

# HOUSE . . . . . No. 5493

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## The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, June 9, 2026.

The committee on Ways and Means, to whom was referred the message from Her Excellency the Governor recommending legislation relative to making appropriations for the fiscal year 2026 to provide for supplementing certain existing appropriations and for certain other activities and projects (House, No. 5377), reports, in part, recommending that the accompanying bill ought to pass (House, No. 5493) [Total Appropriation: \$227,272,868.00].

For the committee,

AARON MICHLEWITZ.

**HOUSE . . . . . No. 5493**

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**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

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

An Act making appropriations for the fiscal year 2026 to provide for supplementing certain existing appropriations and for certain other activities and projects.

*Whereas*, The deferred operation of this act would tend to defeat its purposes, which are to to forthwith make supplemental appropriations for fiscal year 2026 and to make certain changes in law, each of which is immediately necessary to carry out those appropriations or to accomplish other important public purposes, therefore it is hereby declared to be an emergency law, necessary for the immediate preservation of the public convenience.

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

1           SECTION 1. To provide for supplementing certain items in the general appropriation act  
2 and other appropriation acts for fiscal year 2026, the sums set forth in section 2 are hereby  
3 appropriated from the General Fund or the Transitional Escrow Fund established in section 16 of  
4 chapter 76 of the acts of 2021, as amended by section 4 of chapter 98 of the acts of 2022, unless  
5 specifically designated otherwise in this act or in those appropriation acts, for the several  
6 purposes and subject to the conditions specified in this act or in those appropriation acts, and  
7 subject to the laws regulating the disbursement of public funds for the fiscal year ending June 30,  
8 2026. These sums shall be in addition to any amounts previously appropriated and made  
9 available for the purposes of those items. These sums shall be made available through the fiscal  
10 year ending June 30, 2026.

11 SECTION 2.

12 EXECUTIVE OFFICE FOR ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE

13 *Office of the Secretary*

14 1595-6153 No Cost Call Trust Fund Transfer.....\$22,520,889

15 *Department of Revenue*

16 1233-2401 Chapter 40S Education Payments.....\$731,409

17 EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

18 *Department of Public Health*

19 4512-0200 Bureau of Substance Addiction Services.....\$14,071,288

20 EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF HOUSING AND LIVABLE COMMUNITIES

21 *Housing and Livable Communities*

22 7004-0100 Operation of Homelessness Programs.....\$8,181,007

23 7004-9315 Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Fee Retained Revenue.....\$2,000,000

24 EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF PUBLIC SAFETY AND SECURITY

25 *Office of the Chief Medical Examiner*

26 8000-0105 Office of the Chief Medical Examiner.....\$1,133,659

27 *Massachusetts State Police*



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*Massachusetts Department of Transportation*

1596-2527 For the cost of snow and ice removal services incurred by the  
Massachusetts Department of Transportation and the department of conservation and recreation;  
provided, that funds in this item may be transferred to the Massachusetts Transportation Trust  
Fund established under section 4 of chapter 6C of the General Laws; and provided further, that  
funds in this item may be transferred to the department of conservation and  
recreation.....\$159,800,000

Education and Transportation Fund...100%

SECTION 3. Chapter 10 of the General Laws is hereby amended by striking out section  
35 and inserting in place thereof the following section:-

Section 35. (a) There shall be established and set up on the books of the commonwealth a  
separate fund, to be known as the State Lottery and Gaming Fund. Said fund shall consist of all  
revenues received from the sale of lottery tickets or shares, and all other monies credited or  
transferred thereto from any other fund or source pursuant to law.

(b) In order to provide local property tax relief and continue services at the local level,  
revenues of the lottery commission from sales pursuant to subsection (a) of section 25 shall be  
expended only for the following purposes:

(i) for the payment of prizes to the holders of winning lottery tickets or shares;

(ii) for the expenses of the commission in administering and operating the lottery, as  
certified by the secretary of administration and finance; provided, that the state treasurer shall  
transfer the certified amount to the General Fund for said purposes; and

69 (iii) for budgeted aid to cities and towns as provided in section 18C of chapter 58, subject  
70 to appropriation.

71 (c) In order to expand access to affordable, high-quality childcare, revenues of the lottery  
72 commission from sales pursuant to subsection (b) of section 25 shall be expended only for the  
73 following purposes:

74 (i) for the payment of prizes to the holders of winning lottery tickets or shares;

75 (ii) for the expenses of the commission in administering and operating the lottery; and

76 (iii) for the Early Education and Care Operational Grant Fund established by section 19  
77 of chapter 15D, subject to appropriation.

78 (d) For the purposes of accommodating discrepancies between the receipt of revenues  
79 and related expenditures, the commission may incur expenses and the comptroller may certify  
80 for payment expenses incurred in anticipation of revenues.

81 SECTION 4. Subsection (a) of section 78 of said chapter 10, as appearing in the 2024  
82 Official Edition, is hereby amended by adding the following 4 paragraphs:-

83 As used in this section, the term “Korean Emergency” shall mean the period on or after  
84 June 25, 1950 to January 31, 1955.

