, and I'm not
20 going to mention all the same reasons, but the
21 environmental reasons, the economic, and the social
22 reasons that are so important to this area.

23 Indeed, as many -- again, as many other
24 people have said, we've all waited a very, very,

1 very long time; and unlike this gentleman here who
2 was a little bit older than I am -- I'm 56 years
3 old -- I'm hoping that I get to ride on the train;
4 but I'm very confident that with the support and the
5 leadership of our Governor, certainly Kristina Egan,
6 and her agency has done an absolutely terrific job
7 moving this project along, that it will be a
8 reality, and it will be a reality very, very, very
9 soon.

10 One comment that I would like to make
11 and a recommendation, in Fall River there's a tour
12 bus going to be located near Crab Pond, which is
13 also right near the Ponta Delgada gates on the
14 Battleship Cove. That's very close to what we call
15 Crab Pond down there. One consideration may be, at
16 least environmentally, that maybe that terminal
17 could be relocated not very far away, in an area
18 that it is now -- or formerly known as Corrugated
19 Box Company. That may mitigate some of the
20 environmental concerns that you may have.

21 Again, I just want to say thank you very
22 much for coming. We appreciate you being here. We
23 appreciate your thoroughness and your efforts.
24 Please expedite this project. New Bedford, Fall

1 River, all the surrounding cities and towns need the
2 project for all the reasons that are stated. We
3 waited a very, very long time. Sooner in this case
4 is better.

5 Thank you.

6 MR. ROSENBERG: Thank you, sir.

7 (Applause.)

8 MR. ROSENBERG: Our next speaker, Jon
9 Mitchell who will be followed by Henry Bousquet.

10 JON MITCHELL: Thank you, and good
11 evening. My name is Jon Mitchell. I'm a resident
12 of New Bedford.

13 I'm not going to cover the same economic
14 environmental and psychic arguments that we've heard
15 all night. I will note that what is striking about
16 all of them is that there is near unanimity over a
17 course of the last two hours. We've heard the same
18 thing over and over again. We didn't rehearse this
19 all together. What you're hearing is a real
20 consensus coming out of Southeastern Massachusetts
21 in favor of rail generally and the Stoughton
22 Alternative in particular.

23 Let me address one, I think, narrower
24 issue and perhaps somewhat whirling issue. As I

1 understand it, your charge this evening is to
2 evaluate the relative practicality of the
3 alternatives, and I can speak to that, even though
4 it's sort of in one narrow way, but I think in an
5 authoritative way in the sense that I've been for a
6 long time a commuter from New Bedford to Boston.

7 I'm employed as a federal prosecutor in
8 Boston, and it's a job -- my job is one that doesn't
9 exist down here. There isn't a federal courthouse
10 in New Bedford unfortunately, and so -- and I've
11 done that commute in any number of ways. I've taken
12 every possible mode of transportation. I drive for
13 the most part. I drive admittedly in an unsafe way
14 because I spend most of my time on a cell phone
15 because I can't otherwise justify an hour-and-30,
16 hour-and-45-minute commute each way without at least
17 getting some work done. I've taken the train out of
18 Lakeville many times, up to three or four times a
19 week, and I've done the bus route.

20 I mention all this because those
21 commutes, invariably the drive during rush hour, the
22 bus, and the train, when you combine all segments:
23 travel to the train stop, the train ride itself, and
24 then the walk to work are all roughly about an hour

1 and 45 minutes, and it isn't sustainable over the
2 course of a career, and we're talking now one of the
3 justifications for extending rail down here or
4 reestablishing rail is to give people career-long
5 jobs in Boston and to be able to live down here.
6 And as you look at the alternatives, the only one
7 that makes any sense at all because there is so
8 much -- it would be such a shorter commute is
9 Stoughton. It really is a no-brainer in that sense.

10 Attleboro, the bus route, the Whittenton
11 route all promise very, very long commutes that
12 people, speaking from experience, cannot sustain in
13 the long run; and so in that way when you couple
14 that fact with the fact that it promises a much
15 lower environmental impact, and it will be cheaper,
16 it really is -- the Stoughton Route is a no-brainer.
17 So I leave you with that.

18 Thank you.

19 MR. ROSENBERG: Thank you, sir.

20 (Applause.)

21 MR. ROSENBERG: The next speaker is
22 Henry Bousquet, who will be followed by Thomas
23 LaPointe.

24 HENRY BOUSQUET: Good evening, ladies

1 and gentlemen. My name is Henry Bousquet. I'm here
2 to speak on behalf of the people of my neighborhood
3 essentially.

4 I'm excited to finally get to speak
5 about the great potential that a South Coast Rail
6 line brings to our city. New Bedford was once a
7 mighty economic engine for the State of Massachusetts.
8 With our historic successes in whaling, textiles,
9 and fishing, we were the -- once an enormous bread
10 basket that helped grow our state for decades.

11 New Bedford has suffered the exodus of
12 over 40,000 plus jobs in the last 50 years. We, the
13 people of the South Coast and New Bedford, have paid
14 for billions of dollars in countless other
15 Massachusetts infrastructure projects.

16 We on the South Coast now ask the people
17 of our state to, please, consider helping us build
18 our 80- or 90-minute commute, preferably the
19 Stoughton Electric Route, commute to Boston, and
20 connect the histories of Boston to that of our New
21 Bedford's history for the future and for that future
22 of our children.

23 Thank you very much.

24 MR. ROSENBERG: Thank you, sir.

1 (Applause.)

2 MR. ROSENBERG: Next speaker, Thomas
3 LaPointe, who will be followed by Chuck Dade.

4 THOMAS LaPOINTE: Hi. My name is Tom
5 LaPointe. I'm a life-long resident of Fall River.

6 I commute 24 daily. It's a major
7 hassle. The City of Fall River's been waiting for
8 commuter rail for over 20 years.

9 The City's suffered economically because
10 of the lack of job opportunities there. The
11 commuter rail would improve that dramatically.

12 I would -- am strongly in favor of the
13 Stoughton Electric Alternative. I -- excuse
14 me -- the NIMBYism from some of the northern
15 communities is getting a little tiring as a delaying
16 tactic it seems. If they delay, they win, and it's
17 a little ironic particularly considering both
18 Stoughton and Easton are noted for beautiful
19 historic railroad stations; so, I appreciate the
20 Army Corps of Engineers' input on this.

