



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

NEWS

URBAN MASS TRANSPORTATION ADMINISTRATION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

FOR RELEASE 10:00 A.M.
Friday, January 26, 1973

UMTA 73-4
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Secretary of Transportation John A. Volpe met with Massachusetts Governor Francis W. Sargent today to execute a final agreement for a \$19.5 million Federal loan to finance the State's purchase of Penn Central rights-of-way serving metropolitan Boston.

The agreement cleared the way for the immediate transfer of the Federal funds to the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA), an agency of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The loan was made by the U.S. Transportation Department's Urban Mass Transportation Administration (UMTA). It will provide all the funds required for the purchase of 145 miles of Penn Central rights-of-way which will be preserved for future public transportation needs in the Greater Boston area.

The final agreement was executed at a special ceremony in Washington attended by officials of the State of Massachusetts, the U.S. Department of Transportation and by members of the Massachusetts delegation to Congress. The agreement was signed by Secretary Volpe, Governor Sargent and Urban Mass Transportation Administrator Carlos C. Villarreal.

Secretary Volpe said the loan represents a significant step in the Nixon Administration's program for building modern and efficient public transportation systems throughout the country. "This," he said, "is the first advance acquisition loan to be made under the 1970 Mass Transportation Assistance Act. By purchasing these rights-of-way in advance, valuable properties will be preserved until they can be incorporated into the regional transportation system now being developed for the Boston area."

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Secretary Volpe said he knew from personal experience how important these commuter lines have been in the past. He said he is greatly pleased that they will now be restored and improved for the benefit of Boston area residents.

Governor Sargent described the loan as an outstanding example of Federal assistance in the efforts of State and local governments to solve their transportation problems. "The rights-of-way we are acquiring by means of this loan," he said, "will be developed in the next few years to provide extensive commuter rail service throughout metropolitan Boston and adjacent areas. Through the acquisition of properties already developed for transit use, a comprehensive service can be provided with minimum difficulty and at minimum expense."

UMTA Administrator Villarreal said the loan is one of the first important steps in the 1.3 billion dollar program to revitalize Boston's public transportation system. "I should point out," he added, "that as the regional transportation plan develops, the MBTA will become eligible for Federal capital grants to help repay the loan on a project-by-project basis."

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For further information, contact the UMTA Office of Public Affairs at (202) 426-4043, or MBTA, Boston, Mass. (UMTA Project No. MA-03-9001)

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