85 As used in this section, the term “Persian Gulf War” shall mean the period on or after  
86 August 2, 1990 to April 10, 1991.

87 As used in this section, the term “Vietnam Conflict” shall mean the period on or after  
88 July 1, 1958 to May 17, 1975.

89 As used in this section, the term “World War II” shall mean the period on or after  
90 September 16, 1940 to July 25, 1947.

91 SECTION 5. Said section 78 of said chapter 10, as so appearing, is hereby further  
92 amended by inserting after the word “served”, in line 17, the following words:- , or is currently  
93 serving,.

94 SECTION 6. Said section 78 of said chapter 10, as so appearing, is hereby further  
95 amended by striking out, in lines 22 to 24, inclusive, the words “have been in the commonwealth  
96 for a period of not less than 6 months before the time of the person’s entry into the service” and  
97 inserting in place thereof the following words:- be in the commonwealth.

98 SECTION 7. Said section 78 of said chapter 10, as so appearing, is hereby further  
99 amended by inserting after the word “Medal”, in line 49, the following words:- , or equivalent  
100 Expeditionary Medal,.

101 SECTION 8. Said section 78 of said chapter 10, as so appearing, is hereby further  
102 amended by striking out, in lines 55 to 57, inclusive, the words “have been in the commonwealth  
103 for a period of not less than 6 months immediately before the time of the person’s entry into  
104 service” and inserting in place thereof the following words:- be the commonwealth.

105 SECTION 9. Subsection (b) of said section 78 of said chapter 10, as so appearing, is  
106 hereby amended by adding the following paragraph:-

107 (6) Upon application, as provided in this section and as specified in rules and regulations  
108 established by the state treasurer, there shall be allowed and paid out of the treasury of the  
109 commonwealth, without further appropriation, the sums specified in such rules and regulations to

110 each person who has served in the armed forces of the United States in active service as part of  
111 World War II, the Korean Emergency, the Vietnam Conflict or the Persian Gulf War; provided,  
112 however, that the domicile of a person on account of whose service the application is filed shall  
113 be the commonwealth.

114 SECTION 10. Said section 78 of said chapter 10, as so appearing, is hereby further  
115 amended by striking out, in line 68, the words “(i) mother or father” and inserting in place  
116 thereof the following words:- (ii) mother or father.

117 SECTION 11. The first paragraph of subsection (e) of said section 78 of said chapter 10,  
118 as so appearing, is hereby amended by striking out the fifth and sixth sentences.

119 SECTION 12. Said section 78 of said chapter 10, as so appearing, is hereby further  
120 amended by striking out, in line 105, the word “section” and inserting in place thereof the  
121 following word:- act.

122 SECTION 13. Said section 78 of said chapter 10, as so appearing, is hereby further  
123 amended by striking out, in lines 111 and 112, the word “designed” and inserting in place thereof  
124 the following word:- designated.

125 SECTION 14. Said section 78 of said chapter 10, as so appearing, is hereby further  
126 amended by inserting after the word “service”, in line 123, the following words:- during the  
127 enlistment period.

128 SECTION 15. Section 7 of chapter 15D of the General Laws, as so appearing, is hereby  
129 amended by striking out, in lines 38 to 41, inclusive, the words “and all supported findings and  
130 pending investigations of abuse or neglect available through the department of children and

131 families consistent with sections 51B, 51E, and 51F of chapter 119” and inserting in place  
132 thereof the following words:- all supported findings and pending investigations of abuse or  
133 neglect available through the department of children and families, consistent with sections 51B,  
134 51E and 51F of chapter 119, and information contained in the disabled persons protection  
135 commission registry of abusive care providers, as established in section 15 of chapter 19C.

136 SECTION 16. Paragraph (ii) of subsection (a) of said section 7 of said chapter 15D, as so  
137 appearing, is hereby amended by adding the following sentence:- The department shall further  
138 obtain all information contained in the disabled persons protection commission registry of  
139 abusive care providers consistent with section 15 of chapter 19C.

140 SECTION 17. Section 30 of chapter 23B of the General Laws, as so appearing, is hereby  
141 amended by inserting after the word “appeal”, in lines 179 and 180, the following words:- ;  
142 provided, however, that assistance shall not be continued during the period of appeal for a  
143 termination arising from a: (a) reasonable cause to believe that a member of the household is  
144 engaging in or engaged in a criminal or significantly dangerous activity that threatens the health,  
145 safety or security of self, other residents, guests or staff; or (b) lack of children or pregnant  
146 women remaining in the household.

147 SECTION 18. Subparagraph (1) of paragraph (G) of said section 30 of said chapter 23B,  
148 as so appearing, is hereby amended by inserting after the definition of “Non-state-funded  
149 overflow emergency shelter site” the following definition:-

150 “Rapid track site”, a shelter site for unhoused families in the commonwealth that is  
151 eligible to receive funding as a temporary respite site under item 1599-2625 of section 2A of  
152 chapter 1 of the acts of 2025.