21 I think the Hockomock Swamp issue is
22 minor. Particularly with the trestle construction,
23 I think it would have very minor impacts on wildlife
24 there, and, again, I strongly -- you know , the City

1 of Fall River needs commuter rail yesterday.

2 MR. ROSENBERG: Thank you, sir.

3 (Applause.)

4 MR. ROSENBERG: The next speaker, Chuck
5 Dade who will be followed by Hannah Martin.

6 CHUCK DADE: Hi. Chuck Dade, Hawthorn
7 Street, New Bedford.

8 I would say New Bedford's ready. I
9 mean, they've already started to build the bridges
10 and such. They're waiting for the other end of this
11 to happen, whether it's from Attleboro or Stoughton,
12 but you've already decided that Stoughton is the
13 best economic -- environmental way. The time factor
14 shows it's the most -- it's the best way, and beyond
15 that, you know, diesels are antiques. I mean to me
16 a diesel train would be a look-back. The only way
17 we can really green power our train is to have the
18 electric train because we have -- you know, we're
19 going into a solar now, and if we have electric
20 trains, we can plug into that.

21 Beyond that, New Bedford's ready for
22 that too. New Bedford has Cape Wind coming in. It
23 could probably be up and running by the time the
24 train's running, and if the state negotiated the

1 right deal, half the Cape Wind Power is still
2 available; so we could actually power -- power the
3 train partially at least with Cape Wind.

4 Let me see. To me, if you're going to
5 go up through Attleboro, you might as well go
6 through Providence and then you could go to New York
7 City and everywhere else, but that's another matter.

8 To me, the only reason for an extension
9 would be if you did come up with Attleboro because
10 then we'd have to find reasons to change your mind.

11 MR. ROSENBERG: Thank you, sir.

12 (Applause.)

13 MR. ROSENBERG: Thank you very much.

14 The next speaker, Hannah Martin.

15 Ms. Martin?

16 Ariane Martin?

17 David Oliveira.

18 Mr. Oliveira will be followed by Mark
19 Hess.

20 DAVID OLIVEIRA: Good evening. My name
21 is David Oliveira. I'm a resident of the Town of
22 Dartmouth. I'm also a commuter to Boston.

23 Like the previous speaker mentioned,
24 I've taken the bus. I've taken the train, and I

1 drive on many occasions. I would say that those are
2 not viable alternatives when considering the
3 Stoughton Rail.

4 The commuting time has gotten to be
5 intolerable. It's not good for families. It
6 takes -- it can wind up being a 12-hour day or
7 longer.

8 The Stoughton Route is going to become
9 an absolute necessity for this region. The incomes,
10 the wages that one can gain from Boston have
11 incredible impact on the environmental health of
12 this region.

13 The awful alternative is to move.
14 That's what I've seen happen in Washington, D.C. for
15 those that used to have an hour-and-a-half drive to
16 two-hour drive; and, yet, those that took the train
17 from west Virginia were able to sustain it over
18 lengthy careers.

19 The reinvestment of those wages and of
20 this project will lead to environmental enhancements
21 and a better quality of life for this region. And
22 when I talk about the congestion, that's after we
23 spent \$14 billion on the Big Dig, not before.

24 The Rapid Bus, I've always been a fan of

1 it. I think it's good for America as a whole. It's
2 quick, and it's cost effective, but in this case,
3 I'm disheartened to learn that it's -- it's not
4 financially feasible. It's not technically
5 feasible. I don't believe that it's second class
6 transportation. That's not why I oppose it. It's
7 just that it just won't work because of the 93
8 Route 3 split, and the costs involved with that. So
9 the electric alternative is faster. It offers
10 greater frequency of service and will be a huge
11 benefit.

12 In terms of environmental issues and
13 transportation issues, they often come into
14 conflict, but we have an obligation to properly
15 balance the needs of population growth, economic
16 growth, and environmental protection.

17 we did this with the additional runway
18 at Logan, and we did it with the Big Dig, and those
19 had awful environmental impacts, but ultimately we
20 had an obligation to the future, and those projects
21 moved forward.

22 Stoughton is a great congestion mitigation
23 project and has many positive benefits to the entire
24 Route 93 corridor.

1 Finally, I'd like to add that 11 years
2 ago, I asked the then Secretary of Environmental
3 Affairs about a NEPA study, and he said it was not
4 necessary; so here we are 11 years later, and,
5 please, no more delays.

6 Let's just wrap up the comment period
7 and move forward. We're going to be entering the
8 phase for the reauthorization of T Little, which
9 provides an opportunity to get federal money. We
10 have to have our ducks in a row to do that.

11 Thank you.

12 MR. ROSENBERG: Thank you, sir.

13 Next speaker, Mark Hess, who will be
14 followed by Len Coriaty.

15 MARK HESS: Thank you. My name is Mark
16 Hess. I'm a resident of New Bedford. I also work
17 for an owner and developer of housing. It has about
18 6,500 units between Charlotte, North Carolina, and
19 Burlington, Vermont; and my official position is in
20 support of the Stoughton Electric Route, and I'm
21 against postponing the comment period.

22 And in terms of my big picture opinion
23 on this project, this isn't just a South Coast
24 project. I mean, I'm down here because I believe in

1 the rail. I believe in what New Bedford has to
2 offer, but this is also an important project for the
3 State of Massachusetts. We have all sorts of
4 development pressures. We have problems with flight
5 and quality of labor from the high-cost living
6 areas, such as Boston, and here in New Bedford, in
7 the South Coast, we have a hard time creating
8 quality jobs and getting the investment in this
9 area. So, creating this link creates a more
10 efficient market between people in Boston who would
11 love to find -- the fair market rent after utilities
12 in New Bedford is about -- the HUD fair market rent
13 for 2011 is about \$750. You know, you're going to
14 pay at least double that in Boston for equivalent
15 housing.

16 So there is a lot of opportunity to
17 offer on an already existing urban infrastructure
18 without developing new housing very, very expensive
19 housing to build it in Boston with all sorts of
20 subsidies to service the growing needs of businesses
21 and workforce in Boston. Here we have something to
22 offer.

