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495PARTNERSHIP.ORG

April 10, 2025

The Honorable James Arciero, Chair  
House Committee on Transportation  
State House, Room 134  
Boston, MA 02133

The Honorable Brendan P. Crighton, Chair  
Senate Committee on Transportation  
State House, Room 109-C  
Boston, MA 02133

**RE: *An Act Financing Long-Term Improvements to Municipal Roads and Bridges***

Chair Arciero and Chair Crighton,

On behalf of the 495/MetroWest Partnership, please accept this letter of testimony regarding *An Act Financing Long-Term Improvements to Municipal Roads and Bridges*.

By way of background, the 495/MetroWest Partnership is a unique public-private alliance among businesses, municipalities, and other stakeholders leading the advancement of the 495/MetroWest region as an exceptional location for people, businesses, and communities. Our vision is that the 495/MetroWest region will enjoy sustainable economic growth, well-stewarded natural and built resources, and diverse transportation and housing choices across our 36 cities and towns. The Partnership works towards these aims by providing coordination, education, and advocacy for solutions to regional constraints.

Transportation challenges such as congestion, interchange capacity issues, and gaps in public transit coverage pose a major threat to the economic vitality of our region. In accordance with our organization's 2022-2027 Strategic Plan, the 495/MetroWest Partnership's Transportation Committee established working groups for the purpose of reviewing and updating regional priorities on the key transportation topics of commuter rail service, Regional Transit Authority services, and roadways.

Each working group drafted an updated *Vision and Priorities* statement, outlining our organization's vision for what improvements in each category will look like, as well as specific,

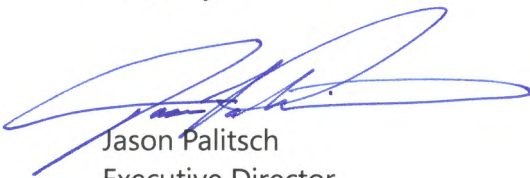
actionable priorities necessary to realize these visions. These drafts were reviewed and adopted by vote of the Partnership's Board of Directors.

In establishing our *Vision and Priorities* statement on the topic of roadways, the Partnership specifically lent its support to increased funding of the Chapter 90 program. Funding for the Chapter 90 program has not kept pace with inflationary pressures; the declining value of the program to our cities and towns in real dollars has meant many communities have fallen behind on needed infrastructure repairs. This challenge had existed prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, when it was exacerbated by post-pandemic inflationary pressures.

The bill as filed would authorize \$300 million per year for Chapter 90 program, with \$200 million distributed based on the Chapter 90 formula and \$100 million distributed based on road miles. This historic investment in Chapter 90 will be of significant benefit to our 36 municipalities, whose financial challenges in the face of constrained revenues and rising prices continue to mount. Addressing local roadway needs will also serve to bolster the economic activity that relies on a well-maintained network of local roads.

Thank you in advance for consideration of these comments. Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can be of any assistance; I can be reached by phone at (774) 760-0495 or via email at [Jason@495Partnership.org](mailto:Jason@495Partnership.org).

Sincerely,



Jason Palitsch  
Executive Director  
The 495/MetroWest Partnership



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April 10, 2025

RE: H.53 *An Act Financing Long-Term Improvements to Municipal Roads and Bridges*

Dear Chair Arciero, Chair Crighton, and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the thirty-two municipalities in Berkshire County, the **Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC) respectfully requests that the Joint Committee on Transportation move swiftly to report favorably H.53, *An Act Financing Long-Term Improvements to Municipal Roads and Bridges* filed by Governor Healey.**

Since FY13, Massachusetts has made a \$200 million annual investment in Chapter 90 funding, but roadway construction and reconstruction needs continue to outpace municipalities' ability to keep up with projects due to inflation, rising construction costs, and a growing backlog of road and bridges. In Berkshire County alone, using the PASER (Pavement Surface Evaluation and Rating) system, which is a visual method for assessing road conditions, we estimate it would cost approximately \$230 million to maintain all Chapter 90 eligible roads in excellent condition. This does not include the need for maintaining the hundreds of small bridges and replacing the thousands of culverts in the county.

The Governor's proposed \$300 million annual investment in Chapter 90 funding gets us closer to the municipal needs across Massachusetts. This \$300 million is proposed to be allocated using two different formulas with \$200 million being distributed using the traditional Chapter 90 formula, and the remaining \$100 million being distributed based on road miles. BRPC is strongly supportive of this approach as no municipalities will lose funding, and our rural municipalities will see much needed increases in funding to address long overdue infrastructure needs. This dual formula distribution system addresses community equity by assisting municipalities that do not rank high using the traditional formula (large number of miles, but small population and bedroom community). These are rural communities with limited ability to generate revenues to augment Chapter 90 funds for their road maintenance.

