



**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION of  
RAILROAD PASSENGERS**

505 Capitol Court, NE, Suite 300 • Washington, DC 20002-7706  
P:: 202.408.8362 • F:: 202.408.8287 • E:: [narp@NARPrail.org](mailto:narp@NARPrail.org)

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Chairman Daniel R. Elliott III  
Vice Chairman Deb Miller  
Member Ann D. Begeman  
Surface Transportation Board  
395 E Street S.W.  
Washington, DC 20423

ENTERED  
Office of Proceedings  
September 12, 2016  
Part of  
Public Record

**RE: BOSTON SURFACE RAILROAD COMPANY, INC. - PETITION FOR  
EXEMPTION - FROM 49 U.S.C. SUBTITLE IV [Docket Number: FD-36043-0]**

Dear Chairman Elliott, Vice Chairman Miller and Ms. Begeman:

The National Association of Railroad Passengers appreciates the opportunity to write to you in support of the Boston Surface Railroad Company's project to bring a private passenger rail service between Worcester, MA; Woonsocket, RI; and Providence, RI.

NARP is the only national organization speaking for the nearly 40 million users of passenger trains and rail transit. We have worked since 1967 to expand the quality and quantity of passenger rail in the U.S. Our mission is to work towards a modern, customer-focused national passenger train network that puts 80% of Americans within 25 miles of a rail station within 25 years, using a combination of high-speed/high-performance, long-distance intercity rail, commuter trains, light rail, transit and even bike share. Our vision for A Connected America supports both public entities, private companies, and partnership between both, to invest in a network to power a 21st century economy in the U.S.

NARP believes the Boston Surface Railroad Company vision to restore passenger rail services to Boston, Providence and Worcester, inactive for decades, is an exciting demonstration of the role private capital can and must play in providing critical capacity expansion to America's transportation network.

With approximately 10,000 daily commuters from Worcester to Providence, and 15,000 daily commuters from Greater Woonsocket to Providence, the crowded Route 146 corridor—home to one of the fastest growing job markets in New England—is in desperate need of transportation alternatives. Even extremely conservative projections show this service carrying between a thousand and 1,600 passengers a day—shifting commuters from overcrowded roads onto a more energy-efficient, safer mode of transportation.

Not only would this service provide direct connections between Worcester, Woonsocket, and Providence, but indirect connections to hundreds of communities across the MBTA and Amtrak networks.

Additionally, this project will contribute positively to the local economy, creating at least 15 permanent jobs, directly, along with 20 to 30 indirect jobs.

The American people are already voting for more trains with their wallets; public use of trains is growing far faster than air or road travel or even the population itself. In FY 2014, Amtrak carried 30.9 million passengers – the eleventh year of record ridership in the last 12 years. NARP applauds the Boston Surface Railroad Company’s initiative in meeting the pent-up demand for, efficient, quality, on-time passenger service.

For these reasons, NARP strongly encourages the Board to grant the Boston Surface Railroad Company’s petition for exemption from 49 U.S.C. Subtitle IV, and allow this project to proceed as quickly as possible.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jim Mathews", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jim Mathews  
President & CEO

CC: Boston Surface Railroad, Parties of Record, via email  
[vbono@bsrc.com](mailto:vbono@bsrc.com)

