



## **MEDIA AVAILABILITY**

For Immediate Release  
May 9, 2023

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### **INVESTMENT IN REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITIES (RTAs) GOOD FOR PUBLIC HEALTH**

WHO: Alexis Walls, Assistant Campaign Manager of the Massachusetts Public Health Association

WHAT: Analysis and commentary regarding regional transit items impacting public health in the Senate Ways & Means (SWM) Budget released today

- The Senate Ways & Means budget proposal represents an historic investment in RTAs in Massachusetts and acknowledgement of the public health, economic equity and environmental justice issues connected to an improved regional transit infrastructure. At \$100M dollars, including \$56M in operating funds to improve service, the SWM proposal moves transit equity a major step forward.
- According to a survey conducted by the MassINC Polling Group in collaboration with the Regional Transit Authority Advocates Coalition (RTAAC) and sponsored by The Barr Foundation, current RTA riders are using the bus for many different types of trips – with health care appointments accounting for 62% and shopping and errands (including food shopping, pharmacies), 74%.
- The survey also showed that communities of color and those with low-incomes are overrepresented among bus riders: less likely to be white (54% versus 72% statewide). more likely to be under age 30 (34% versus 22%). A majority (53%) of riders make less than \$50,000 a year, 43% have a high school diploma or less education, and 80% do not own or lease a car (34%) or have only one car (46%).

MPHA co-convenes the RTAAC, a network of community groups, human services providers, transportation advocates, and local leaders who advocate for transit that meets the needs of communities served by the 15 regional transit authorities across Massachusetts.

We invite you to include this public health perspective in your reporting of this significant investment in the Commonwealth's public transportation system.

*To schedule an interview, please contact Toni Troop, MPHA Media Consultant by phone (617-212-7571) or email ([tonitroop@gmail.com](mailto:tonitroop@gmail.com)).*