23 And, meanwhile, in terms of the social
24 justice front, in New Bedford, you have access to

1 more jobs and a quality workforce with the good work
2 ethic down here that simply needs a more efficient
3 connection to job opportunities in the Boston area;
4 and in terms of quality of life, you know, I spend
5 many days a week up in Boston myself, and I think
6 that having an opportunity to give to your family
7 and to your community is important, and when you
8 spend three hours in a car on your way home every
9 day, it's a major sacrifice, and I don't think that
10 it's -- it should be what we have to experience here
11 down in New Bedford. I would rather spend that time
12 with my family and in my community; and that's my
13 comment.

14 Thank you.

15 MR. ROSENBERG: Thank you, sir.

16 (Applause.)

17 MR. ROSENBERG: Next speaker, Len
18 Coriaty, who will be followed by Michele Paul.

19 LEN CORIATY: Good evening and welcome
20 to New Bedford.

21 Thank you for making this opportunity
22 available to us and thank you for all your work in
23 making the case for why commuter rail to the South
24 Coast makes so much sense.

1 I stand in support of commuter rail to
2 the South Coast, the Stoughton Alternative, and the
3 electric train; and I stand before you in three
4 capacities: a taxpayer, a parent, and the Executive
5 Director of the Greater New Bedford Workforce and
6 Investment Board.

7 A life-long resident of the South Coast,
8 I was born and brought up in Fall River. I
9 presently live in Dartmouth, and I work in New
10 Bedford, and I have traveled Route 24 for some
11 30 years, and the traffic on 24 has gotten worse and
12 worse and worse each year. There was a time you
13 could make it all the way down to Route 128. Now
14 you can get backed up from Brockton or Bridgewater
15 or Taunton, and then it's just a miserable ride
16 going and sometimes coming back. It's very
17 stressful. It does impact the quality of life for
18 the commuters that have to do the traveling.

19 As a parent, my son is a second-year
20 student in college in Boston, and he would come home
21 a lot more often, and my wife and I would love to
22 have him, if it was more convenient. Right now he
23 does come into Lakeville. Sometimes we pick him up
24 in Quincy, and sometimes we take him back and forth,

1 but that's an issue that a lot of parents in this
2 area have to deal with and students have to deal
3 with.

4 As a taxpayer, you've made a very
5 compelling case. It's a cost-benefit thing, and I
6 won't get into all of it, but it just clearly makes
7 a lot more sense that we -- and the benefits
8 outweigh tremendously the costs of not taking action
9 on this and doing that as quickly as we possibly
10 can.

11 And, finally, as Executive Director of
12 the Workforce Board, it is a jobs matter. It's
13 economic development as well as environmental issues
14 that would make a strong case for. Again, the
15 benefits far outweigh the costs.

16 So we would ask that you would work in
17 support of a commuter rail to the South Coast as
18 quickly as we possibly could have it.

19 Thank you.

20 MR. ROSENBERG: Thank you, sir.

21 (Applause.)

22 MR. ROSENBERG: Our next speaker,
23 Michele Paul who will be followed by Jeffrey Rocha.

24 MICHELE PAUL: Hello. My name is

1 Michele Paul. I'm here on behalf of the City of
2 Fall River, the Fall River Office of Economic
3 Development. I'm also a life-long resident of the
4 Town of Swansea, and I'm an environmental engineer;
5 and from each of these perspectives, I can
6 wholeheartedly support the electric route through
7 Stoughton.

8 I can, you know, echo all of the
9 sentiments and all of the reasons to come to the
10 South Coast and all of the reasons that we need
11 to -- to have that connectivity to Boston.

12 Economic development, just feeling like
13 we're actually part of the community of
14 Massachusetts. It's been a long time coming, and my
15 two favorite gateway cities of Fall River and New
16 Bedford cannot afford to have Lucy pull the football
17 from Charlie Brown any more.

18 MR. ROSENBERG: Thank you, ma'am.

19 (Applause.)

20 MR. ROSENBERG: Next speaker, Jeffrey
21 Rocha.

22 JEFFREY ROCHA: Good evening. My name
23 is Jeffrey Rocha. I am a CPA and resident of both
24 New Bedford and St. John, in the US Virgin Islands.

1 I wanted to approach this from a
2 different perspective for the Army Corps of
3 Engineers. Let you know you can get this done.

4 The island of St. John is 20 square
5 miles. It's three by seven. It's two-thirds US
6 National Park. Okay? In the wintertimes, we
7 transport 200,000 people a day through the national
8 park waters, through the national parks, so people
9 touch it, feel it, see it, smell it, and send them
10 right back over those federal park waters again
11 undamaged. Please don't let our neighbors to the
12 north let you believe for a minute it can't be done.
13 Because it can. And that same place up north is
14 where the traffic jam starts on Route 24. Okay?

15 Lastly, shortest distance between two
16 points is a straight line. Stoughton is the
17 straight line, and I was surprised it didn't happen
18 sooner. Cape Wind is here. It's coming. This is
19 the staging area for it. We have the power coming
20 in the form of electricity to operate the train
21 safely and efficiently.

22 Thank you.

23 MR. ROSENBERG: Thank you, sir.

24 (Applause.)

1 MR. ROSENBERG: Next speaker, Hannah
2 Martin.

3 Ariane Martin.

4 Ladies and gentlemen, is there anybody
5 here who did not -- who did not speak, did not fill
6 out a card to speak, or who wishes to speak now?

7 Please, sir, come on down.

8 when you come down to the microphone,
9 please state your name. If you would spell your
10 last name for our stenographer and provide us your
11 comment.

12 CHRISTIAN SMITH: My name is Christian
13 Smith. Do you need help with that?

14 (Laughter.)

15 CHRISTIAN SMITH: Okay. I'm the
16 President of GreenFleet. We're an after-school
17 program here in New Bedford. We encourage at-risk
18 youth to believe in their futures and to believe in
19 themselves through hard work, job skills, and
20 environmental stewardship.

21 Now, this rail project is an opportunity
22 for them. It's also an opportunity for
23 Massachusetts in the environmental sense. We're
24 going to take all these cars off the road.