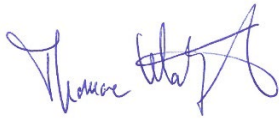
**In addition to supporting the increased investment level, BRPC urges the Legislature to authorize this funding over multiple years as proposed in H.53.** Multiyear authorization allows cities and towns to plan for longer term projects while knowing that at least a base level of funding can be anticipated.

Authorizing multi-year Chapter 90 dollars should not be the ceiling for transportation

funding. I thank the Legislature for the attention being provided to infrastructure and urge the Legislature to continue to fund programs such as the bridge and pavement asset management program, culvert and small bridge modernization, micro transit, and congestion management to support municipal transportation infrastructure. In addition, I encourage the legislature to make it easier for small municipalities to access these funds as the administrative burden for applying to these grant funds can often present obstacles for municipalities, particularly cities and towns with small staff.

Thank you for your consideration of this letter. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at [tmatuszko@berkshireplanning.org](mailto:tmatuszko@berkshireplanning.org).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Thomas Matuszko". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Thomas Matuszko  
Executive Director



1502 Providence Highway, Suite 14  
P. O. Box 667  
Norwood, Massachusetts 02062  
(781) 551-0182

April 10, 2025

Chair James Arciero  
Joint Committee on Transportation  
State House, Room 134  
Boston, MA 02133

Chair Brendan Crighton  
Joint Committee on Transportation  
State House, Room 109-C  
Boston, MA 02133

RE: H53 – An Act financing long-term improvements to municipal roads and bridges

Dear Chair Arciero and Chair Boncore:

On behalf of the members of Construction Industries of Massachusetts, a trade association representing the contractors, subcontractors, engineers, and suppliers that perform a significant portion of the capital work for MassDOT, Massport, MBTA, municipalities and other awarding entities, I am writing to express our support for this year's Chapter 90 bill filed by Governor Healey, which seeks to authorize \$2.385 billion in funding for improvements to municipally-owned roads and bridges.

The Chapter 90 program, together with the various grant programs that now supplement local infrastructure expenditures, is an indispensable part of municipal capital improvement programs. As 78% of lane miles in the commonwealth – nearly 60,000 lane miles in total – are under local control, the program has statewide import, as well.

However, despite a modest increase in state funding in recent years, there remains a significant backlog of local road and bridge projects (we note the more than 350 structurally deficient local bridges and culverts). Though the additional grant programs supported by this committee have been welcome and highly beneficial, the funding gap has been exacerbated due to historically high inflation impacting the public works construction industry. The purchasing power of construction dollars has been eroded by more than 60% just in the past 5 years alone.

Accordingly, as our members can attest, the additional funding has not necessarily led to an increase in the number and scope of road and bridge projects put out to bid.

Further, as in past years, we remain strong supporters of a multi-year authorization. The Chapter 90 bill is one of the few, if only, bond bills that is routinely funded with a 1-year horizon (as opposed to the traditional 5- or 10-year horizon), and because the legislative process is understandably deliberative and rigorous, this frequently results in a Chapter 90 bill that reaches the Governor's desk in late spring or early summer. Moreover, during the first year of a legislative session, the bill is often filed before committees have even been appointed.

A multi-year bill takes these understandable delays out of the equation and will allow cities and towns with stressed public works budgets to plan and move forward with road projects at the very start of the construction season.

Again, we thank the chairs for giving the bill a prompt hearing and for their consideration of our concerns, and we respectfully request that that the committee give *H53* a favorable report.

Sincerely,



Jeff Mahoney  
Executive Director



## CITY OF MELROSE

## OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

City Hall, 562 Main Street  
Melrose, Massachusetts 02176  
Telephone - (781) 979-4440

JENNIFER GRIGORAITIS

*Mayor*

April 10, 2025

Honorable Members of the Joint Committee on Transportation

C/o Siobhan Morrissey

[VIA EMAIL: [Siobhan.Morrissey@mahouse.gov](mailto:Siobhan.Morrissey@mahouse.gov)]

Chairman Crighton, Chairman Arciero, and Honorable Members of the Joint Committee on Transportation:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on behalf of the City of Melrose in support of H. 53, *An Act financing long-term improvements to municipal roads and bridges*.

