ATTACHMENT J

July 26, 2018

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives:

Pursuant to Article LVI, as amended by Article XC, Section 3 of the Amendments to the Constitution, I am returning to you for amendment Section 87 of House Bill No. 4800, “An Act Making Appropriations for the Fiscal Year 2019 for the Maintenance of the Departments, Boards, Commissions, Institutions and Certain Activities of the Commonwealth, for Interest, Sinking Fund and Serial Bond Requirements and for Certain Permanent Improvements.”

Section 87 requires MassDOT to study fares on the commuter rail including: (i) the fairness and equity of the current distance-based fare system that utilizes fare zones; (ii) pricing based on track distance from the terminal station; (iii) the impacts of commuter rail fare price on passengers’ transportation choices, considering frequency of service, travel time and parking costs, between commuter rail, motor vehicle transportation, public bus and subway service; (iv) the potential for lower interzone fares to encourage ridership outside core central stations; (v) the potential for discounted fares for riders in gateway cities or similarly situated municipalities; and (vi) the potential for utilizing a variable pricing system based on the time of day.

While I support this purpose, the section requires MassDOT to report its findings to the legislature on or before January 1, 2019. Because the data that MassDOT requires in order to complete this study will not be available until January 1, 2020, it will be impossible for MassDOT to meet this deadline. In addition, it is important that MassDOT consider the impacts on fare revenue of any of the proposed changes.

For this reason, I recommend that Section 87 be amended, in the first paragraph, by striking the language “and (vi) the potential for utilizing a variable pricing system based on the time of day” and inserting in place thereof the following:- (vi) the potential for utilizing a variable pricing system based on the time of day; and (vii) the impact on any of these changes on fare revenue.

I further recommend that Section 87 be amended, in the last sentence of the second paragraph, by striking out the words “January 1, 2019” and inserting in place thereof the following words:- March 15, 2020.

Respectfully submitted,

Charles D. Baker

Governor