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Westborough House Delegation Works Together to Secure Policy and Funding Changes in \$18.2 Billion Transportation Bond Bill

Boston, MA – Representative Hannah Kane (R-Shrewsbury), Representative Carolyn Dykema (D-Holliston), and Representative Danielle Gregoire (D-Marlborough) proposed and secured multiple amendments in H.4506, *An Act authorizing and accelerating transportation investment*, that was engrossed in the House of Representatives on March 5, 2020. The amendments will ensure significant improvements to public transportation in Westborough, MetroWest, and Central MA as a whole, including mitigating effects of the Allston I-90 Multimodal Project for commuters and improving the parking capacity at the Westborough Commuter Rail Station.

With Representative Dykema as the lead sponsor, the delegation advocated for an amendment directing the Massachusetts Department of Transportation to coordinate a mitigation plan for the Allston I-90 corridor before and during the construction of the Allston Multimodal Project. The Project is a 10-year, \$1.2 billion reconstruction of the I-90 viaduct in Boston, realignment of I-90 and Soldiers Field Road, and includes the building of the new West Commuter Rail Station. Construction has the potential to impact commuters using I-90 and the Worcester/Framingham Commuter Rail Line for all 10 years.

The final language of the bill ensures that the Allston Multimodal Task Force will meet throughout the duration of the Project and that the department develops a plan to mitigate the detrimental effects the Project will have on commuters from Westborough and Central MA. Other provisions in the Allston Multimodal Project language require maintenance of 2-track service on the Framingham/Worcester line during construction, requires 20-minute peak headway Commuter Rail service within 1 year of construction commencing, and requires the necessary service and capital improvements on the Framingham/Worcester line to be identified by July 2021.

Further amendments secured by the Westborough House Delegation include the creation of an office of transit parking and access to coordinate multi-agency efforts to increase access to transit stations through improvements to parking, trail networks, and bike and pedestrian improvements, as well as \$250,000 for parking improvements at the Commuter Rail station in Westborough. The delegation also advocated for parking improvements at other commuter rail stations in MetroWest.

“As always, it is a pleasure to work with the women in this delegation to advance funding and policy initiatives that benefit the residents of our communities,” said Representative Gregoire. “We have a busy few months ahead of us in the Legislature and I look forward to continuing our advocacy for the MetroWest area.”

“I am thrilled to have worked with my colleagues to advocate for critical funding and policy changes that will allow for substantive improvements for Westborough commuters in the Transportation Bond Bill. While we have much work ahead to provide for a world-class transportation system, the amendments that Rep. Dykema filed as a lead sponsor will make a dramatic difference in both the short and long-term as we invest to improve our public transportation infrastructure. I was also pleased that Rep. Gregoire was able to increase the amendment we filed for increasing parking capacity at the Westborough Commuter Rail Station from \$200,000 to \$250,000,” remarked Rep. Kane. “As the Central MA representative on the Allston Multimodal Task Force, the efforts of our delegation to secure mitigation for the duration of the 10-year project will be critical as the project progresses.”

“Congestion on our highways has reached unsustainable levels, and multiple large construction projects are planned for the I-90 corridor in the coming decade. Improving service and increasing capacity on the Framingham/Worcester Line is more important than ever to move commuters off our roads and to reduce our emissions in the face of urgently-needed climate action,” said Rep. Dykema. “With the support and collaboration of Rep. Kane and Rep. Gregoire, along with our colleagues from Worcester to Boston, the MetroWest delegation has worked to shape the conversation and drive the direction of the investments in this bill to effectively meet our most pressing needs.”

H.4506, *An Act authorizing and accelerating transportation investment*, was engrossed in a 150-1 vote in the House on Thursday, March 5th 2020. The bill will now head to the Senate.

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