153 SECTION 19. Subparagraph (3) of said paragraph (G) of said section 30 of said chapter  
154 23B, as appearing in section 4 of chapter 1 of the acts of 2025, is hereby further amended by  
155 striking out the figure “6” and inserting in place thereof the following figure:- 9.

156 SECTION 20. Said paragraph (G) of said section 30 of said chapter 23B, as amended by  
157 said section 4 of said chapter 1, is hereby further amended by striking out subparagraph (8) and  
158 inserting in place thereof the following subparagraph:-

159 (8) The executive office shall maintain rapid track sites that shall be available to eligible  
160 families, as determined by an assessment of family risk pursuant to guidance issued by the  
161 executive office, and shall be subject to appropriation, rules, regulations and availability, for a  
162 period of not more than 30 days, subject to any extensions upon written certification by the  
163 secretary of housing and livable communities; provided, that rapid track sites shall only be  
164 available to families who provide information sufficient to comply with paragraph (C<sup>1/2</sup>);  
165 provided further, that the length of stay at a rapid track site shall constitute a benefit received  
166 under the emergency housing assistance program for the purpose of calculating the length of stay  
167 limit pursuant to subparagraph (3); and provided further, that placement in a rapid track site shall  
168 not make a family ineligible for the bridge shelter track after proving eligibility pursuant to  
169 section 7 of chapter 1 of the acts of 2025. This paragraph shall apply during any period in which  
170 the secretary of housing and livable communities has determined that the shelter system is no  
171 longer able to meet all current and projected demand for shelter from eligible families  
172 considering the facts and circumstances then existing in the commonwealth.

173 SECTION 21. Section 5 of chapter 23J of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2024  
174 Official Edition, is hereby amended by striking out, in lines 10, 11 and 22, the words “August  
175 15”, and inserting in place thereof, in each instance, the following words:- January 30.

176 SECTION 22. Section 9A of said chapter 23J, as so appearing, is hereby amended by  
177 striking out, in lines 113 and 114, the words “or offshore wind organization” and inserting in  
178 place thereof the following words:- , offshore wind organization or an entity engaged in port  
179 infrastructure development or operation in support of the offshore wind industry.

180 SECTION 23. Section 59 of chapter 23K of the General Laws, as so appearing, is hereby  
181 amended by striking out, in lines 29 and 30, the words “clause (c) of the second paragraph” and  
182 inserting in place thereof the following words:- clause (iii) of subsection (b).

183 SECTION 24. Section 63 of said chapter 23K, as so appearing, is hereby amended by  
184 striking out, in lines 10 and 11, the words “clause (c) of the second paragraph” and inserting in  
185 place thereof the following words:- clause (iii) of subsection (b).

186 SECTION 25. Chapter 26 of the General Laws is hereby amended by adding the  
187 following section:-

188 Section 13. (a) For the purposes of this section, “pharmacy benefit manager” shall have  
189 the same meaning as defined in section 1 of chapter 176Y.

190 (b) The commissioner of insurance may make and collect an assessment against  
191 pharmacy benefit managers licensed by the division of insurance pursuant to section 2 of chapter  
192 176Y to pay for the expenses related to the regulation and oversight of pharmacy benefit  
193 managers, including, but not limited to: (i) defraying the cost of salaries of any financial analysts,

194 licensing staff, market conduct specialists, attorneys, special investigators, staff with expertise in  
195 pharmacy and pharmaceutical processes, senior health researchers, administrative staff or any  
196 other staff as may be necessary, as determined by the commissioner; and (ii) compensating  
197 consultants, as necessary, retained by the commissioner. Said assessment shall be made at a rate  
198 sufficient to produce not less than \$1,000,000 annually. The assessment amounts shall be  
199 credited to the General Fund. The amount collected under this section shall be credited to the  
200 funds to which the appropriations for the division of insurance are charged.

201 (c) The assessment shall be allocated on a fair and reasonable basis among all pharmacy  
202 benefit managers licensed by the commissioner. The funds produced by said assessments shall be  
203 expended by the division, in addition to any other funds which may be appropriated, to assist in  
204 defraying the general operating expenses related to the regulation and oversight of pharmacy  
205 benefit managers and may be used to compensate consultants retained by the commissioner. A  
206 pharmacy benefit manager licensed by the commissioner shall pay the amount so assessed  
207 against it within 30 days after the date of the notice of assessment from the commissioner.

208 SECTION 26. Section 39R of chapter 30 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2024  
209 Official Edition, is hereby amended by striking out, in lines 5 and 6, 12 and 13 and 60 and 61,  
210 the words “thirty-eight A<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> to thirty-eight O, inclusive, of chapter seven”, each time it appears,  
211 and inserting in place thereof, in each instance, the following words:- 44 to 57, inclusive, of  
212 chapter 7C.

