

# Massachusetts legislators pass emergency response support for Southcoast Rail Fire & Rescue

“Great news!

The Transportation Bond Bill Conference Committee which I chaired on behalf of the House of Representatives in my role as Chair of the Transportation Committee, completed our work on Saturday.

On Sunday, both the House and Senate adopted the overall bill which includes my original amendment for special safety extraction equipment necessary to be ready for the start of South Coast Rail service in 2023. The final authorization of \$900,000 will allow for the purchase of new specialized safety equipment which would be deployed strategically with the fire departments in New Bedford, Fall River, Taunton and Lakeville.

As is often the case, this great idea started with a meeting request to me from New Bedford Fire Chief Kruger along with members of New Bedford Firefighters Local #841 and the PFFM Legislative Team represented by Billy Cabral. As a group, we reached out to my Bristol County colleagues in the Legislature and the regional fire chiefs in Bristol and Plymouth Counties. The public always benefits from this kind of cooperation and experience.

While every legislator from our region pitched in, key help was provided by Senator Montigny, and my House colleagues Rep. Chris Markey, Rep. Paul Schmid and Rep Chris Hendricks.

The legislation is now on Governor Baker’s desk and I urge him to support this critical part of the bill during his review

and expected approval.” -Rep Bill Straus.