1 Everybody's said all this before. We've heard it,
2 but this is important for my kids' futures, not only
3 in the respect that they're going to have a good
4 environment to be in, but they're going to have job
5 opportunities that are going to exist, not only in
6 New Bedford from what we bring in with the commuter
7 rail, but also the ability to stretch out and flap
8 their wings a little bit and get out of New Bedford
9 in order to find some work and to come back and be a
10 part, a meaningful part of this community.

11 So, I implore you, please, do everything
12 you can to make sure that we have an environmentally
13 sensitive electric rail running through Stoughton to
14 New Bedford.

15 Thank you very much.

16 MR. ROSENBERG: Thank you, sir.

17 Is there anybody here who has not spoken
18 that wishes to provide comment?

19 Yes, sir, please come down to the
20 microphone. State your name, spell your last name.

21 THOMAS SARGENT: Thank you. My name is
22 Thomas Sargent, S-A-R-G-E-N-T. I live in New
23 Bedford.

24 And I would like to register my support

1 for the Stoughton route, and all of the reasons that
2 have been explained and so forth. I say, you know,
3 let's get the show on the road.

4 Thank you.

5 MR. ROSENBERG: Thank you, sir.

6 (Applause.)

7 MR. ROSENBERG: Ladies and gentlemen, is
8 there anybody here who has not spoken but wishes to
9 provide comment?

10 Ladies and gentlemen, Lieutenant Colonel
11 Howell.

12 (Applause.)

13 LIEUTENANT COLONEL HOWELL: We have
14 heard a great many thoughtful statements this
15 evening. Careful analysis will be required before a
16 determination can be made and a decision rendered.

17 Again, written statements may be
18 submitted to the Corps of Engineers until 27 May
19 2011. They will receive equal consideration with
20 those presented tonight.

21 Each question or issue raised will be
22 addressed in our Final EIS regarding the Commonwealth
23 of Massachusetts South Coast Rail permit application.

24 We, the Corps of Engineers, extend our

1 appreciation to all who took the time to involve
2 themselves in this public review process.

3 And, finally, before I conclude this
4 hearing, I'd like to extend my appreciation to the
5 City of New Bedford, the Keith Middle School for the
6 use of this fine facility tonight, and the City of
7 New Bedford Police Department for their support and
8 protection.

9 Once again, thank you all for taking the
10 time to provide us with your thoughts, your
11 comments, and your concerns.

12 Good night and best travels.

13 (Applause.)

14

15 (At 9:19 p.m., the public hearing was
16 adjourned.)

17

18

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23

24

ORAL STATEMENTS

1
2
3 CHUCK DADE: Hi. My name's Chuck Dade,
4 D-A-D-E, and I live in New Bedford, Mass., a native
5 and long-time resident of the general area, and my
6 descendants are as well. I am a vet. My father was
7 a vet, and my great grandparents were the parents of
8 the largest veteran family in the country ever who
9 hence served in World War II.

10 Okay. I'm also an Army engineer, but it
11 happens to be in power generation. What I would
12 like to say is pretty simple. I'm just thinking if
13 they're thinking about changing the location to
14 Attleboro, as opposed to Stoughton, this is an idea
15 that I have been thinking about for a long time.
16 Attleboro would make it an even easier decision, I
17 would think, is that I think instead of having a
18 train go directly to Boston, we should have a train
19 that goes to Providence, because Providence is
20 already connected to Boston. Providence is
21 connected to New York. Providence is connected to
22 D.C., and all points connected to those points. So
23 I would think it would be a better expenditure of
24 federal dollars, both from the Nation's perspective

1 of access to the South Coast and Cape Cod and the
2 islands as well as South Coast, Cape Cod and the
3 Islands' access to the rest of the country if we had
4 a train that went to Providence, because they
5 wouldn't give us not only that, but it would give us
6 access to Providence, so you would be able to hop a
7 daily to Providence, if you live in Providence, and
8 back you wouldn't have to use a car, and you would
9 be able to have maybe a ten minute extra ride to
10 Boston to transfer, because there probably a high
11 speed train 20 minutes to Boston -- I mean to
12 Providence, and probably 40 minutes to Boston from
13 there. I just think that is the way we should go.
14 I don't think we should go directly to Boston. From
15 a federal perspective, I think we should go to
16 Providence and then to Boston. I think that's a
17 much better way of doing it once and for all.

18 I think that's good. Okay. Thank you.

19 well, I should add if you are going to
20 spend billions of dollars, you should get it right
21 the first time, not play catch-up to an old idea.
22 The old idea -- we have been fighting in this region
23 to be treated with equity to have train access to
24 get to Boston, and there has been a lot of -- the

1 general mentality, we're at that last hurdle to get
2 to Boston, but they may miss the boat to the bigger
3 idea of getting to New York, D.C. and Boston.

4 okay. Thank you.

5 SCOTT W. LANG: My name is Scott W. Lang.
6 I'm the mayor of the City of New Bedford. My last
7 name is spelled L-A-N-G. My address is 3 Stetson
8 Street, New Bedford.

9 I was elected in November of 2005 and
10 have been keenly focused on bringing rail to New
11 Bedford, Fall River, Taunton by way of the South
12 Coast Rail Project. I believe that it is an
13 absolutely vital transportation project for our
14 portion of the state, which is the fastest growing
15 region in Massachusetts.

16 I believe that it restores appropriate
17 freight service, as well as passenger service, by
18 way of a 21st century infrastructure project that
19 will bring not only economic development opportunities
20 for our area, but also fulfill a social, economic
21 and environmental justice agenda for Southeastern
22 Massachusetts. It will provide construction jobs in
23 its inception during a period in our economy when we
24 are struggling to get out of the worse recession

1 that we've had since the Depression.

2 It will then provide for detailed smart
3 growth type projects along the rail, which will lead
4 to enhancement of quality of life by way of better
5 housing stock, better commercial and retail
6 opportunities, and a transportation network that
7 will allow our citizens to travel efficiently,
8 inexpensively, and not only to the north, towards
9 Boston, but also from Boston to our area. It is a
10 project that in this area of the state has been
11 discussed for the past 30 years.

12 In the late '50s rail service for
13 passengers ceased in this area, and the people of
14 Southeastern Massachusetts have desired a new look
15 and then a project since the mid '80s.