Chapter 90 is an indispensable resource for cities and towns like Melrose. It's not only used to build and repair city-owned roads and bridges, or just to fill potholes; but also, to procure, design and install traffic lights, street lighting, sidewalks, crosswalks, bicycle lanes and pedestrian accessibility improvements. Every resident, local business, and visitor to our community benefits from these investments.

In recent years, Melrose has leveraged Chapter 90 funds beyond paving alone, to improve the functionality, curb appeal and safety of our neighborhoods.

As part of our Complete Streets efforts in the past decade, Melrose has installed 27 sets of Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFBs) with an investment of over \$200,000. We have spent over \$80,000 to deploy 20 solar speed feedback signs on the city's busiest roadways to calm traffic and reduce inadvertent speeding by motorists. We have redesigned and rebuilt nine major intersections and added or rebuilt sidewalks on over 20 streets in order to adhere to traffic engineering and pedestrian safety best practices.

These kinds of improvements are often relatively inexpensive, but the capital funding available to municipalities like ours is dwarfed by the enormous number of eligible and worthy projects in our community. We rely heavily on state support to ensure our capacity to tackle these priorities.

Infrastructure projects and improvements mean a lot to our community and have made a measurable and marked impact for all users of our built infrastructure. But we have a long way to go, as evidenced by high school civics projects from Melrose Public Schools students and regular questions and hearings before our City Council and Traffic Commission about constituent priorities and needs.

We are grateful to the Healey-Driscoll Administration, the House of Representatives, and the Massachusetts Senate for delivering record levels of Chapter 90 funding last year. In fact, Melrose proudly hosted the signing ceremony for that legislation. We look forward to continued partnership and collaboration between City Hall and the State House for many years to come.

I respectfully urge the Committee to report favorably on the swift passage of H. 53, *An Act financing long-term improvements to municipal roads and bridges*.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jen Grigoraitis', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Mayor Jen Grigoraitis

City of Melrose

April 10, 2025

Dear Chair Crighton, Chair Arciero, and Committee members,

I am writing regarding H. 53. I want to thank you for the work you have done and your commitment to funding our transportation needs across the Commonwealth.

With “Full Depth Reclamation” (FDR) costing a million dollars a mile, every dollar counts. With our smaller communities in the western part of the state caught between declining populations and increasing fixed costs, trying to balance our budgets and maintain and improve our aging infrastructure has become a yearly battle.

There is also the issue of equity for our smaller rural communities. I have looked at the Chapter 90 allocations and in addition to changing the formula to focus more on road miles and less on employment, I have a few other suggestions and have provided the cost to do so. The federal ARPA and ESSER funds provided a minimum allocation to cities and towns and I think the Chapter 90 funds should have a similar approach. In addition to the 2026 transportation funding proposals, I would like to add the following for consideration.

Based on Fiscal 2025 allocations at the \$200 Million Chapter 90 level:

1. 15 towns get less than \$100,000. An extra \$100,000 would cost \$1,500,000.
2. 136 towns get less than \$300,000 An extra \$100,000 would cost \$13,600,000. (The 15 towns that get less than \$100,000 would get \$200,000.)
3. We have 72 towns with less than 3,000 population
4. Of those 72 towns with less than 3,000 population, only 4 get more than \$300,000. Including them in the increase would cost \$400,000.
5. These 3 additions would cost \$15,500,000 in total.
6. Of the 136 towns that get less than \$300,000, only 5 have a population over 10,000.
7. Bringing every community to a minimum of \$300,000 would cost \$14,367,957.35 for Fiscal 2026. At this level a community would still have to save for more than 3 years to FDR 1 mile of road. That does not include any expenses for other work on patching, guard-rails, culverts, bridges etc.
8. Bringing every community to a minimum of \$400,000 would cost \$29,981,884.66 for Fiscal 2026.

Lisa Blackmer, (She/Her) MBA, CMMT, MCPPO  
North Adams City Council  
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[lblackmer@msn.com](mailto:lblackmer@msn.com)  
[lblackmer@northadams-ma.gov](mailto:lblackmer@northadams-ma.gov)



## CITY OF REVERE

Patrick M. Keefe Jr.  
Mayor

April 9, 2025

The Honorable Joint Committee on Transportation  
24 Beacon Street  
Room 134  
Boston, MA 02133

RE: Governor Healey's Transportation Chapter 90 Bond Bill

Dear Honorable Members of the Massachusetts Joint Committee on Transportation,

I am writing in support of H.52, An act Financing Long-Term Improvements to Municipal Roads and Bridges.

