



**Executive Office of Transportation and Public Works - Public Hearing
September 15, 2008 – State Transportation Building, 10 Park Plaza, Boston**

RE: 701 CMR 7.00 – Use of road flaggers and police details on public works projects

On behalf of the Massachusetts Business Roundtable (MBR), we would like to be recorded in support of the Administration's proposed regulations to use flagmen rather than police details on certain public works projects. This is an important step to reduce costs while "ensuring the safety of workers, motorists, and pedestrians traveling through construction work zones."

It is also an important reform, as highlighted in the September 2007 report issued by the state's Transportation Finance Commission (TFC). MBR had two appointees to the twelve-member Commission, which emphasized the need for reform as its first principle. The regulations being proposed today meet two of the Commission's criteria by both spending dollars more resourcefully and eliminating a practice that undermines public confidence in the cost-effective delivery of transportation services. While initial estimates of savings range between \$5.7 million and \$7.2 million annually, with the promise of greater savings in the future, the value will come in reversing what the TFC called the "long-standing and unnecessary system" of requiring police officers to work as flagmen at road construction sites. This is a requirement that should come to an end, and Governor Patrick and his Administration deserve tremendous credit for taking it on.

MBR members convened last February in a "Summit on State Fiscal Policy" to discuss corporate tax policy and long term transportation planning. In our transportation discussion, members agreed that adopting a few, key recommendations from the TFC report would be a prudent way to reduce costs and begin to build momentum toward a more comprehensive solution to the \$15B to \$19B funding gap which was identified in the state's twenty-year transportation plan. Chief among the recommendations suggested by MBR members was the elimination of mandatory police details. MBR therefore supports the proposed regulations as a necessary reform and an important step in addressing the state's long term transportation funding and planning issues.

MBR has heard from some of its member companies that police details add an unnecessary cost to their doing business in Massachusetts. MBR continues to advocate that the state's long term public policy must promote an environment conducive to corporate investment and job creation. And while the use of flagmen may be only a start to reducing costs, it will create savings and build public confidence that the Commonwealth is serious about addressing transportation construction costs. As the TFC report points out, "Forty-nine other states have found a way to manage road projects utilizing flagmen; Massachusetts should join them."

Respectfully submitted,

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Executive Director