

SENATE No. 2

Message from Her Honor the Lieutenant Governor relative to the general concerns of the Commonwealth.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts



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To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives,

Mr. Speaker, Madam President. Representatives and Senators. Constitutional Officers and members of the Governor’s Council. Mr. Chief Justice and members of our Judiciary. Sheriffs. District Attorneys. Mayors. Local Officials. Clergy and distinguished guests. Cabinet Secretaries and leaders in our administration.

Thank you for gathering with us on this very important day.

And thank you for your continued hard work and partnership representing the people of this great Commonwealth.

Jan Cellucci and the Cellucci family, thank you for being here and for all you’ve done for Massachusetts.

And our friend, Charlie Baker, my partner in governing, your leadership and compassion are an example to all of us and an inspiration to me.

“And on behalf of the children in the care of the Department of Children and Families, I sincerely thank Lauren Baker for caring about them so much.

To my family, my brother Ken and his family, thank you for being here.

My parents Fran and Judy, thank you for instilling in me the values of hard work and perseverance.

My husband Steve, you are always my rock. And Bobby and Judy, you make us proud, I love you all so much.

Four years ago, when I first stood here to take the oath of office, I spoke of my great grandfather, Francesco Polito, and as I stand here today with all of you I’m reminded of him again.

He immigrated to this country from Sicily, moving to Worcester County to build a better life for his family.

At that time, he started a business making concrete blocks.

And just as those concrete blocks became the foundations of homes, businesses and buildings here in Massachusetts, his good career and growing business became the foundation for our family.

And when I think about the work that we've all shared over the last four years, I think about the strong foundation of partnership and progress that we've all built together.

In Governor Baker's first executive order, our community compact program was created.

It's been my great honor to lead that initiative because, like Governor Baker, I started my public service in local government.

It was there and later in representing Westborough and my hometown of Shrewsbury, that I learned that those we serve judge our success not by what's happening on Beacon Hill, but by what's happening in their communities and neighborhoods.

With that in mind, I want to recognize and honor the contributions of our local elected officials and municipal workforce. Because their efforts make our state stronger every single day.

And since we issued that executive order I've had the pleasure to visit and partner with leadership in all 351 of our cities and towns.

And on an exciting note, one of those cities is now the home of the Worcester Red Sox!

You know, I keep a flag from Mount Washington in my office, a Berkshire County community of 150 strong, as a reminder that our work here extends to every border of Massachusetts touching a truly diverse expanse of people and places.

And through our partnership with you, our legislative colleagues, we have a long list of accomplishments to be proud of.

We've led the nation on our efforts to tackle an opioid crisis that has terrorized families across this Commonwealth and our nation.

We've supported our teachers and students by funding education at record levels and given direct support to make our schools safer.

We've provided our public safety professionals and first responders with dedicated funding for equipment and training.

We've brought innovative approaches to combating domestic violence, establishing a tool kit that empowers local law enforcement and victims to identify abuse and hold offenders accountable.

We've formed a Black Advisory Commission and Latino Advisory Commission that have issued a robust set of recommendations that we'll fund in our upcoming budget.

We've led the nation on procuring renewable energy, reducing our carbon footprint and helping our communities become more resilient.

And so much more.

And just like my great grandfather's concrete block business that became the foundation for the future of his family, our work over these last four years serves as a strong foundation for this Commonwealth to build on in the years ahead.

And that's why we're here together today.

Throughout this nation's history, Massachusetts has been a leader. Together, we've continued that proud tradition of leadership.

And at this unique and sometimes troubling time in our American history, we've found a pathway to progress.

We've chosen partnership over partisanship and worked to find common ground.

We've focused on doing the work we were elected to do rather than getting bogged down in political gamesmanship.

And we've never forgotten that what we do here matters.

We're blessed to be the home to so many hard working, creative and passionate people. Seeking nothing more than the opportunity to build a better life for their families.

And now is the time that we press forward.

Collaborating, finding common ground, remembering the solemn responsibility that we have to our Commonwealth and its people.

And recognizing the gravity of the opportunity and trust we've been given.

Because this is the Massachusetts Way.

And because of our collective work over the last four years, we're in a uniquely strong position to build on these successes.

We must continue to strengthen our public education, realizing that our work isn't done until every student in every community has access to great schools.

We'll create further opportunities in STEM, vocational and technical schools and online learning, innovating our public education system and better connecting our students to good careers.

And, I've witnessed firsthand the transformational impact these programs can have for women and underserved communities.

We must work to create more housing choices in all communities, pushing forward with our Opportunities-for-All economic development agenda.

Creating more housing is important not only for our economic competitiveness, but so that the next generation of talent and our children can afford to stay here in Massachusetts.

We must continue to modernize our aging transportation infrastructure, finding innovative approaches to increase mobility and connecting more people to places efficiently.

And we must continue to make our state government and our communities more resilient. Recognizing the effects of climate change, assessing vulnerabilities and preparing our infrastructure so that future generations may continue to prosper.

"On each of these initiatives, I look forward to working with Governor Baker, our Cabinet and all of you. To make real progress, to keep Massachusetts moving forward.

And while the challenges ahead of us are real and our goals ambitious, we recognize why and how we will meet them.

We have accepted this solemn responsibility because the amazing people that call Massachusetts home have turned to us.

We will resist the temptations to react to the headlines coming from Washington D.C. and won't regress to partisan bickering.

And we will achieve these goals because we must, by building on the foundation of partnership and progress that we've established over these last four years.

Because this is who we are. This is the Massachusetts way.

And I for one am filled with optimism, excitement and gratitude for the opportunity to stand with each of you and continue this great journey.

Thank you.

"God bless you, our communities, our great nation.