213 SECTION 27. The first paragraph of subdivision (4) of section 16 of chapter 32 of the  
214 General Laws, as so appearing, is hereby amended by adding the following 6 sentences:- If the  
215 chair of the board determines that the volume of appeals has resulted in a backlog, the chair may,

216 in writing, inform the attorney general, the public employee retirement administration  
217 commission and the governor of the backlog and the need for additional board members to  
218 address the backlog. If the backlog involves matters related to disability retirement or interim  
219 benefits, the chair may also, in writing, inform the secretary of health and human services. Upon  
220 notification by the chair of a backlog of appeals to the board, the attorney general, the public  
221 employee retirement administration commission, the governor and, if such backlog involves  
222 matters related to disability retirement or interim benefits, the secretary of health and human  
223 services, each shall, subject to availability of staffing, designate or appoint such number of  
224 additional members as determined by the chair, but not more than 4 additional members each;  
225 provided, however, that the public employee retirement administration commission shall  
226 designate or appoint additional members only to the extent necessary to address a backlog of  
227 cases that do not pertain to disability retirement or interim benefits. The secretary of health and  
228 human services may designate qualified staff from agencies within the executive office. The  
229 additional members shall be designated or appointed in the manner and ratio of the board itself to  
230 serve on the contributory retirement appeal board for not more than 3 years. The chair of the  
231 board shall organize such additional members into panels assigned to each matter pending before  
232 the contributory retirement appeal board, and a panel so organized shall be empowered to decide  
233 and resolve the appeal; provided, that each panel so organized shall consist of 3 members  
234 reflecting the membership of the board with a chair of the panel as determined by the chair of the  
235 board.

236 SECTION 28. Section 33 of chapter 36 of the General Laws, as so appearing, is hereby  
237 amended by striking out the third paragraph, in lines 7 and 8, and inserting in place thereof the  
238 following paragraph:-

239 Register: A sum equivalent to the salary of the clerk of the superior court department for  
240 criminal business in the county of Suffolk.

241 SECTION 29. Section 7 of chapter 70B of the General Laws, as so appearing, is hereby  
242 amended by striking out, in line 3, the figure “\$1,200,000,000” and inserting in place thereof the  
243 following figure:- \$1,300,000,000.

244 SECTION 30. Said section 7 of said chapter 70B, as so appearing, is hereby further  
245 amended by adding the following paragraph:-

246 Notwithstanding the preceding paragraph, for each fiscal year starting in fiscal year 2027,  
247 following the authority’s review of its financial health and audited financial statements, the  
248 authority may vote to award additional grants up to 10 per cent over the limit set forth in this  
249 section. The amount of any such additional grants shall be calculated separately and shall not  
250 impact the calculation of the annual limit in subsequent fiscal years. The authority may  
251 periodically adopt guidelines and policies related to the administration of the annual limit and  
252 additional grants.

253 SECTION 31. Section 10 of said chapter 70B, as so appearing, is hereby amended by  
254 striking out the first sentence and inserting in place thereof the following 2 sentences:- The grant  
255 percentage for approved school projects shall be applied to eligible costs, as determined by the  
256 authority in accordance with this chapter and any applicable regulations, policies or procedures  
257 set forth by the authority to implement this chapter. Such grant percentage shall be calculated  
258 based on the following formula; provided, however, that no grant percentage shall be greater  
259 than 80 per cent, unless any such percentage reimbursement points in excess of 80 per cent are

260 earned by an eligible applicant for achieving the standards necessary to be awarded incentive  
261 percentage points by the authority in accordance with paragraph (C) of subsection (a).

262 SECTION 32. Section 17 of said chapter 70B, as so appearing, is hereby amended by  
263 striking out subsections (a) and (b) and inserting in place thereof the following 2 subsections:-

264 (a) The authority shall submit an annual report to the governor, the house and senate  
265 committees on ways and means and the joint committee on education.

266 (b) The authority shall also conduct a periodic survey of the cities, towns and regional  
267 school districts to determine the need for new school facility construction to meet demand. Such  
268 periodic surveys shall include a listing of each school building within the commonwealth,  
269 together with a description of its size, capacity, age and state of maintenance and whether such  
270 school is likely to require construction, enlargement, reconstruction, rehabilitation or  
271 improvement due to such factors, including, but not limited to, deterioration, anticipated  
272 increases in school-age population or lack of adequate facilities to meet educational standards.  
273 Upon completion, the authority shall make such periodic surveys publicly available and shall  
274 submit such periodic surveys to the governor, the house and senate committees on ways and  
275 means and the joint committee on education.

276 SECTION 33. Section 72W of chapter 111 of the General Laws, as so appearing, is  
277 hereby amended by inserting after the fifth paragraph the following paragraph:-

278 The department may, without a prior hearing, suspend or refuse to renew the certification  
279 of a nurses' aide who poses an immediate and serious threat to the public health, safety or  
280 welfare; provided, that a hearing shall be afforded to the nurses' aide, pursuant to chapter 30A,

281 not later than 7 days after the department's action to determine whether such summary action  
282 was warranted.

283 SECTION 34. Section 72W<sup>1/2</sup> of said chapter 111, as so appearing, is hereby amended by  
284 striking out subsection (g) and inserting in place thereof the following 2 subsections:-

285 (g) The department may, without a prior hearing, suspend or refuse to renew the  
286 certification of a certified medication aide who poses an immediate and serious threat to the  
287 public health, safety or welfare; provided, that a hearing shall be afforded to the certified  
288 medication aide, pursuant to chapter 30A, not later than 7 days after the department's action to  
289 determine whether such summary action was warranted.