At a time where trust in government is at an all-time low, it's imperative that we find every opportunity we can to deliver results that meet the needs of our residents. As Mayor of Revere, one of the main concerns I hear is that we need to upgrade our roads and bridges. Talking with my peers throughout the Commonwealth, I know this is a shared concern.

Chapter 90 has been level-funded since 2012, yet our costs and maintenance challenges have been anything but level. These funding increases, and the stability provided by a multi-year authorization, are a necessary first step to chip away at backlog of deferred maintenance that was created by over a decade of substandard funding.

I support these funding increases and look forward to working with my colleagues at the state level to direct this funding to support tangible improvements to our roadways that will have positive quality-of-life benefits for those who live, work and play in Revere.

Regards,

Patrick M. Keefe Jr.



**CITY OF SALEM, MASSACHUSETTS**

Dominick Pangallo  
Mayor

Office of the Mayor

March 9, 2025

Joint Committee on Transportation  
24 Beacon Street  
Boston, MA 02133

RE: H.53, An Act Financing Long-Term Improvements to Municipal Roads and Bridges

Dear Chair Crighton, Chair Arciero, and members of the committee:

The City of Salem appreciates the opportunity to provide written testimony regarding this important bill, which will help address the financial challenges associated with improving municipal roads and bridges. We sincerely thank the Joint Committee on Transportation for their ongoing work and partnership in addressing the needs of our community.

The Commonwealth's support through the Chapter 90 program has been, and continues to be, instrumental in facilitating various initiatives and projects that enhance the quality of life in our city. The proposed Transportation Bond Bill is critical in continuing that work, tackling the significant increases in labor and material costs experienced following the pandemic. Post-pandemic inflation has markedly slowed the pace of public construction in Salem, significantly reducing the number of miles of infrastructure improvements we can achieve under the existing level-funded program.

According to Salem's most recent roadway assessment, approximately 30% of our total roadway miles—around 27 miles—require major rehabilitation. In addition to the Chapter 90 funding we receive, the city has allocated \$1.3 million of our own capital dollars for roadway and sidewalk projects this fiscal year. Also new this fiscal year, the city of Salem has allocated \$750,000 to address sidewalk repair needs that have been reported by the public, as part of a larger multi-year Safe Sidewalks project. That \$750,000, however, represents only 8% of the projects on the whole Safe Sidewalks repair list, further illustrating the need for additional Chapter 90 support.

For context, the cost of concrete sidewalks stands at around \$633,000 per mile of road. In addition to that, the cost to mill and overlay a road is about \$300,000 per mile. These costs make

comprehensive repairs and replacements a significant challenge within our current budget constraints. To mill and overlay all 27 miles of our roadways requiring major rehabilitation would therefore require, at a minimum, roughly 8 times our typical annual Chapter 90 allocation. And given the condition of some of those roadway miles, complete reconstruction may actually be required, further increasing that cost.

Despite our local capital dollar commitment each year and the inclusion of Chapter 90 funds, we are only able to rehabilitate approximately 5 miles of roadways and replace about ½ mile of sidewalk this year. This constrained funding not only impacts major rehabilitations but also strains our ability to perform minor rehabilitations, routine maintenance, sidewalk upgrades, and other essential infrastructure improvements. It impacts on our ability to maintain and improve vital infrastructure, which in turn affects the safety and accessibility of our community.

The proposed \$1.5 billion multi-year authorization for the Chapter 90 program is essential for Salem to ensure that our roads, sidewalks, and bridges are dependable, functional, and accessible. Increased funding will enable us to continue our vital work in meeting regulatory requirements and advancing projects focused on safety and accessibility.

Moreover, this multi-year authorization provides the stability necessary for long-term planning, allowing us to allocate these critical resources far more efficiently. By investing in our infrastructure now, we set the foundation for a safer and more connected community in the future. We believe that the passage of this bill will provide the necessary resources to ensure that our roads and bridges remain safe, efficient, and conducive to the needs of our residents and visitors for years to come.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on H.53 and, again, for your ongoing commitment to our Commonwealth and to our communities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dominick Pangallo". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dominick Pangallo  
Mayor

cc: State Senator Joan Lovely  
State Representative Manny Cruz  
Salem City Council



My name is Larry Langford. I live in the small town of Buckland out in Franklin County in Western Mass. I serve as chair of Buckland's finance committee but am speaking as a resident who is very concerned about the sustainability of small towns like mine.

