

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

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EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT, BOSTON, May 28, 1912.

*To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives:*

I take this occasion while ample time still remains for legislation this year, to appeal to this Legislature again to co-operate with me in a constructive program for the immediate settlement of our transportation problems. I have been at great pains to take every opportunity to inform myself as to public opinion in regard to every aspect of this great question, so that when the time came for final action it might represent the real aspirations of the whole people.

I am now convinced that the public demands:—

1. A stronger control and regulation by the State of the public service companies, such as can only be exercised through a powerfully constituted Public Service Commission;
2. The connection of our two principal railroad terminals by means of a tunnel through Boston, and that this work should be accomplished by public ownership.

The absolute necessity for these two steps I stated in my last inaugural. I there advocated again the establishment of a public utilities board with centralized and increased powers, on the ground that our present system of State control had become wholly inadequate. In that inaugural I also called for the ownership by the State of our rail terminals and the construction of a tunnel system connecting them, thereby clearing away the uncertainties of the present situation.

Real regulation can only be obtained by the establishment of a Public Service Commission of the modern type with mandatory powers over rates and service. Such a commission now exists in every progressive State in the Union, while Massachusetts still suffers from the inadequate facilities and inveterate abuses of the old regime.

What the people of this State demand is the immediate development of their transportation systems along the most ad-

vanced lines. This means, in the first place, the immediate construction by the public authorities of a tunnel system connecting South Boston, Charlestown and East Boston, open to all railroads entering Boston, and, as a part of this general plan, the compulsory electrification of all lines entering the city.

I believe that the Legislature would grievously disappoint the earnest desire of the people if it should adjourn without being willing to spend the time necessary to work out a general scheme of public control, of the things most essential to our commercial advancement. Personally I stand ready to cooperate with any Committee to which action upon this message may be referred, by submitting for its consideration a draft of a comprehensive measure for State action of the sort I have outlined.

I feel strongly that the time has come for two positive steps; first for the State to take control of the situation by public construction of at least the tunnels themselves as the essential parts of the terminal system, and second, for the ordering of the railroads to electrify their lines at once, so as to be ready to use these public terminals.

The Metropolitan District cannot longer wait for these substantial improvements which are demanded by the industrial and commercial interests of the city. If Boston is to grow and take her place among the great industrial and commercial cities of the country, improved transportation facilities must be provided immediately. So imperative is the necessity for having these expenditures made at once that I believe that this is one of the rare cases for public construction.

The City or State is fully equipped, through the Transit Commission, to proceed with the construction of these connecting tunnels as soon as you authorize it. The terms for their use can be made such that they will be neither burdensome to the public, nor to the railroads, and provision should be made that all railroads now entering Boston, or hereafter entering it, should use this tunnel system in common under the immediate supervision of the Service Commission.

EUGENE N. FOSS.