290 (h) The department shall promulgate rules and regulations to carry out this section.

291 SECTION 35. Chapter 112 of the General Laws is hereby amended by inserting after  
292 section 61A the following section:-

293 Section 61B. A board of registration under the supervision of the department of public  
294 health may, without a prior hearing, suspend or refuse to renew the license of a licensee who  
295 poses an immediate and serious threat to the public health, safety or welfare; provided, that a  
296 hearing shall be afforded to the licensee, pursuant to chapter 30A, not later than 7 days after the  
297 board's action to determine whether such summary action was warranted.

298 SECTION 36. Chapter 152 of the General Laws is hereby amended by striking out  
299 section 25A, as appearing in the 2024 Official Edition, and inserting in place thereof the  
300 following section:-

301 Section 25A. In order to promote the health, safety and welfare of employees, every  
302 employer shall provide for the payment to their employees of the compensation provided for by  
303 this chapter in the following manner:

304 (1) By insurance with an insurer or by membership in a workers' compensation self-  
305 insurance group, established pursuant to the provisions of sections 25E to 25U, inclusive; or

306 (2) Subject to the rules of the department, by obtaining from the department annually a  
307 license as a self-insurer by conforming to either subparagraph (a) or (b) and to subparagraph (c)  
308 if required. Every employer desiring to be licensed as a self-insurer shall make application for  
309 such license on a form provided by the department. The application shall contain: (1) a sworn  
310 itemized statement of the assets and liabilities of the applicant; (2) a payroll report for the  
311 preceding fiscal year of the applicant; and (3) a detailed description of the nature and kind of  
312 business carried on.

313 (a) By keeping on deposit with the state treasurer in trust for the benefit and security of  
314 employees such amount of securities, not less in market value than \$100,000, as may be required  
315 by the department, said securities to be in the form of cash, bonds, stocks or other evidences of  
316 indebtedness as the department may require, and to be used, liquidated and disbursed only upon  
317 order of the department for the purposes of paying the benefits provided for by this chapter. The  
318 department shall, at least annually, and at its discretion more frequently, determine the liabilities  
319 of a self-insurer both incurred or to be incurred because of personal injuries to employees under  
320 this chapter. The department shall require an additional deposit or further security when the sum  
321 of the self-insurer's liability both incurred or to be incurred exceeds the deposit or any required  
322 reinsurance, or permit a decrease of said deposit provided the value of said deposit in no case

323 shall be less than \$100,000. The department may permit a substitution of securities in place of  
324 those deposited. Interest, dividends and other income from said deposit or deposits shall be  
325 payable to the employer that deposited them, unless the department directs otherwise. The  
326 deposit or deposits may be returned to the employer if the employer shall: (i) insure with an  
327 insurer under paragraph (1); (ii) qualify as a self-insurer under subparagraph (b); or (iii) cease to  
328 transact business in the commonwealth; provided, that the employer shall demonstrate, to the  
329 satisfaction of the department that they are not under any obligation to pay compensation under  
330 this chapter, or, if the department so requires, they furnish the department with a single premium  
331 non-cancellable policy, insuring the employer against any liability that may have arisen under  
332 this chapter, or with a bond executed as surety by some company with a rating of "A" or higher  
333 authorized to transact the business of workers' compensation insurance in this commonwealth, in  
334 an amount and form approved by the department, guaranteeing the payment of any liability on  
335 the employer's part that may have arisen under this chapter. No deposit so deposited shall be  
336 assignable or subject to attachment or be liable in any way for the debt of the self-insurer. If an  
337 employer engaged in interstate or foreign commerce certifies that the laws of the United States  
338 provide for liability for injury to or death of its employees, the deposit shall be returned to the  
339 employer less such amount as determined by the department as necessary to satisfy against  
340 liability that may already have arisen under this chapter; provided, that such determination by the  
341 department shall be reviewable by the superior court for the county in which the employer  
342 resides, or, in the case of a corporation, where said corporation has a principal place of business.  
343 Any bond issued pursuant to this subparagraph shall remain in full force and effect until a new  
344 bond is issued on the same conditions as a bond issued under subparagraph (b) and with an

345 effective date approved by the department, and shall be subject to all provisions of this chapter  
346 and 452 C.M.R. 5.00.