A critical component of our sustainability involves our roads. The Chapter 90 local roadways program has provided vital funding for all 351 cities and towns since 1973, enabling municipalities to improve pavement quality, build sidewalks, restore bridges and finance bike and pedestrian infrastructure. Now over fifty years later, as the Transportation Funding Task Force, formed by MassDOT and the Executive Office for Administrative and Finance at the request of Governor Healey and Lt. Governor Driscoll, has concluded, there are two reasons why this program needs to be overhauled.

First this program has been level-funded at \$200 million annually since 2012, except for a one-time increase in 2015 and some supplemental funds from the Fair Share surtax in 2023 and 2024.

Second, the formula used for the distribution of those funds is based on roadway mileage, population, and employment, and has not been changed in 50 years in spite of all the changes that have occurred in that time.

These two issues, the distribution formula and the flat-funding on an annual basis, are central to my strong support for the Chapter 90 Bond Bill that the Healey-Driscoll Administration filed on January 24, 2025.

There are two key parts of this bill that are core to our issues in Western Mass.

- A. It provides an historic increase in annual funding, raising the annual total to \$300 million, and commits that that additional \$100 million provided each year be distributed on the basis of road mileage only, not population as in the formula in place for the current \$200 million. Here's why that matters.
  - a. Small towns in Western Mass combine the greatest road mileage with the lowest populations. Our small populations limit the amount of property tax revenue we have available to invest in the repairs and reconstruction of its road infrastructure.
  - b. Conversely, towns with larger populations, even those with comparable road mileage, not only benefit from greater property tax revenue, by

the current formula they receive larger Chapter 90 apportionments as well.

- c. Here is an example of this inequity, comparing Buckland to a much larger municipality with about the same number of road miles:
  - i. Buckland has a population of 1,808 people and 42 miles of town accepted road. Our annual budget, raised through taxation, is \$4.9 million, with 56 percent dedicated for regional school assessments. We receive \$187,000 in Chapter 90 funds each year.
  - ii. Chelsea, on the other hand, has about the same number of miles (44.96), but has a population of 40,787 and by the formula receives \$602,337 in Chapter 90 funds.
- d. While it may be true that more people equates to more vehicle miles driven, the bottom line is that rural municipalities and their roads have been underfunded for fifty years.

- B. In addition to an important funding increase and formula change, the bill will authorize Chapter 90 dollars for multiple years, not annually. This is crucial.
  - a. One-year authorizations create uncertainty and result in delayed projects, as towns like ours currently save up our annual funds in order to pay for larger projects whose costs continue to increase.
  - b. H. 53, the Healey-Driscoll Bond Bill, addresses this issue by authorizing \$1.5 billion over five years, committing an additional \$500M to the program over the remainder of this decade. This multi-year authorization will enable us to better plan how to deploy roadway funding to reach our long-term goals, and it encourages the development of five-year capital plans for roadways that will aid the effective deployment of these resources.

I thank you for your time and for hearing my testimony, and urge the passage of H. 53, the Healey-Driscoll Bond Bill.



# MAAPA

Massachusetts Aggregate and Asphalt Pavement Assoc.

PO Box 602

Norwood, MA 02062

April 9, 2025

Representative James Arciero  
Senator Brendan Crighton  
Chairs, Joint Committee on Transportation  
State House Room 134  
Boston, MA 02133

**RE:** H.53- An Act financing long-term improvements to municipal roads and bridges

Dear Chairs Arciero, Crighton and members of the Committee:

On behalf of the Massachusetts Aggregate and Asphalt Pavement Association (MAAPA), I am writing in support of H.53, Governor Healey's proposed \$1.5 billion, multi-year Chapter 90 funding bill.

MAAPA represents over 17 Massachusetts-based companies with 75 production facilities producing and installing Hot Mix Asphalt (HMA) as well as Warm Mix Asphalt (WMA) throughout the Commonwealth. We directly employ over 2,000 people in good paying jobs and, indirectly, another 5,000 + (including truck drivers, quality control technicians, traffic safety personnel, engineers and others). Our industry produces an economic impact of over \$1 billion annually to the Commonwealth.

Studies show that infrastructure spending has a significant "multiplier effect," and for every dollar invested in infrastructure, the return on investment can range from a \$3 to \$8 increase in economic growth over 20-30 years.

A multi-year Chapter 90 allocation is critical for both municipal planning purposes as well as for our member contractors. It is extremely difficult for our members to make long term business decisions, investments, or capital expenditures when they don't know what the market will be in 2026. Simply put, our members cannot gamble on spending money if the market disappears next year. Also, for cities and towns, it is significantly easier to plan out projects over the course of a three-to-five-year time horizon, helping to save money over the long term.

