

## **POSITION STATEMENT**

### **COMMUTER RAIL EXTENSION TO THE SOUTHCOAST**

*The New Bedford Area Chamber of Commerce is a non-profit business advocacy and economic development organization. It has a diverse membership base of 1,000 businesses – primarily small and medium size - in the SouthCoast region of Massachusetts. This policy position is intended to serve as guidelines for the Chamber's Government Affairs efforts and has been reviewed and approved by the Chamber's Government Affairs Committee and Board of Directors.*

Adopted: March 27, 2014

The New Bedford Area Chamber of Commerce remains a strong advocate for the extension of MBTA commuter rail service from Boston to New Bedford and other communities in the SouthCoast region of Massachusetts. The Chamber believes commuter rail extension is critical to economic development and growth in the region and in keeping with long-range "Smart Growth" planning strategies that support the environment and encourage development around priority development areas.

The Chamber encourages our federal and state officials to:

- Provide additional federal and state transportation funding for the extension of Commuter Rail Service to Southeastern Massachusetts.
- Encourage double tracking of the rail lines to provide future capacity and faster service. It is important that any design, permitting, and building of the rail service be completed with an eye towards enhancing or expanding the service in the future.
- Provide travel time from the SouthCoast to Boston South Station that is no more than seventy minutes. Shorter commuting time gives businesses greater access to more workers with specialized skills, while residents of the region gain connectivity to employment opportunities along the Route 128 corridor and in the business districts of Boston.
- Support full service throughout the day to meet demand and encourage ridership. A minimum of three trains in the morning peak period and three trains in the afternoon peak period should be utilized. This includes full weekend service and inter-city service between Taunton, New Bedford and Fall River to encourage regional mobility.
- Offer a late evening train service to Boston for residents and visitors. Weekend and evening service would help support our growing tourism economy by connecting the Boston area to our hotels, our national park, our ferry service to Martha's Vineyard, and our vibrant arts and restaurant scene here in the SouthCoast.

*While this statement is policy as of the effective date of this document, the Chamber reserves the right to adopt changes and make modifications and additions to its policies, and will continue to monitor issues as they develop.*

*Please contact Roy Nascimento, President at (508) 999-5231 with any questions regarding this policy position.*