16 Governor Dukakis, Governor Weld, Governor
17 Cellucci, Governor Swift, Governor Romney have all
18 made various statements on it, but Governor Patrick
19 decided to bring this project to fruition. There
20 has been a great deal of planning work done in the
21 past four years, and I believe that the planning has
22 been thorough and appropriate for this type of 21st
23 century project.

24 A number of different routes have been

1 looked at, as well as a number of different
2 possibilities for moving people en mass, but it's
3 clear to us that the only viable alternative is
4 rail, and that it's completely appropriate to go
5 through the Hockomock Swamp from Taunton through the
6 swamp and up to Boston.

7 The main reasons that I've heard that
8 the rail is not something that people support is
9 because first it is an expensive project. In
10 reality, the project is a project for the entire
11 eastern section of the state, not just Southeastern
12 Mass., and the project involves many different
13 components, including a total rehabilitation of the
14 South Station corridor, which is something that's
15 needed to service all the rail that runs through the
16 eastern part of the state.

17 In addition, the people of Southeastern
18 Massachusetts have subsidized the T and many
19 building projects regarding transportation in the
20 inner 128 belt. So it's an equity issue when you
21 look at how this project should be funded and
22 whether or not everyone should share in the funding
23 of the project. It's a state project; therefore, I
24 believe it's appropriate that the state and the

1 federal government finance the project.

2 I think that what it will do is help us
3 with our energy independence by getting more cars
4 off the road than any other way that I know of. It
5 will help clear up congestion, which is one of our
6 major drivers on air quality and pollution. It will
7 also be a green project from the standpoint of the
8 building of the project as well as the running of
9 the project. I favor high speed electric
10 transportation, rather than relying on diesel. I
11 think diesel is -- is a technology, quite frankly,
12 that harkens back to an iron horse type of
13 mentality. I believe that we should come up with
14 the fastest system, which means electric, and it
15 also means being coordinated by a sophisticated
16 computerized routing that will allow for the
17 quickest journey to any station and up from
18 New Bedford to Boston, from Fall River to Boston.

19 As far as the -- as far as the issue of
20 whether or not there should be an extension of time
21 in which people should comment on the Army Corps of
22 Engineers' environmental study, I believe that this
23 project has been completely vetted in public and
24 transparent now for over four years, and I don't

1 believe an extension is warranted. I believe that
2 the May 27th date is appropriate. The longer that
3 we delay the permitting process, the longer it will
4 take to -- to actually begin to implement the rail
5 project.

6 I think that the way that I would like
7 to see the rail built is in phases. I believe that
8 the New Bedford to Taunton, Fall River to Taunton
9 rail beds are already in place. They're used for
10 freight. They need to be upgraded, and I would ask
11 that the state and federal government begin that
12 section of this rail project immediately. I think
13 the permitting is very, very minimal and the laying
14 continuously welded rail is something that we easily
15 have capability of doing. It will put many people
16 to work very quickly and will lead towards a
17 shortening of the actual project.

18 By beginning the project now, you'll not
19 only get an economic stimulus going, but by the time
20 the permitting is done through the swamp, we will
21 have already reached Taunton and can continue to
22 move the project in a very, very seamless manner.
23 So I would ask that the -- the portions of the
24 project be broken up into a southern triangle and

1 then a swamp component. And then from the swamp up
2 to Boston. I also would ask that the work on South
3 Station begin in a contemporaneous way with the
4 southern triangle so that the work that will need to
5 be done is simply going through with continuously
6 welded rail through the swamp. I understand that
7 there are some trestles that need to be built and
8 some additional engineering, and this will speed up
9 the project dramatically.

10 I think, lastly, we know that when the
11 original studies were done back in the late '80s,
12 gasoline was 80 cents or 88 cents a gallon. It's
13 now \$4 in the City of New Bedford. We know that the
14 drive time to Boston at that time was an hour. We
15 know now that the drive time at most times of the
16 day is an hour and a half to two hours. Back in
17 1988, parking was \$10 for the day in Boston. We now
18 know it's 35 to \$40 a day. The only way from an
19 economically viable standpoint that you can move
20 people up and down this north/south corridor,
21 south/north corridor is by building the rail.

22 The other thing that the rail will bring
23 is freight that will be moved efficiently, much more
24 rapidly than it is now, much more safely than it is

1 now. The City of New Bedford, as well as the City
2 of Fall River, are building freight capability using
3 our port cities to bring in import and export cargo,
4 and this is something that the rail will not only
5 allow for in a much more -- in a much more efficient
6 manner, but also will open up the -- the marine
7 highway regarding short sea shipping, as well
8 as -- as well as roll-on roll-off cargo.

9 The federal government has begun
10 replacing hundred-year-old bridges that service the
11 rail system in New Bedford. We currently have three
12 bridge projects going, somewhere in the vicinity of
13 \$20 million. These are absolutely necessary to
14 bring a passenger system into the City as well as
15 refurbish the freight capability. We have one
16 additional bridge that is over Route 18 and Wamsutta
17 Street. This bridge needs approximately a 25
18 percent restoration as 25 percent of the bridge is
19 100 years old. The rest of it is approximately 20
20 years old. I ask the federal government provide the
21 money to rebuild this 100-year portion of the bridge
22 which will be done, I believe, in a very, very
23 expeditious manner, and it will not cause the shut
24 down of the -- of the route after we complete the

1 three-bridge project. So it seems to me it makes a
2 lot more sense to provide the funding, which I
3 believe is somewhere between 5 and \$7 million to
4 finish up all the rail bridges in the City, rather
5 than doing three and then having to shut down the
6 rail to do the last 25 percent of one.

7 In addition, that last 25 percent of the
8 Wamsutta Street bridge is the closest bridge to the
9 harbor transportation system, which means that we
10 would not be able to use the harbor transportation
11 system until that bridge has been rebuilt. So the
12 time for this, I believe, is right now as well. So
13 my message simply is let's begin to build it. Let's
14 begin to build it in a way that is -- that is 21st
15 century technology, which means electric, and let us
16 begin to plan for the areas around -- around the
17 line by way of smart growth, by way of station
18 planning, and by way of beginning to think that in
19 terms of moving people to the station by way of
20 bike, by way of car, by way of bus, by way of
21 walking, but let's start spending our time planning
22 for this as we go ahead and begin to build the
23 southern section of the rail.