The \$1.5 billion, 5-year allocation is vital to maintaining and upgrading municipal roads. This funding will allow municipalities to tackle long-deferred projects, improving the safety and reliability of roads that are essential for daily commuting and regional connectivity. It has been shown that our municipal road infrastructure needs \$700 million annually to be brought into a state of good repair. Increasing the amount of money invested in our roads from \$200 million to \$300 million annually will have a significant impact on our ability to keep our roads safe in partnership with the local communities.

We further support provisions in this bill that would improve pavement and bridge conditions across the state by authorizing an additional \$500 million for MassDOT's road and bridge lifecycle asset management program to address the condition of pavement and bridges statewide.

We strongly believe that this proposed legislation will provide crucial support for maintaining and upgrading Massachusetts' infrastructure. We respectfully urge your support for this essential legislation to ensure the continued safety and reliability of our roadways.

Thank you for your consideration. Please feel free to reach out with any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

*Chuck Latvis*

Chuck Latvis  
Executive Director, MAAPA  
[clatvis@massasphalt.com](mailto:clatvis@massasphalt.com)  
860.993.4934



SMART GROWTH AND REGIONAL COLLABORATION

April 4, 2025

The Honorable Brendan Crighton  
Chair, Joint Committee on Transportation  
State House, Room 109-C  
Boston, MA 02133

The Honorable James Arciero  
Chair, Joint Committee on Transportation  
State House, Room 134  
Boston, MA 02133

RE: H.53, *An Act Financing Long-Term Improvements to Municipal Roads and Bridges*

Dear Chair Arciero, Chair Crighton, and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC), **we respectfully request that the Joint Committee on Transportation move swiftly to report favorably H.53, *An Act Financing Long-Term Improvements to Municipal Roads and Bridges*** filed by Governor Healey. This bill authorizes Chapter 90 funding at \$1.5 billion over five years, a critical investment in our roads and bridges across the Commonwealth.

MAPC is the regional planning agency for Greater Boston, serving the people who live and work in the 101 cities and towns of the region. A reliable, efficient, and accessible transportation network is critical to our work as it connects workers to jobs, businesses to markets, students to schools, patients to health care, and residents and visitors to cultural and recreational resources. We prioritize efforts that foster regional collaboration, and we have long advocated to increase Chapter 90 funding to support the large volume of roadway repair and maintenance needs in our region and across our Commonwealth. At current funding levels, roadway construction and reconstruction needs continue to outpace municipalities' ability to keep up with projects.

Since FY13, Massachusetts has made a \$200 million annual investment in Chapter 90 funding that is no longer meeting the needs of the Commonwealth. Increasing inflation, rising construction costs, and a growing backlog of road and bridges maintenance now necessitate at least the \$300 million annually as proposed by the Governor to fix previous underinvestment. The true scale of needs across Massachusetts is over \$850 million annually to fully address the needs across the 30,000 miles of roads and bridges in the Commonwealth.<sup>1</sup>

**In addition to supporting the increased investment level, we urge the Legislature to authorize this funding over multiple years so that municipalities can better plan for long term infrastructure projects as proposed in H.53.** Multiyear authorization allows cities and towns to

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<sup>1</sup> Mass Municipal Association, <https://www.mma.org/gov-healey-announces-5-year-ch-90-bill-with-50-increase/>



SMART GROWTH AND REGIONAL COLLABORATION

plan for longer term projects while knowing that at least a base level of funding can be anticipated. Additionally, this allows municipalities to take advantage of what is a limited construction season due to weather constraints and better plan for mitigation measures.

MAPC is grateful for the Legislature's continued investment in innovative transportation infrastructure funding. We urge the Legislature to include programs such as the bridge and pavement asset management program, culvert and small bridge modernization, and congestion management to support municipal transportation infrastructure.

As the Legislature considers these critical investment needs across the Commonwealth, we urge your committee to consider long term revenue raising legislation to ensure that we can address the backlog of needs and transform our transportation network to meet the needs of residents and ensure resilience in the face of climate change. A thriving transportation system is the backbone of our economy and is critical to reaching our climate goals. The transportation sector remains the largest source of greenhouse gas emissions in Massachusetts and staggering levels of traffic congestion impact both access to resources and cause negative public health outcomes. As you make investments in transportation infrastructure, we urge the Legislature to increase revenue and provide guidance to ensure that updates to the system move us towards achieving climate goals.