347 (b) By furnishing annually a bond running to the commonwealth, with a surety company  
348 with a rating of “A” or higher authorized to transact business in the commonwealth as surety, in  
349 such form as may be approved by the department and in such amount not less than \$100,000 as  
350 may be required by the department. The bond shall be upon the condition that if the license of  
351 the principal shall be revoked, or if the principal shall cease to transact business in the  
352 commonwealth, or if the department shall refuse to renew the license, or if the principal shall  
353 insure with an insurer, then the department may, in its discretion, demand, and the principal then  
354 shall, deposit with the state treasurer 1 of the following: (i) an amount of securities equal to the  
355 penal sum of the bond; (ii) a single premium non-cancellable policy issued by some insurance  
356 company authorized to transact the business of workers’ compensation insurance in the  
357 commonwealth, insuring the principal against any liability that may have arisen under this  
358 chapter; or (iii) a bond executed as surety by some company with an “A” rating or above  
359 authorized to transact the business aforesaid in the commonwealth, in an amount and form  
360 approved by the department, guaranteeing the payment of any liability on the principal’s part that  
361 may have arisen under this chapter. Unless the department has made such demand and the  
362 principal has made such deposit with the treasurer, such bond shall remain in full force and effect  
363 for any and all liabilities of the self-insurer under this chapter. No deposit with the state treasurer  
364 under this section shall be assignable or subject to attachment or be liable in any way for the debt  
365 of the self-insurer.

366 The department shall, at least annually, determine the liabilities of a self-insurer both  
367 incurred or to be incurred because of personal injuries to employees under this chapter. The

368 department may at any time require an additional bond, similarly conditioned, or further security  
369 or permit a decrease in the amount of said bond; provided, that the amount of the bond or the  
370 bonds in no case shall be less than \$100,000. The liability of the surety shall not exceed in the  
371 aggregate the penal sum or sums stated in any such annual bond or bonds or in any endorsements  
372 giving effect to any such increase or reduction. The department may permit a substitution of a  
373 new bond or bonds for the bond or bonds that have been furnished and shall return the old bond  
374 or bonds to the self-insurer as soon as a new annual bond has been obtained. Any bond for which  
375 the department permits or requires substitution shall remain in full force and effect until a new  
376 bond is obtained with an effective date approved by the department. When a surety bond is  
377 activated under this chapter, the surety bond company shall, within 10 days of the activation,  
378 commence payment of any liabilities that may arise or have arisen under this chapter on behalf of  
379 the principal.

380 (c) As a further guarantee of a self-insurer's ability to pay the benefits provided for by  
381 this chapter to injured employees, every self-insurer shall make arrangements satisfactory to the  
382 department, by reinsurance, to protect it from extraordinary losses or losses caused by 1 disaster.

383 Such reinsurance shall be: (i) in such amounts and form as the department may approve;  
384 and (ii) effected with a company as provided in section 20 of chapter 175; provided, that the  
385 minimum amount shall be not less than \$500,000. Such reinsurance shall provide that the use or  
386 disposition of any money received by a self-insurer or former self-insurer under any such  
387 reinsurance shall be subject to the approval of the department, and no such money shall be  
388 assignable or subject to attachment or be liable in any way for the debt of the self-insurer unless  
389 incurred under this chapter. In the event that a surety bond is activated under this section, such  
390 reinsurance shall continue and such reinsurer shall continue to make payments on claims for

391 which payments have already commenced, commence payment on claims that reach the  
392 retention level set in the applicable reinsurance policy and, upon exhaustion of the surety bond or  
393 development of any deficiency in the bond, commence or continue payments for any liabilities  
394 that may arise or have arisen under this chapter.

395 The provisions of this paragraph shall not apply to common carriers by railroad that are  
396 subject to the provisions of the federal Employers Liability Act.

397 (3) The department may: (i) make rules governing self-insurers; and (ii) revoke or refuse  
398 to renew the license of a self-insurer because of the failure of such self-insurer promptly to make  
399 payments of compensation provided for by this chapter, or for any other reasonable cause. Any  
400 person aggrieved by the action of the department in refusing to grant a license or in revoking, or  
401 refusing to renew, a license of a self-insurer under this section or by the action of the department  
402 in requiring an additional deposit or further security under paragraph (a) of this section, or in  
403 requiring a further bond or security for an additional sum under paragraph (b) of this section may  
404 demand a hearing before the department, and if, after said hearing, the department denies their  
405 petition, the person may within 10 days after receipt of a notice stating reasons for such denial,  
406 file a petition in the superior court for Suffolk county for a review thereof; but the filing of such  
407 a petition shall not suspend the action of the department unless a stay thereof shall be allowed by  
408 the justice pending a final determination by the court. The court shall summarily hear the petition  
409 and may make any appropriate order or decree.

410 (4)(a) The commissioner of insurance shall require each insurer issuing a policy under  
411 this chapter to offer, as a part of the policy or as an optional endorsement to the policy,  
412 deductibles, including reasonable small deductibles optional to the policyholder for benefits

413 payable under this chapter. Deductible amounts offered shall be fully disclosed to the prospective  
414 policyholders in writing in amounts determined by the commissioner. The policyholder  
415 exercising the deductible option shall choose only 1 deductible amount.

416 (b) If the policyholder exercises the option and chooses a deductible, the insured  
417 employer shall be liable for the amount of the deductible for benefits paid for each compensable  
418 claim of work injury suffered by an employee or, at the option of the policyholder, an aggregate  
419 deductible as determined by the commissioner. The insurer shall pay all or part of the deductible  
420 amount, whichever is applicable, to a compensable claim, to the person or medical provider  
421 entitled to the benefits conferred by this chapter and then seek reimbursement from the insured  
422 employer for the applicable deductible amount. The payment or nonpayment of deductible  
423 amounts by the insured employer to the insurer shall be treated under the policy insuring the  
424 liability for workers' compensation in the same manner as payment or nonpayment of premiums.

