



THE GENERAL COURT OF MASSACHUSETTS
STATE HOUSE, BOSTON 02133-1053

May 2, 2023

**Statement of New Bedford State Representatives Regarding the City's Threatened Litigation
Involving SouthCoast Rail**

As State Representatives who represent parts of the City of New Bedford and the surrounding SouthCoast towns, we are concerned about implications of the threatened legal action by the Mitchell Administration against the MBTA.

The draft civil Complaint referenced in yesterday's Boston Globe article, is nothing like the 'typical' kind of lawsuit over the dollar amount a property owner is paid after the government files a "Taking Order" to seize the property for a public purpose---in this case the downtown rail station now under construction for extending commuter rail to New Bedford.

Count I of the threatened lawsuit asserts that the MBTA does not even own the real estate in question but that it still belongs to the City of New Bedford. While the Complaint later on contests the dollar amount which should be paid for the May 2020 land taking, the Mayor's claim challenging ownership of the land associated with the new station, is something quite different; we express our opposition to any approach by the City of New Bedford which could risk the timely completion of this project and public use of the coming train station.

Over many years, we have worked diligently with several Governors and mayors to advance this project. Alleging that the MBTA does not have the authority for the taking to begin would possibly delay the completion of the downtown station and potentially throw a wrench in the Southcoast Rail project as a whole. As such, we wholeheartedly disagree with the City making that assertion. We do not see how this aggressive approach fosters the continuing working relationships the City and the legislative delegation need to work on this or other projects benefitting our region.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Hendricks".

CHRISTOPHER HENDRICKS
State Representative, 11th Bristol District

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bill Straus".

WILLIAM A. STRAUS
State Representative, 10th Bristol District

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Markey".

CHRISTOPHER M. MARKEY
State Representative, 9th Bristol District

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul Schmid".

PAUL A. SCHMID III
State Representative, 8th Bristol District