24 I thank you very much for your attention,

1 and we're very excited about bringing rail to the
2 City of New Bedford. Thank you.

3 HANNAH MARTIN: Hannah Martin,
4 M-A-R-T-I-N, 209 Liberty Street, New Bedford,
5 Massachusetts.

6 My question is: why would the Army
7 Corps of Engineers produce and build a railroad
8 between New Bedford and Boston when without traffic
9 it could take one hour or 45 minutes; and with
10 traffic, it would only take two hours?

11 Thank you.

12 ARIANE MARTIN: My name is Ariane
13 MARTIN, M-A-R-T-I-N, 209 Liberty Street, New
14 Bedford, Mass.

15 I think that the rail connecting Boston
16 to -- from Boston to New Bedford is of extreme
17 importance. Economically and environmentally, it
18 would make a sound choice on our behalf and create
19 more jobs and bring in more revenue to the State of
20 Massachusetts.

21 My concern for the wetlands, I don't
22 want them to be disturbed, if we don't have to, and
23 if there's an alternative way to go around the
24 wetlands and make it be environmentally safe then I

1 think we should do that, but we still need to -- we
2 need to continue to connect the South Shore with the
3 rest of the State of Massachusetts.

4 Thank you.

5 BRUCE DUARTE, JR.: My name is Bruce
6 Duarte, Jr. That is B-R-U-C-E D-U-A-R-T-E, J-R. My
7 address is 804 Kempton Street in the City of New
8 Bedford. I am also a New Bedford City Councillor.
9 I represent ward 4.

10 I am making this statement in support of
11 the Stoughton line for rail; and you know, I'm going
12 to be as simple as I possibly can by stating jobs,
13 jobs, jobs. Economic justice for our South Coast.
14 The fact of the matter is this is not just about the
15 South Coast going to Boston, but more to me it's
16 about Boston coming to the South Coast, enjoying our
17 restaurants, enjoying our museums, our beaches,
18 enjoying our national park, the Whaling National
19 Park, things of that nature that I think we're
20 not -- the folks in Boston aren't given the
21 opportunity to see because of transportation issues
22 in some instances.

23 This is about environmental justice.

24 This is about taking thousands of vehicles off our

1 state highways and allowing folks to travel on the
2 train and not putting all that carbon in the area as
3 far as that is concerned.

4 So, my statement, I think, is absolutely
5 for, absolutely for this South Coast Rail. I don't
6 believe that we should extend any periods. I think,
7 as stated, that the information has been out there
8 since '09. We're in '11. This project needs to go
9 forward ASAP, a bird in the hand so to speak. I
10 think if we wait too long then we may lose funding
11 that's critically important, as we all know, to get
12 this project done, and I'm talking about federal
13 funding.

14 Certainly, I want to thank the Governor
15 for his leadership. I want to thank the Army Corps
16 of Engineers for their interest and commitment into
17 this project. I think that they'll do a fine job,
18 and they'll come out with what I believe will be a
19 favorable report for this project, and I think it
20 will be favorable for the Stoughton line as far as
21 that's concerned. Kristina Egan has been great.
22 She has been inclusive. She has been informative,
23 as far as that's concerned; and again, I will finish
24 by saying what I started with, I support the South

1 Coast Rail Project.

2 Thank you.

3 CHRISTOPHER MARKEY: My name is
4 Christopher Markey. The last name is spelled
5 M-A-R-K-E-Y, 48 William Street, W-I-L-L-I-A-M,
6 Dartmouth, Mass.

7 I'm a State Representative for the Ninth
8 Bristol District, and I just wanted to add to my
9 comments made in the public hearing in regard to the
10 economic development of the South Coast, which will
11 be benefitted from the South Coast Rail Project.

12 As I mentioned briefly that approximately
13 80 years ago two bridges were built across the
14 Cape Cod Canal, and there were very few bridges --
15 very few vehicles and very few roads, and we look
16 back 80 years, and we wonder what would we do
17 without those two bridges in that economic
18 development that has developed as a result of people
19 being able to be transported from the mainland to
20 Cape Cod.

21 I find that the South Coast Rail will
22 have the same effect on the South Coast. The
23 development of the South Coast is really essential
24 for the development of Massachusetts as well. This

1 is one of the areas in Eastern Massachusetts that
2 has not been fully developed, and I think having the
3 access to Boston would allow for significant
4 positive economic development where we would grow
5 our tax base, establish great education institutions,
6 and allow for our citizens to be the most productive
7 they could possibly be. So, therefore, I'm
8 absolutely in favor of the Stoughton Route for the
9 development of the South Coast Rail.

10 Thanks.

11 T.K. ROY: My name is T.K. Roy. T
12 stands for Tridib, T-R-I-D-I-B. The last name is
13 Roy, R-O-Y, and my address is 216 Blackmore Pond
14 Road, West Wareham, Massachusetts 02576.

15 I was making some comments in the
16 hearing, but time ran out, so I'm going to finish
17 with the rest of it, or do you want me to start,
18 give the beginnings -- I think it may be easier to
19 give the rest of it.

20 So these are some of the other additional
21 things that I have to state. The rail will provide
22 an easy access, convenient and economic and fast
23 connection to bring people of other areas to enjoy
24 the nature's grandeur of this area, such as its nice

1 clean beaches, railroads and creeks, ponds and parks
2 all over the area. This area is so close and yet so
3 far because without rail people do not have access.

4 Boston and the suburbs have a great
5 scarcity of housing, and the ones that are available
6 are exorbitantly expensive. The South Coast, on the
7 other hand, provides an abundance of housing
8 facilities, nice waterfront locations, big nice
9 lawns, much open space for growth and development,
10 and to live in luxury and comfort, rather than the
11 cramped accommodation of the Boston area.

12 People can live here and work in Boston.
13 It's very easy access with the rail commute. It's
14 another win-win situation.

15 Convenient access to the best medical
16 facilities for the area residents. As we know,
17 Boston has one of the best and most advanced medical
18 facilities and state-of-the-art practicing
19 physicians and specialists. The rail will provide
20 an easy access to these facilities for the people of
21 this area. No driving, no parking headaches to
22 travel to Boston.

