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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Wednesday, February 17, 2010

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**GOVERNOR PATRICK, CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION ANNOUNCE \$20
MILLION FEDERAL STIMULUS TRANSPORTATION GRANT FOR SOUTH COAST
RAIL PROJECT**

ARRA Grant Propels South Coast Rail, Creates Jobs, Boosts Freight Rail

New Bedford, MA - Wednesday, February 17, 2010 - As part of the Patrick-Murray Administration's Massachusetts Recovery Plan to secure the state's economic future, Governor Deval Patrick today announced Massachusetts has been awarded a major federal stimulus Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) Grant that will fund reconstruction of structurally-deficient rail bridges in New Bedford and represents a first step in South Coast Rail construction.

"This is big news for South Coast rail. Once again, others talk but we deliver," said Governor Deval Patrick. "We are creating immediate and permanent jobs and jump-starting intercity rail service for South Coast residents."

"Our administration is committed to investing in improved transportation in Massachusetts," said Lieutenant Governor Timothy Murray. "Today's announcement of TIGER grants will benefit New Bedford and surrounding communities by increasing opportunities for improved rail services as well as economic and community development."

The \$20 million TIGER grant was part of \$95.5 million in grants Massachusetts received. It will provide the final necessary funding to move forward with the groundbreaking of the "Fast Track New Bedford" project that will revitalize New Bedford's waterfront and initiate construction of a key component of South Coast Rail. The rail project is expected to create immediate construction jobs and reduce fuel consumption by 292,000 gallons of gas per year.

The bridges that will be rebuilt with the TIGER grant funds are immediately north of the planned Whale's Tooth Station for the South Coast Rail project. The freight rail bridges are 103 years old and can only allow trains to travel a maximum of 5 miles per hour. Rebuilding the bridges will allow freight to continue to be hauled by rail, a more environmentally-friendly way to transport goods.

"This is a highly competitive federal discretionary grant program that required convincing evidence that transportation enhancements would bring smart growth and economic benefit," said Jeffrey Mullan, Massachusetts Department of Transportation Secretary & CEO. "This award again validates the Governor's commitment to smart federal stimulus investments, regional equity, and the promise of South Coast Rail."

The Fast Track New Bedford project has been planned in a partnership involving MassDOT and the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development working with the City. The project should begin construction in fall 2010 and is scheduled to be completed by early 2012.

"Upgrading the existing infrastructure is a vital step in the development of the SouthCoast rail project," said Senator Joan M. Menard. "I am pleased to hear Governor Patrick is prioritizing this money for the necessary renovations."

"I would like to thank Congressman Frank and the federal government and Governor Patrick and his Administration for continuing to make enhanced rail service to the South Coast a priority. This funding is another significant step forward in our ongoing efforts to bring improved transportation options to the greater New Bedford and Fall River area," said Representative Stephen R. Canessa.

"I've been of the mind that we should pursue the upgrading of existing tracks in anticipation of commuter rail service to New Bedford and Fall River. I feel it's important to our region's economy to make sure we are connected to Boston, as other regions are, and I'm please about this news of the TIGER grant which will not only provide an opportunity to upgrade the rail system, but will also provide job opportunities," said Representative Robert M. Koczera. "This is yet another sign of Governor Patrick's support and to the region and to bringing commuter rail service to it. I think this shows the contrast between this Administration's support and those seeking the Governor of the state."

"This announcement is another in a long line of major steps forward in bringing this project to fruition," said Representative John F. Quinn. "The Governor and his administration has never wavered from their commitment to this much needed project in Southeastern Massachusetts."

"This award represents an important step towards the funding for the commuter rail to New Bedford and most importantly this federal stimulus money will create jobs now," said Representative Antonio F. D. Cabral, Jr.

"The people of the City of New Bedford are extremely excited about receiving a TIGER Grant for rail and bridge construction. Governor Patrick, Senator Kerry, Senator Kirk and Congressman Frank advocated vigorously for the TIGER grant and we would like to express our sincere gratitude for their work. These federal funds represent a commitment by the federal government to help construct this 21st century rail project. The commencement of building the southern portion of South Coast Rail will create jobs which will be working on the most important green project in the state," said Mayor Scott Lang of New Bedford.

"This award takes positive steps in so many ways," said Kristina Egan, MassDOT South Coast Rail Project Manager. "The rail bridges are not only the first step in construction of South Coast Rail as we build from south to north but will immediately benefit freight rail service and open waterfront land for development."

"The Whale's Tooth station project, which will be the next phase of the project, will be a model "green" building using renewable energy technologies. It will connect area buses, city buses, Fast Ferry service to Nantucket and future passenger rail and house a "one-stop" career center, while building a signature pedestrian and bicycle bridge that will be a New Bedford landmark and connect neighborhoods to the waterfront."

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