

Youth Way on The MBTA  
For Immediate Release

Wednesday, September 9th, 2009

## **On Eve of New School Year Youth Way Campaign Achieves Major Improvements to Youth Access on the MBTA**

On the eve of the new school year, Boston-area youth have achieved a major improvement to public transportation by working with the Secretary of Transportation to extend the MBTA Student Pass to 11:00pm.

Summary:

1. The **Youth Way on the MBTA campaign**, led by youth from REEP & BYOP has built a successful **partnership with Mass. Secretary of Transportation James Aloisi**. Together we are working toward broader access and quality of service for youth riders.
2. As a short term improvement, Secretary Aloisi has agreed to **extend the time of the Student Pass to 11:00pm beginning September, 2009**.
3. **Many students who couldn't afford to get home from school or extra-curricular activities after 8:00pm will benefit from the Student Pass extension**.
4. The Youth Way campaign remains committed to work for the **creation of a Youth Pass** that would increase access to public transportation for all youth, 12-21 years old. Secretary Aloisi has committed to study the creation of a Youth Pass.

More Information:

### **Youth Way campaign.**

Youth Way on the MBTA is a campaign of the Boston-area Youth Organizing Project (BYOP) and the Roxbury Environmental Empowerment Project (REEP) of Alternatives for Community and Environment (ACE) with support from the T Riders Union (TRU). This campaign was started in 2007 with the goals of promoting affordable access, safety, and quality service for youth riders of the MBTA. So far we have engaged 3000 Boston-area youth to work toward improved service and affordability. Together we are fighting for youth transit justice.

### **Support from Secretary Aloisi.**

On June 29th, 2009, REEP and BYOP met with Sec. Aloisi to gain his support for the Youth Way campaign. Sec. Aloisi agreed to 1) show public support for the Youth Way campaign, 2) research the viability of a new

Youth Pass, 3) extend the existing Student Pass to 11:00pm, and 4) to hold more meetings with representatives of the Youth Way campaign. Secretary Aloisi also attended the REEP Youth Summit on July 24th to hear directly from Boston youth about their hardships on the T. We greatly appreciate Sec. Aloisi's attention to youth issues on the MBTA, and we look forward to continuing this groundbreaking partnership on behalf of all youth riders!

### **Hardships for Youth on MBTA.**

Many Boston-area students have difficulty getting to and from school, work, and activities. Common examples of hardship include difficulty obtaining a Student Pass from school, getting stranded after 8:00pm when the Student Pass is expired, bus drivers passing by youth at bus stops, and youth without a Student Pass not being able to afford the T fare at all. Transportation difficulties impact young people's safety and wellbeing. This is not quality service for youth riders of the MBTA.

### **Impact of the Student Pass Extension.**

The extension of the Student Pass from 8:00pm to 11:00pm is a major improvement for Student Pass holders. Students have many commitments that leave them traveling after 8:00pm including sports, after school programs, study halls, and jobs. This improvement will also benefit everyone on the T by reducing bus driver-youth conflicts over use of the Student Pass at and around 8:00pm.

### **Need for a Youth Pass.**

While the Student Pass extension is an improvement, there are still major problems facing young people's access to the MBTA that cannot be addressed without a Youth Pass. The Youth Way campaign estimates that the Student Pass only reaches between 12-15% of Boston-area youth between 12-21 years old. We are excited to continue to work with Secretary Aloisi and the MBTA to investigate the creation of a broader Youth Pass and to improve young people's access to the MBTA.

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**Photos available.**

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