425 (c) Optional deductibles shall be offered in each policy insuring liability for workers'  
426 compensation that is issued, delivered, issued for delivery, or renewed under this chapter on or  
427 after a date to be determined by the commissioner, unless an insured employer and insurer agree  
428 to renegotiate a workers' compensation policy in effect, so as to include a provision allowing for  
429 a deductible.

430 (d) Premium reductions for deductibles shall be determined by the commissioner of  
431 insurance. The commissioner of insurance may adopt rules or promulgate regulations to enforce  
432 this section relative to workers' compensation insurance deductibles.

433 (e) This subsection shall not apply to employers who are approved to self-insure against  
434 liability for workers' compensation or group self-insurance funds for workers' compensation  
435 established pursuant to the provisions of this chapter.

436 (f) The commissioner of insurance may promulgate regulations to enforce the provisions  
437 of this section.

438 SECTION 37. Section 7 of chapter 175M of the General Laws, as so appearing, is hereby  
439 amended by striking out, in lines 26, 68, 72 and 77, the figure "140", each time it appears, and  
440 inserting in place thereof, in each instance, the following figure:- 120.

441 SECTION 38. Chapter 731 of the acts of 1945 is hereby repealed.

442 SECTION 39. Chapter 210 of the acts of 1946 is hereby repealed.

443 SECTION 40. Chapter 581 of the acts of 1946 is hereby repealed.

444 SECTION 41. Chapter 440 of the acts of 1953 is hereby repealed.

445 SECTION 42. Chapter 646 of the acts of 1968 is hereby repealed.

446 SECTION 43. Chapter 325 of the acts of 1969 is hereby repealed.

447 SECTION 44. Subsection (e) of section 9 of chapter 152 of the acts of 1997 is hereby  
448 amended by inserting after the word "Fund" the following words:- ; and provided further, that  
449 the surcharge shall not apply to vehicular rental transaction contracts entered into with a car-  
450 sharing organization, as defined in section 32J of chapter 90 of the General Laws.

451 SECTION 45. Section 16 of chapter 130 of the acts of 2005 is hereby repealed.

452 SECTION 46. Section 71 of chapter 10 of the acts of 2015, as amended by chapter 146 of  
453 the acts of 2020, is hereby further amended by striking out the figure “2026” and inserting in  
454 place thereof the following figure:- 2032.

455 SECTION 47. Chapter 183 of the acts of 2022 is hereby amended by striking out section  
456 4 and inserting in place thereof the following section:-

457 Section 4. The parcels of land that may be transferred to the department of agricultural  
458 resources pursuant to section 3 contain approximately 175 acres, and are shown as the  
459 agricultural fields numbered 4, 5, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14A, 14C, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20 and 22 on the  
460 plan entitled “Plan of Land in Templeton, MA” prepared by Northeast Survey Consultants and  
461 dated July 27, 2017 on file with the division of capital asset management and maintenance,  
462 subject to modifications pursuant to section 3 and the parcel shown as AF13 and the western  
463 portion of AF1, both of which are owned by the commonwealth and currently used as  
464 agricultural fields, containing approximately 54 acres on the plan entitled “Plan of Land in  
465 Templeton, MA & Phillipston, MA” prepared by Northeast Survey Consultants and dated March  
466 18, 2025 and recorded in Worcester county registry of deeds book 983, page 11.

467 SECTION 48. Said chapter 183 is hereby further amended by striking out section 6 and  
468 inserting in place thereof the following section:-

469 Section 6. The agricultural fields and parcels that may be conveyed pursuant to section 5  
470 are the agricultural fields numbered 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 14B and the parcels labeled LA 2, LA 3  
471 and LA 4 on the plan entitled “Plan of Land in Templeton, MA” prepared by Northeast Survey  
472 Consultants and dated July 27, 2017 on file with the division of capital asset management and  
473 maintenance, subject to modifications pursuant to section 5, and the parcels shown as SP2, SP6

474 and the eastern portion of AF1 containing approximately 10 acres on the plan entitled “Plan of  
475 Land in Templeton, MA & Phillipston MA” prepared by Northeast Survey Consultants and dated  
476 March 18, 2025 and recorded in Worcester county registry of deeds book 983, page 11.

477 SECTION 49. Item 1596-2511 of section 2A of chapter 7 of the acts of 2025 is hereby  
478 amended by adding the following words:- ; provided further, that the commissioner of early  
479 education and care may transfer funds from this item to items 3000-3060 and 3000-4060.

480 SECTION 50. Item 7004-9315 of section 2 of chapter 9 of the acts of 2025 is hereby  
481 amended by striking out the figure “\$3,571,512”, each time it appears, and inserting in place  
482 thereof, in each instance, the following figure:- \$5,571,512.