23 Another advantage is Boston is loaded
24 with many facilities of entertainment and learning

1 centers, such as theaters, sports arenas, museums,
2 musical halls, great restaurants, which will be
3 easily accessible to the area residents. Now also
4 people commute to Boston to enjoy those, but driving
5 back and forth and parking are always big headaches,
6 and that's why it is less attractive for them. With
7 the rail, that will make them easy access, and they
8 would be able to use more of these facilities.

9 Again, it will help the business there
10 in the Boston area, and it will make better use of
11 this facilities for many of which our tax dollars
12 are also used to support or subsidize.

13 So with those, I would like to say that
14 I am convinced that the South Coast Rail will be a
15 big plus point both for the Boston area as well as
16 for the South Coast area.

17 I believe the -- out of the alternatives,
18 the electric train will be a better choice to build.
19 The initial cost may be higher, a bit, but in the
20 long run it will be more economical. It will save
21 time, less noise, and less pollution.

22 Also it will be amenable to use newer
23 and environmental friendly energy of the future,
24 such as wind energy and solar energy. Also it will

1 be amenable to high-speed technology, just like the
2 bullet train or high speed train can be used with
3 electric trains.

4 And I also support the Stoughton
5 Alternative, which would be more direct, and it will
6 save time for the commuters, both for New Bedford
7 and Fall River.

8 I also would like to mention that no
9 extension of the hearing beyond May 27th is necessary.
10 We have already had many studies; and, therefore, it
11 will be my request that the committee takes a
12 decision on this thing in favor of building the
13 project as early as possible.

14 Thanks for your patience, and I hope you
15 will have a very positive recommendation to make
16 this South Coast Rail as a reality for which the
17 community will thank you enormously. It will be an
18 asset for the country once it is completed.

19 Thank you.

20 DAVID BENWAY: It's David Benway,
21 B-E-N-W-A-Y, B, as in boy. It's 165 Union Street,
22 New Bedford, Mass. 02740.

23 I just want to say that I'm in favor of
24 the Stoughton Route, not the Whittenton Route. I

1 would like to see the train electric, and in these
2 tough economic times with gas prices reaching \$4 a
3 gallon we need to take the 8,000 cars off the road.
4 Now is the best time to do this.

5 Plymouth, Hingham, Lakeville all have
6 the rail. Why doesn't New Bedford and Fall River
7 have it? Is it something to do with poor, black,
8 Hispanic? You know, please stop the economic
9 injustice.

10 Do not extend the comment period. The
11 people who oppose it, the rail system coming to
12 New Bedford and Fall River, already have access to
13 the rail. This is not fair.

14 I want to thank the Army Corps of
15 Engineers for their report, and let's see, some
16 people have been waiting for this rail system their
17 whole entire life, and they are afraid that they're
18 going to be deceased before they see it come
19 through. Some of these people are in their early
20 60s. Let's make sure that they can have a ride on
21 the rail system to Boston.

22 Thank you very much. I appreciate it.

23 DEBORAH ROHER: My name is Deborah
24 Roher, R-O-H-E-R. I live at 240 Tremont Street, in

1 New Bedford, and I have lived in this area for 24
2 years. I'm not an engineer or an ecologist by
3 training, and I deeply respect the decisions and
4 evaluations that the Corps has to make for this
5 project, but I am by predilection an ecologist. I
6 didn't drive until I was 28. I lived in Eastern
7 Kentucky for almost six years before I bought a car.
8 And when I move to this area, I remember it was
9 really not long after I moved to this area that I
10 attended my first public hearing on the question of
11 restoring rail, passenger rail service from this
12 area to Boston, a subject that was of deep interest
13 to me. I've lived most of my adult life in places
14 where I got around without a car, and I remember
15 very clearly from that hearing the diagrams and the
16 presentation and the discussion of the three
17 possible routes, and the conclusion that the Taunton
18 Attleboro route was infeasible, because there were
19 too many grade crossings, and the extension of -- of
20 the route from Middleborough was infeasible because
21 it would create such a back -- such a bottleneck in
22 Braintree that you couldn't really run enough trains
23 along that route to make it an attractive commuter
24 option; and then there was the Stoughton Route,

1 which clearly was the feasible and preferred route,
2 and it is mind-boggling to me that 20 years later
3 we're still having the same discussion.

4 As I say, I take very seriously the
5 issues raised about endangered species and damage to
6 the wetlands, but in the intervening 20 years, I've
7 seen Route 24 expanded and repaved, I don't know how
8 many times; and moreover, the new entrances and
9 exits built off routes -- Route 24 and all along the
10 Route 140 and Route 24 corridor all of the
11 sprawl-type developments, the strip malls with the
12 impervious paving taking up who knows how many acres
13 of what used to be very nice meadows, the
14 destructive single family suburban subdivisions,
15 which have been the predominant kind of development,
16 and I've also seen all of that development benefit
17 the suburbs and further impoverish the city. So I
18 really hope that the outcome of this process will be
19 a determination that we can have our rail service
20 from Fall River and New Bedford. I believe that it
21 will be environmental as well as an economic and
22 cultural enrichment benefit to the state and to all
23 of us in this area.

24 ANGELA BANNISTER: My name is Angela

1 Bannister, and I am a New Bedford resident. I live
2 at 321 Query Street. I have lived here for a year
3 and a half. I graduate college in two weeks, and I
4 am scared for this economic area. I would like to
5 one day call New Bedford my home. I would like to
6 raise a family here, and I would like to have access
7 to Boston, and I think that the -- the Stoughton
8 line is the best reliable and efficient means of
9 transportation for this area.

10 New Bedford has a very bad reputation
11 currently due to the lack of accessibility and
12 inequality that we unfortunately have; and again,
13 I'm a young new grad, and I would like to be able to
14 build my home in New Bedford and still have access
15 to jobs in Boston and be able to provide for my
16 family if I -- if I decide to stay in New Bedford
17 and live and work.

18 So thank you to everyone that's put
19 energy towards this.

20 MATTHEW COES: My name is Matthew Coes,
21 C-O-E-S, and I live at 4 Hedge Street in Fairhaven,
22 Mass.

23 Thank you for your thorough review of
24 the South Coast Rail alternatives. I support the

1 Stoughton Route with electric service and oppose an
2 extension of review. I am an environmentalist. I
3 commute to work with a bicycle, but I am a big
4 picture environmentalist, and in this case the
5 benefits far outweigh the costs.