In late 2024, MAPC released our “[Transportation Funding Recommendations](#)” report, outlining 18 different revenue raising opportunities for the Commonwealth to ensure that we can build and maintain the infrastructure and programs to connect people throughout Massachusetts. Many of these revenue raising mechanisms are utilized in other states to fund critical transportation needs and expanding the available tools for transportation revenue will help the Commonwealth achieve our transportation and climate goals. MAPC urges your committee to consider including Regional Transportation Ballot Initiatives (RBIs) as proposed in H.3050 and S.2009, filed by Representatives Lewis and Ciccolo and Senator Friedman in this bill. RBIs enable a municipality, or a group of municipalities, to place a question on the ballot to raise revenue for local and regional transportation projects. This flexible and hyper local revenue raising mechanism can supplement funding allocated through Chapter 90 to ensure that local priority projects can be completed in a timely and effective manner.

MAPC strongly supports creating additional funding streams to support local transportation projects so that municipalities can be strong partners with the state in achieving our transportation and climate goals. In 2024, MAPC released three different white papers that have informed the following policy recommendations that we hope you will consider including in H.53. The first recommendation is based on “[Considerations for Ride-hailing Assessments](#)” to increase



SMART GROWTH AND REGIONAL COLLABORATION

Transportation Network Company (TNC such as Uber and Lyft) fees as proposed in H.1251 and S.2253 filed by Representative Livingstone and Senator Crighton. The current \$0.20 TNC fee in Massachusetts is far behind the fees in other cities and states, and increasing this fee would add funding to both local transportation infrastructure and the MBTA and RTA funds. MAPC is also strongly supportive of creating a new fee structure for deliveries made by third party delivery companies (such as UberEats, Instacart, DoorDash) to make a new revenue stream for deliveries that are taking place using our roads, bridges, and downtowns as proposed in H.3774 and S.2356 filed by Representative Ryan and Senator Crighton. This recommendation comes from our 2022 report “[From App to Table](#)” and the 2024 update “[Considerations for Retail Delivery Assessments](#)”. Finally, MAPC strongly encourages that the Legislature allow municipalities to implement local option commercial parking taxes as proposed in H. H.3756 filed by Representative Owens based on our research “[Commercial Parking Tax Revenue in Boston/Massachusetts](#)”. Currently, only private parking that was built in coordination with the convention centers can be taxed, but allowing more commercial parking taxes or fees to be implemented could raise millions of dollars for transportation infrastructure while encouraging mode shift.

Thank you for your consideration of this letter. If you or your staff have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 540-809-4467 or [eweyant@mapc.org](mailto:eweyant@mapc.org).

Sincerely,

Lizzi Weyant  
*Deputy Executive Director*



# Massachusetts Association of Regional Planning Agencies

April 9, 2025

The Honorable Brendan Crighton  
Chair, Joint Committee on Transportation  
State House, Room 109-C  
Boston, MA 02133

The Honorable James Arciero  
Chair, Joint Committee on Transportation  
State House, Room 134  
Boston, MA 02133

RE: H.53 *An Act Financing Long-Term Improvements to Municipal Roads and Bridges*

Dear Chair Arciero, Chair Crighton, and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the Commonwealth's 13 Regional Planning Agencies (RPAs), the **Massachusetts Association of Regional Planning Agencies (MARPA)** respectfully requests that the **Joint Committee on Transportation** move swiftly to report favorably **H.53, *An Act Financing Long-Term Improvements to Municipal Roads and Bridges*** filed by Governor Healey. Thank you for this opportunity to share our support for this critical investment in our roads and bridges across the Commonwealth and a needed multi-year authorization for this critical funding.

MARPA has long advocated to increase Chapter 90 funding to support the large volume of roadway repair and maintenance needs across our Commonwealth. Since FY13, Massachusetts has made a \$200 million annual investment in Chapter 90 funding, but roadway construction and reconstruction needs continue to outpace municipalities' ability to keep up with projects due to inflation, rising construction costs, and a growing backlog of road and bridges. Our estimate aligns with the need proposed by MMA, with the true need for Chapter 90 being over \$850 million annually to fully address the needs across the 30,000 miles of roads and bridges in the Commonwealth.

The Governor's proposed \$300 million annual investment in Chapter 90 funding gets us closer to the municipal needs across Massachusetts. This \$300 million is proposed to be allocated using two different formulas with \$200 million being distributed using the traditional Chapter 90 formula, and the remaining \$100 million being distributed based on road miles. MARPA is supportive of this approach as no municipalities will lose funding, and many, particularly our rural municipalities, will see much needed increases in funding to address long overdue infrastructure needs.

**In addition to supporting the increased investment level, MARPA urges the Legislature to authorize this funding over multiple years as proposed in H.53.** Multiyear authorization allows cities and towns to plan for longer term projects while knowing that at least a base level of funding can be anticipated.

