

LIFTING ALL FAMILIES

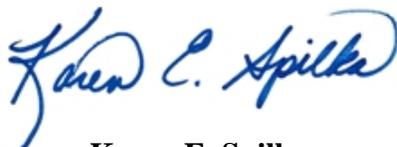
“**G**overnment is instituted for the common good; for the protection, safety, prosperity and happiness of the people...” (Mass. Const. Pt. 1, Art. 7). This is the job entrusted to us by the Massachusetts Constitution. Our goal in this budget is to open new avenues of opportunity, strengthen networks of support, and lift all families in communities across the Commonwealth. The recommendations that follow fulfill the fundamental task of government: to be fiscally responsible, help those in need, and invest in our future. Senate President Stan Rosenberg set an impressive example of civic engagement with the Commonwealth Conversations tour. We listened to the passions, priorities, and ideas of people from all corners of the state. Our budget is built on the shared values of the Senate and the new insights gained from that tour. It lays the groundwork for continued investment in the programs and services that will raise Massachusetts families to new heights next year and in the years to come.

Massachusetts is a hotbed of innovation. Our vibrant technology, life sciences, advanced manufacturing, and knowledge-based industry sectors open new doors to discovery and economic prosperity. Our world-renowned research institutions and rich cultural attractions bring diverse ideas and perspectives to our Commonwealth. Our people, with their varied backgrounds, experiences, and skills, are our strongest asset. A spirit of entrepreneurship, creativity, and collaboration is woven in the fabric of our communities.

In the aftermath of the worst recession since the Great Depression, the Massachusetts economy faces challenges. Many residents have bounced back and found well-paid, rewarding jobs. Others still struggle to get back on their feet. This budget addresses the hurdle of a staggering \$1.8 billion deficit. These recommendations reflect many hard choices, but we present an ambitious plan to grow opportunities and help families access the tools and resources they need to overcome barriers and achieve success.

Lifting all families is about supporting people through all stages of life: our children, our seniors, our neighbors, and our loved ones. It’s about raising up those who do not have a voice. It’s about building an economy that works for everyone and giving families a chance to achieve their hopes and dreams for a better life. These budget line items are more than just numbers. They embody the Senate’s commitment to foster upward economic mobility and greater equality for all residents. This budget funds programs to connect people with education, job opportunities, stable housing, affordable child care, and quality health services. Our people are the engine for the Massachusetts economy, and this budget gives them the fuel to drive faster and farther.

This is a long-term vision, one that lays the foundation for shared prosperity. These budget recommendations are but the first step on the road to realizing that vision of success for the Commonwealth. Moving forward, the work of lifting all families continues.



Karen E. Spilka
Chair, Senate Committee on Ways and Means