6 I moved to New Bedford three years ago
7 for work in the city's burgeoning art community. My
8 employer works primarily with advertising and design
9 clients within the Route 128 belt. We offer studio
10 visits and delivery to and from Boston. And
11 visitors, once we are able to convince them to
12 travel, are amazed at what New Bedford has to offer.
13 I've lived previously in Salem, Mass., and Brooklyn,
14 New York, and there I used public transport
15 extensively to commute into major cities.

16 The South Coast Rail will be a vigorous
17 economic course and provide the typical
18 opportunities for both ends of the rail project.

19 Thank you for the opportunity.

20 SCOTT W. LANG: This is Scott Lang,
21 Mayor of the City of New Bedford.

22 There were a couple of other issues that
23 I wanted to address at the end of the evening. The
24 first one was the issue regarding subsidy of this

1 rail project and the idea that this project would be
2 unduly subsidized by other areas of the state. The
3 fact is that this is a state project, a project that
4 will benefit all citizens in Massachusetts, and
5 currently all citizens subsidize all forms of
6 highway, airport, train, harbor projects.

7 The idea that we would be asked to
8 subsidize all other parts of the state regarding
9 rail and then the issue would be brought up as to
10 whether or not other parts of the regions of
11 Massachusetts should subsidize New Bedford,
12 Fall River, Taunton's rail is not appropriate and is
13 certainly not equitable from the standpoint of equal
14 protection and in the whole theory of the benefit
15 for all within the state. And it creates a
16 disproportionate advantage to live outside of New
17 Bedford based on the fact that we don't have the
18 infrastructure for transportation that other areas
19 of the state would have.

20 The other thing that I would like to
21 state is this idea that the train would be an
22 inconvenience or an imposition to pass through
23 different communities. Again, with the -- with the
24 eye on the fact that this benefits the entire state,

1 there is no community that should put up a barrier
2 to progress for any region of the state and for the
3 entire state. Just as if a town would argue against
4 having a highway go through their town or
5 infrastructure projects within their town that
6 benefit the entire region to argue that the rail
7 going through a specific town is not fair to the
8 town really misses the point of a unified sovereign
9 state entity. So I would hope that that is not an
10 issue that in any way affects the Army Corps'
11 decision.

12 On a whole, if you look at the balance
13 of this project, it will, in fact, benefit the
14 entire state. It will increase the tax base in the
15 state, decrease unemployment within the state and
16 lead towards a quality of life for all those who
17 live in the state being enhanced.

18 It also will help clean up the
19 environment. So if you look at this as a project
20 that not only affects the New Bedford, Fall River,
21 Taunton, South Coast region, but look at it as a
22 project that affects the good of the whole, this
23 project should go forward.

24 So, now I'm done.

WRITTEN STATEMENTS

1
2
3 May 5, 2011
4

5 Richard K. Sullivan, Secretary
6 Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs
7 Attention: MEPA Office: Aisling O'Shea
8 100 Cambridge St., Suite 900
9 Boston, MA 02114
10

11 Dear Director,
12

13 As Mayor of the City of Taunton, I, along with the
14 unanimous support of the several editions of the
15 Taunton Municipal Council have enthusiastically
16 supported the direct Stoughton Route that will
17 provide rail service to our community and to the
18 South Coast region in a more timely and cost
19 effective manner. The direct Stoughton Route will
20 travel south from Boston through the communities of
21 Stoughton, Easton and Raynham over the same railroad
22 bed that had been used by passenger trains over 150
23 years ago. Once entering Taunton, the trains will
24 stop at a station planned along Dean Street (Route

1 44) where my administration has designed and
2 endorsed a Transit Oriented District (T.O.D.). The
3 trains would continue southward through Taunton to
4 another station planned behind Depot Drive near the
5 intersection of Route 140 and Route 24. The route
6 would have only five (5) at-grade crossings through
7 its entire length through Taunton. The direct
8 Stoughton Route provides for the quickest route
9 between the South Coast communities and Boston and
10 it would provide, according to the studies, the
11 highest ridership.

12
13 The citizens of Taunton through their elected
14 representatives have gone on record as in favor of
15 the direct Stoughton Route, and they have also gone
16 on record as emphatically opposed to the Attleboro
17 Route as well as the Whittenton Alternative Route,
18 as those options would provide from fourteen to
19 fifteen (15) at-grade crossings within our community,
20 and effectively cut off public safety operations
21 within our community. The Attleboro Route and the
22 Whittenton Alternative Route would also cause the
23 trips between Boston and the South Coast communities
24 to be longer and less cost effective. The Attleboro

1 Route as well as the Whittenton Alternative Route
2 would cause the trains to run through our heavily
3 congested residential area where the houses are
4 right up against the tracks. The noise mitigation
5 measures that would be necessary would also add to
6 the costs of this route.

7
8 Attleboro officials have long contested that route
9 for environmental reasons. My administration with
10 the unanimous support of the Taunton Municipal
11 Council in Taunton has worked closely with the
12 Selectman of Dighton and Norton to endorse the
13 application Three Mile River Area of Critical
14 Environmental Concern (A.C.E.C.), which was recently
15 adopted by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The
16 Attleboro Route runs directly through this A.C.E.C.

17
18 On behalf of the citizens of Taunton, I want to
19 express our sincere and emphatic support for the
20 direct Stoughton Route that will provide the highest
21 ridership, the quickest trip from the South Coast to
22 Boston, and provides the least impact to our
23 citizens. I believe the only intelligent choice is
24 the direct Stoughton Route. I look forward to see

1 that route adopted and for our community to become
2 the gateway to the South Coast.

3

4 Respectfully,

5

6 Charles Crowley,

7 Mayor

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C E R T I F I C A T E

1
2
3 We, Marianne Kusa-Ryll, Certified
4 Realtime Reporter, and Julie Thomson Riley,
5 Certified Realtime Reporter, do hereby certify that
6 the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate
7 transcription of our stenographic notes on May 5,
8 2011, to the best of our knowledge, skill, and
9 ability.

10
11
12 /s/ Marianne Kusa-Ryll
13 Marianne Kusa-Ryll, RDR, CRR

14 /s/ Julie Thomson Riley
15 Julie Thomson Riley, RDR, CRR
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