483 SECTION 51. Item 8100-0102 of said section 2 of said chapter 9 is hereby amended by  
484 striking out the figure “\$52,000,000”, each time it appears, and inserting in place thereof, in each  
485 instance, the following figure:- \$55,000,000.

486 SECTION 52. Item 1599-1778 of section 2 of chapter 14 of the acts of 2025 is hereby  
487 amended by inserting after the word “community”, the second time it appears, the following  
488 words:- and such funds shall be made available until December 31, 2026.

489 SECTION 53. Notwithstanding section 23 of chapter 59 of the General Laws, section 31  
490 of chapter 44 of the General Laws or any other general or special law to the contrary, with the  
491 approval of the director of accounts, a city or town may amortize over the subsequent 3 fiscal  
492 years, in equal installments or more rapidly, the amount of its deficit related to the outbreak of  
493 the 2019 novel coronavirus, also known as COVID-19, and subsequent variants. The  
494 commissioner of revenue shall issue guidelines or instructions for reporting the amortization of  
495 deficits authorized by this section. The local appropriating authority, as defined in section 21C of

496 said chapter 59, shall adopt a deficit amortization schedule in accordance with the department of  
497 revenue's guidelines or instructions under this section before setting the municipality's next  
498 fiscal year tax rate.

499 SECTION 54. There shall be a special commission to study the functions of the various  
500 registries of deeds and examine opportunities for consolidation.

501 The commission shall evaluate and report on the organizational structure of all registries  
502 of deeds and make recommendations on if registries not covered under chapter 48 of the acts of  
503 1997 for abolished counties should be subject to section 10 of chapter 34B of the General Laws  
504 or if the supervision of all registries of deeds should be altered. In developing a list of  
505 suggestions, the commission shall consider: (i) the volume of transactions for each office; (ii) the  
506 potential to consolidate multiple county offices; (iii) the standardizing of operational procedures;  
507 and (iv) the pay structure for elected registrars based on the size and transaction volume for each  
508 office and other appointed staff not covered by any collective bargaining agreements.

509 The commission shall consist of 7 members: 2 members appointed by the governor, 1 of  
510 whom shall serve as chair; 2 members appointed by the secretary of the commonwealth, 1 of  
511 whom shall serve as vice-chair; 1 member appointed by the senate president; 1 member  
512 appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives; and 1 member of the Massachusetts  
513 registers of deeds association.

514 The first meeting of the commission shall be convened not more than 30 days after  
515 members have been appointed.

516           The commission shall submit a written report of its findings with the clerks of the senate  
517 and house of representatives, the senate president and the speaker of the house of representatives  
518 not later than December 31, 2026.

519           SECTION 55. Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, in each of  
520 fiscal years 2026 and 2027, the comptroller, at the direction of the secretary of administration  
521 and finance, shall transfer from the General Fund to the Massachusetts Offshore Wind Industry  
522 Investment Trust Fund established in section 9A of chapter 23J of the General Laws an amount  
523 not to exceed \$35,000,000; provided, that not less than 15 days in advance of the transfer, the  
524 secretary shall certify the amount to be transferred, to the chairs of the house and senate  
525 committees on ways and means.

526           SECTION 56. Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, for fiscal year  
527 2026, the secretary of administration and finance shall transfer funds from the Communications  
528 Access Trust Fund established pursuant to section 2XXXXX of chapter 29 of the General Laws  
529 for the purpose of making payments to the department of correction and the sheriffs for  
530 providing voice communication services, in the following manner: \$10,000,000 to the  
531 department of correction; \$1,653,987 to the Bristol sheriff's office; \$108,712 to the Hampshire  
532 sheriff's office; \$429,193 to the Berkshire sheriff's office; \$567,296 to the Barnstable sheriff's  
533 office; \$15,152 to the Dukes County sheriff's office; \$1,552,291 to the Essex sheriff's office;  
534 \$392,076 to the Franklin sheriff's office; \$538,188 to the Hampden sheriff's office; \$1,525,788  
535 to the Middlesex sheriff's office; \$784,043 to the Norfolk sheriff's office; \$1,199,999 to the  
536 Plymouth sheriff's office; \$2,191,927 to the Suffolk sheriff's office; and \$1,562,237 to the  
537 Worcester sheriff's office; provided, however, that the secretary may amend transfer amounts

538 based on actual costs incurred and shall certify final transfer amounts to the house and senate  
539 committee on ways and means no fewer than 15 days before making any such transfers.

540 SECTION 57. Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, to account for  
541 any timing discrepancy presented by the initial application of clause (i) of subsection (b) of  
542 section 2EEEEEE of chapter 29 of the General Laws relating to the Commonwealth Federal  
543 Matching and Debt Reduction Fund, said section 2EEEEEE of said chapter 29 shall not apply to  
544 the determination of the applicability of fiscal year 2026 interest transfers.

545 SECTION 58. Sections 5, 15 and 16 shall take effect July 1, 2027.

546 SECTION 59. Section 31 shall take effect for any school project approved by the  
547 Massachusetts school building authority on or after July 1, 2026.