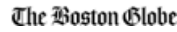




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T looks to crack down on fare evaders by boosting fines

First violation would cost \$150

By [Matt Rocheleau](#)
Globe Correspondent / February 15, 2011

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The MBTA is seeking to raise the fine for first-time fare evaders tenfold — from \$15 to \$150 — and decrease the time allowed to pay the fines from one year to three weeks, Transit Police Chief Paul MacMillan said.

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The T, which has filed a bill in the state Legislature to make the changes, is taking the steps to rein in fare scofflaws. The number of fines issued for evasion has been rising sharply — from 818 citations in 2007 to 3,248 last year.

“The current amount of \$15 [for a first offense] is not a significant deterrent,” MacMillan said in an e-mail. “Plus, the payment scheme for the fine is too long and arduous.”

The current fines — which also include \$100 for a second offense and \$250 for a third or additional offense — have not risen since 2007, T officials said. If the bill is approved, the fine for a second offense would be \$250 and \$500 for a third.

During a chat Friday on [Boston.com](#), MacMillan wrote: “Fare enforcement is part of our duties. We have written thousands of tickets for fare evasion and will continue with our enforcement actions. General Manager [Richard] Davey is in support of increasing the fines for fare evasion.”

Officials said in past years the transit system could be losing as much as 3 percent of its annual transportation revenue to fare evasion. Last year, the T brought in \$451 million, 3 percent of which would be \$13.5 million.

Those fined would also have less time before the T refers their names to the Registry of Motor Vehicles. The measure is designed to prevent scofflaws from renewing their driver’s licenses unless they pay their tickets.

MacMillan said the T also plans to expand its camera system to identify and catch criminal suspects, including chronic fare evaders. The transit system often asks for the public’s help by posting video clips or snapshots from those cameras on the Web.

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