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Sierra Club Massachusetts Chapter Response to MassDOT Report on North South Rail Link

BOSTON, MA -- On Monday the Massachusetts Department of Transportation released its Feasibility Assessment Study on the North South Rail Link (NSRL) at the MBTA's Fiscal Management Control Board meeting.

The North South Rail Link is a proposed pair of 1.5 mile-long tunnels that would connect the MBTA's North Station and South Station. Project proponents argue that such a connection would allow for the through running of Amtrak and commuter trains, eliminating the backup moves that are now a major cause of congestion at both terminals.

The MassDOT report claimed projected 2028 NSRL cost estimates of \$12-21.5 billion - much higher than a 2017 Harvard Kennedy School study projecting \$4-6 billion.

In response, Massachusetts Sierra Club Chapter Director Emily Norton and Transportation Committee Co-Chair John Kyper made the following statements:

“We have concerns about the accuracy of MassDOT’s cost estimates for the North South Rail Link. Comparable tunneling projects around the globe have a significantly lower cost,” said Norton.

“The report and presentation failed to account for any of the major benefits of the project,” said Kyper. “As a resident of Roxbury commuting to work every morning for thirty years, I had to face a wall of commuters at Back Bay station waiting to transfer from the commuter rail into my already overcrowded subway car. The Rail Link would provide more direct connections to areas downtown, reduce toxic emissions, extend the Northeast Corridor to Portland and take pressure off our already overstressed subway system.”



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About the Sierra Club

The Sierra Club is America's largest and most influential grassroots environmental organization, with more than 3 million members and supporters. In addition to helping people from all backgrounds explore nature and our outdoor heritage, the Sierra Club works to promote clean energy, safeguard the health of our communities, protect wildlife, and preserve our remaining wild places through grassroots activism, public education, lobbying, and legal action. For more information, visit www.sierraclub.org.