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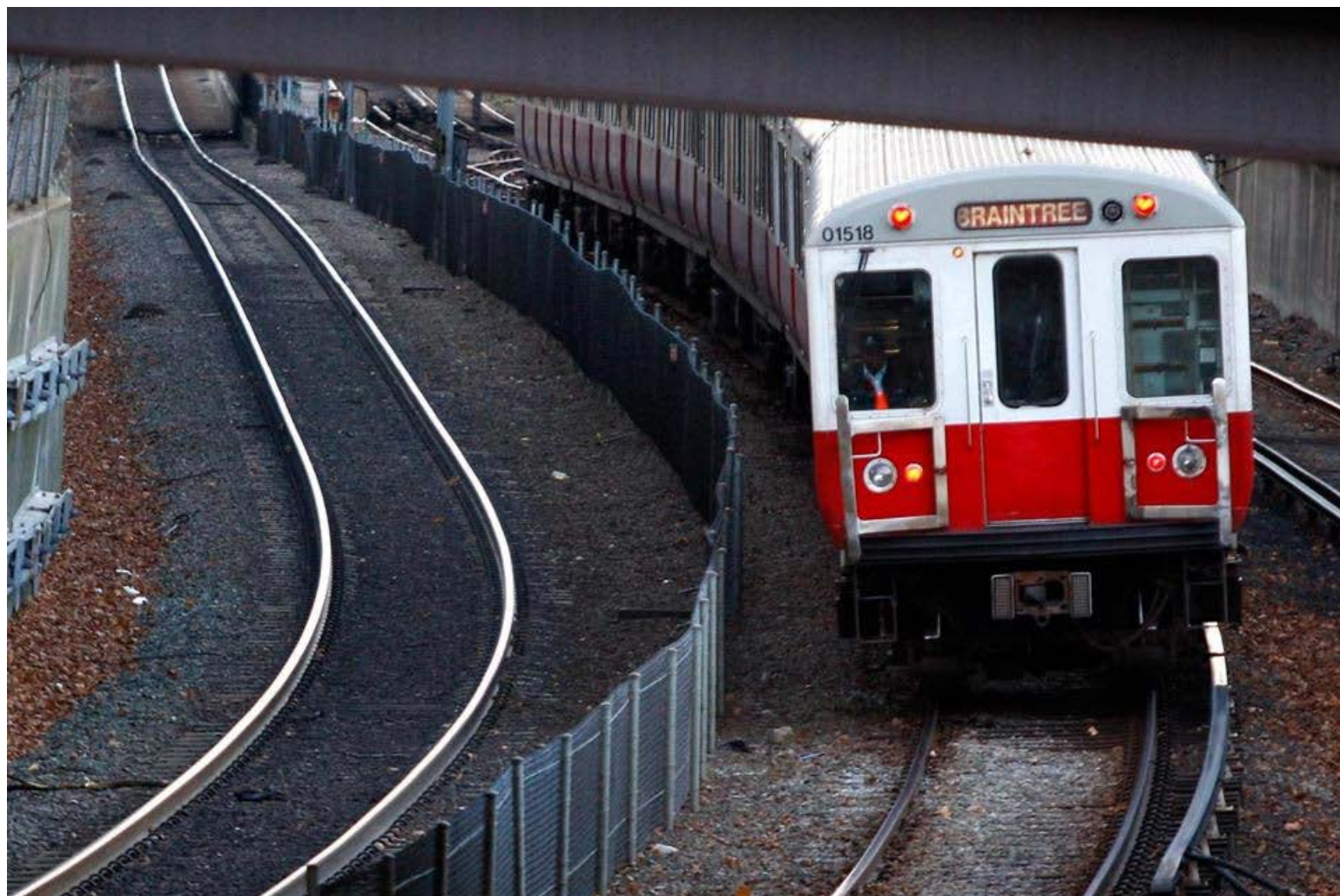
The Boston Globe

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MBTA subway fares cheaper than in most major US cities

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The T is currently limited in how it raises fares, which it can only do by 5 percent every two years.

By **Matt Rocheleau**

GLOBE STAFF APRIL 08, 2015

Taking the subway in Boston is generally cheaper than riding transit systems in other major US cities, a point highlighted in a special report released Wednesday that calls on Massachusetts lawmakers to lift limits on the T's ability to raise its prices.

Only one other large municipal subway system — in San Francisco — charges less than the T for monthly passes, and only two systems — in Los Angeles and Philadelphia — charge less per ride, according to a Globe review of fares in eight other cities.

The most expensive city among those the Globe reviewed was Washington, D.C., where users pay \$237 for a monthly pass and up to \$5.90 for a ride. Washington, D.C.'s subway, the Metro, was also the only system that charged regular riders based on distance and time of day and not a flat rate.

The T is currently limited in how it raises fares, which it can only do by 5 percent every two years. The [report](#) issued Wednesday by a special panel appointed by Governor Charlie Baker called on the state Legislature to lift that cap.

The report found that passenger fares collected by subway agencies in many other cities cover greater proportions of those systems' annual operating expenses than fares collected by the T do. Meanwhile, the T's operating costs have increased significantly year-to-year, and maintenance expenses per vehicle mile traveled are now among the highest nationally.

Subway fares in major cities around the US

The MBTA is among the cheapest in terms of both monthly pass and per-ride fares

City	System/operator name	Monthly pass	Base fare for regular riders/passholders
Boston	MBTA	\$75.00	\$2.10
New York	MTA	\$116.50	\$2.75
Washington D.C.	Metro	\$237.00	\$2.15-\$5.90
Chicago	"L"	\$100.00	\$2.25
San Francisco	SFMTA	\$68.00	\$2.25

Los Angeles	Metro Rail	\$100.00	\$1.75
Philadelphia	SEPTA	\$91.00	\$1.80
Atlanta	MARTA	\$95.00	\$2.50
Miami	Metrorail	\$112.50	\$2.25

DATA: Subway system operators

Note: Rates in some cities are higher for riders who do not regularly use the system and/or do not own the system's payment card (i.e. CharlieCard). Fares in some cities also vary depending on the time of day.

MATT ROCHELEAU/GLOBE STAFF

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