

Final FY 19 Budget

SECTION 101. There shall be a transportation subcommittee convened in the working group convened pursuant to section 137 of chapter 47 of the acts of 2017 to identify and evaluate the issues, benefits and challenges of creating a seasonal rail service between New York City and the county of Berkshire.

The subcommittee's responsibilities shall include, but not be limited to: (i) identifying and evaluating the issues, costs, needs and benefits of existing and non-existing transportation alternatives in the county of Berkshire for visitors that arrive from New York City at the Joseph Scelsi intermodal transportation center in the city of Pittsfield; (ii) making recommendations to improve ground transportation alternatives for riders who arrive at the intermodal center in the city of Pittsfield to ensure that Berkshire Flyer riders have reasonable access to transportation options to arrive at their next point of destination in the Berkshires; (iii) collaborating with representatives from the ride-sharing industry and other public and private transportation providers in the county of Berkshire to develop those transportation alternative recommendations; (iv) collecting and evaluating data on ridership from New York City to the city of Pittsfield; (v) developing a marketing strategy, in collaboration with individuals and businesses who are employed in the hospitality industry and transportation industry, to promote the seasonal rail service between New York City and the Berkshires; and (vi) identifying and developing private partnerships to potentially support a pilot season of passenger rail service in calendar year 2020.

The first meeting of the subcommittee shall take place not later than September 1, 2018. Members of the subcommittee shall include, but shall not be limited to: a designee of 1Berkshire Strategic Alliance, Inc., who shall serve as co-chair; a designee of the Berkshire regional planning commission, who shall serve as cochair; a designee of the secretary of housing and economic development; a designee of the secretary of transportation from the rail and transit division; a designee of the Berkshire regional transit authority; not less than 3 designees from the hospitality industry in county of Berkshire, who shall be appointed by the co-chairs; a designee of the department of community development of the city of Pittsfield; an elected municipal official from the southern part of the county of Berkshire, who shall be appointed by the co-chairs; an elected municipal official from the northern part of the county of Berkshire, who shall be appointed by the co-chairs; a designee of the president of Berkshire County Board of Realtors, Inc.; a designee of the senator from the Berkshire, Hampshire, Franklin and Hampden district established under section 3 of chapter 57 of the General Laws; and existing rail service stakeholders, as deemed necessary by the co-chairs.

The subcommittee shall file a report of their findings and recommendations with the clerks of the house of representatives and the senate, the house and senate committees on ways and means, the joint committee on tourism, arts and cultural development, the joint committee on transportation and the Massachusetts Department of Transportation not later than March 1, 2019.