

SENATE No. 2593

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

—
**In the One Hundred and Ninety-Fourth General Court
(2025-2026)**
—

SENATE, September 8, 2025.

The committee on Higher Education to whom was referred the petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 942) of Mark C. Montigny for legislation to establish a reduce fare pilot program for students aboard South Coast Rail, report the accompanying bill (Senate, No. 2593).

For the committee,
Joanne M. Comerford

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**In the One Hundred and Ninety-Fourth General Court
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An Act to provide reduced or free fare on public transportation for students at public institutions of higher education.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1 (a) There shall be a special legislative commission to study and develop
2 recommendations for funding, policies and practices designed to provide reduced or free fare on
3 Massachusetts Bay Transit Authority services for all students of public institutions of higher
4 education in the commonwealth.

5 (b) The commission shall consist of the following members: the house and senate chairs
6 of the joint committee on transportation, who shall serve as co-chairs; 2 members of the
7 Massachusetts Department of Transportation board of directors, one of whom shall serve as co-
8 chair; the speaker of the house of representatives or a designee; the president of the senate or a
9 designee; the minority leader of the house of representatives, or a designee; the minority leader
10 of the senate, or a designee; the house and senate chairs of the joint committee on higher
11 education; the general manager of the Massachusetts Bay Transit Authority, or a designee; 1
12 member of the Massachusetts Bay Transit Authority board of directors; 2 members who shall be
13 representatives of state universities in the commonwealth recommended by the Massachusetts

14 State Universities Council of Presidents; 2 members who shall be representatives of community
15 colleges in the commonwealth recommended by the Massachusetts Association of Community
16 Colleges; 2 members who shall be representatives of the University of Massachusetts
17 recommended by the president of the university; 1 member of Transportation for Massachusetts;
18 and 3 members appointed by the governor, each of whom shall be students at the time of their
19 appointment at a public institution of higher education.

20 (c) The commission shall investigate and study ways to provide reduced or free fare for
21 all students of public institutions of higher education in the commonwealth on Massachusetts
22 Bay Transit Authority services, and shall prepare a report that shall include, but not be limited to:
23 (i) the financial impact of reduced or free fare on the Massachusetts Bay Transit Authority; (ii)
24 the overall cost, benefits and potential challenges associated with different fare discount levels
25 for students including, but not limited to, 50 per cent reduced fare and free fare options; (iii)
26 funding options and associated potential benefits and downsides for 50 per cent reduced fare and
27 free fare options including, but not limited to, financial contributions by public institutions of
28 higher education, financial contributions through tuition and fees by students attending public
29 institutions of higher education and state and federal funding sources; (iv) current and anticipated
30 ridership data of students attending public institutions of higher education at various fare levels;
31 (v) examples from other states and transit authorities which have implemented reduced or fare
32 free options for public higher education students; and (iv) policy and funding recommendations
33 for implementing reduced or free fare on Massachusetts Bay Transit Authority services for all
34 students of public institutions of higher education in the commonwealth.

35 (d) The Massachusetts Department of Transportation shall furnish reasonable staff and
36 other support for the work of the commission. Members of the commission may receive

37 reimbursement for the reasonable expenses incurred in carrying out their responsibilities as
38 members of the commission under procedures established by the department.

39 (e) The commission shall file its report with the clerks of the senate and house of
40 representatives, the senate and house committees on ways and means, the joint committee on
41 transportation and the joint committee on higher education, no later than 12 months after the
42 effective date of this act. The report shall be posted on the website of the Massachusetts
43 Department of Transportation.