



**Testimony submitted to the Joint Committee on Transportation  
In Support of H.3392/S.2217 An Act relative to setting deadlines to electrify the  
commuter rail  
by Franny Osman, LWVMA Specialist on Transportation  
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The League of Women Voters of Massachusetts (LWVMA), with 3,000 members in 44 local Leagues, from Cape Cod to the Berkshires, supports H.3392/S.2217 An Act relative to setting deadlines to electrify the commuter rail, and urges the committee to report the bills favorably.

Electrification of the MBTA Commuter Rail jump-starts our transition to a clean energy and transportation future. We recognize that climate change is the fundamental threat of our time. For more than fifty years, the League of Women Voters has been studying air pollution and promoting change that improves air quality. In Massachusetts, the transportation sector is responsible for approximately 40% of emissions, and environmental justice communities are disproportionately affected by poor air quality.

Electrified trains come more frequently than trains in today's systems—7 minutes to 30 minutes between most trains, as laid out in the timetable described by these bills—allowing easier access to housing and jobs, particularly in Gateway cities and other environmental justice communities. Electrified rail no longer leaves diesel trains idling in low-income neighborhoods. Electrified rail can be linked underground, as in the proposed North South Rail Link in Boston, using state-of-the-art tunneling technology that has been demonstrated in other cities. LWVMA has supported the efforts to build the North South Rail Link for many years.

LWVMA supports transportation that is efficient, convenient, and cost effective; is safe and secure; serves all segments of the population and diverse geographic needs; minimizes harmful effects on the environment; is integrated with land use; and is supported by extensive public education. The League of Women Voters of the United States (LWVUS) believes that energy-efficient and environmentally sound transportation systems should afford better access to housing and jobs. The League believes that an interrelated approach to combating climate change—including through energy conservation, air pollution controls, building resilience, and promotion of renewable resources—is necessary to protect public health and defend the overall integrity of the global ecosystem.

We encourage the Joint Committee on Transportation to report these bills favorably and bring them to a floor for a vote.

Thank you for your consideration.