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Statement of Massachusetts Trial Court on the Springfield Regional Justice Center Procurement

The existing Roderick L. Ireland Courthouse in Springfield is in urgent need of replacement. For too long, court employees and litigants have been forced to conduct business in a poorly designed facility that is beyond its useful life and lacks features that ensure access, functionality, health and safety for everyone involved in the delivery of justice at the second busiest courthouse in the Commonwealth.

The Massachusetts Trial Court was pleased when Governor Healey prioritized building a new Regional Justice Center to serve the people of Springfield and Hampden County. We have also strongly supported the Governor's effort to construct the facility under a long-term Trial Court lease because it will deliver the building several years sooner than would otherwise have been possible.

We are grateful for the support and collaboration with the Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance (DCAMM) to help the Massachusetts Trial Court advance the project, starting with our successful proposal to obtain authorization from the Asset Management Board for a long-term lease through the procurement process. We are pleased that DCAMM's professional staff listened closely to the Trial Court leadership and subject matter experts in developing and issuing an RFP that effectively documented the programmatic requirements for a new courthouse.

We were gratified to see 10 responses to that RFP, several of which provided compelling proposals that would meet the Trial Court's facility requirements and deliver an excellent new building for Hampden County. The Trial Court worked closely with DCAMM to ensure the integrity and independence of the procurement process. Proposals were reviewed by a neutral committee of professional staff. All proposers were responsible for complying with the Massachusetts Conflict of Interest Law.

Of the 10 proposals, there was no doubt that the Liberty Junction proposal addressed our needs with by far the lowest projected impact on the Trial Court's future operating budgets. This preserves our ability to fund other important components of the delivery of justice for the people of the Commonwealth.

In addition to offering the most competitive price, the Liberty Junction project will deliver a thoughtful layout that protects the safety of court users and introduces natural light into all courtrooms, in a location that is well-served by public transportation and the regional highway network, ensuring that access to justice is readily available to all.

For these reasons, the Massachusetts Trial Court recommended that DCAMM award this lease to the Liberty Junction team and advance the process of constructing this important facility for the people of Springfield and Hampden County.