Authorizing multi-year Chapter 90 dollars should not be the ceiling for transportation funding, and we are grateful for the Legislature's continued investment in innovative transportation and



# Massachusetts Association of Regional Planning Agencies

infrastructure funding. We urge the Legislature to continue to fund programs such as the bridge and pavement asset management program, culvert and small bridge modernization, and congestion management to support municipal transportation infrastructure though we encourage the legislature to make it easier for small municipalities to access these funds as the administrative burden for applying to these grant funds can often present obstacles for municipalities, particularly cities and towns with small staff.

As the Legislature considers these critical investment needs across the Commonwealth, MARPA urges your committee to consider legislation that can ensure we are able to address the backlog of needs and transform our transportation system to meet the unique needs of municipalities across the state and ensure resilience in the face of climate change. A thriving transportation system in all parts of the Commonwealth is the backbone of our economy and is critical to reaching our climate goals. While it is currently before the Joint Committee on Revenue, we want to draw your attention to Regional Transportation Ballot Initiatives (RBIs) as proposed in H.3050 and S.2009, filed by Representatives Lewis and Ciccolo and Senator Friedman in this bill. RBIs enable a municipality, or a group of municipalities, to place a question on the ballot to raise revenue for specific local and regional transportation projects. Across much of the country, RBIs are regularly used to finance transportation projects, ranging from road repairs to public transportation expansions. This flexible and hyper local revenue raising mechanism can supplement funding allocated through Chapter 90 to ensure that local priority projects can be completed in a timely and effective manner.

Thank you for your consideration of this letter. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us at [ldunlavy@frcog.org](mailto:ldunlavy@frcog.org) and [jwalker@srpedd.org](mailto:jwalker@srpedd.org).

Sincerely,

Linda Dunlavy  
Co-President, MARPA  
Executive Director, Franklin Regional  
Council of Governments

Jeffrey Walker, AICP  
Co-President, MARPA  
Executive Director Southeastern Regional Planning  
and Economic Development District



April 10, 2025

Senator Brendan P. Crighton  
Chair, Joint Committee Transportation  
State House, Room 109 C  
Representative James Arciero  
Chair, Joint Committee Transportation  
State House, Room 34

RE: Strong Support for H.53: An Act financing long-term improvements to municipal roads and bridges

Dear Chair Crighton, Chair Arciero, and Members of the Joint Committee on Transportation,

On behalf of the approximately 3,500 member families of the Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation, the largest farming organization in the Commonwealth, I am writing to respectfully urge the Committee to give a favorable recommendation to H.53, An Act financing long-term improvements to municipal roads and bridges.

The Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation would like to emphasize two key aspects of this important bill.

The governor's bill allocates an additional \$100 million on a road mileage basis, significantly enhancing support for small rural communities where many of our farms are located. In these small rural communities, current Chapter 90 funding has often proven insufficient to adequately improve bridges and roadways. The necessity for small towns to bank several years of their Chapter 90 allocation to fund a single project highlights the inadequacy of the current funding levels. This funding shortfall has a direct impact on our farm operations. Substandard area bridges can lead to isolation or necessitate lengthy detours for our farmers if they fail. For example, the closure of the Kellogg Road Bridge in Sheffield prevented one of our farms from reaching their fields. While this bridge was eventually repaired for \$85,000, many similar small bridges could be maintained with proactive repairs before full replacement becomes necessary. This bill would ensure more funding is available for such crucial preventative measures.

Section 6121-2627 of the bill also allocates an additional \$200 million for investments in culverts and small bridges, aiming to replace undersized and deteriorating infrastructure with more resilient replacements, thereby reducing the significant backlog of deferred maintenance for both state and local governments. This program will support the modernization, reconstruction, removal, repair, replacement, and resilience improvements of culverts and small bridges with a span of 20 feet or less.

According to a 2022 report by the Massachusetts Budget and Policy Center, Massachusetts faces a significant challenge with structurally deficient bridges, with 664 identified as such. This

situation contributes to the state's substantial backlog of needed repairs and investments, ranking us 16th in the nation for poor bridge conditions. Without this additional funding, we risk falling further behind in maintaining the vital bridge infrastructure of our Commonwealth. This continued neglect will inevitably lead to increased costs when we are eventually forced to undertake more extensive repairs or replacements of bridges and culverts. Therefore, this bill represents a crucial step towards addressing these critical needs, and we strongly urge its passage.

Thank you for your time and careful consideration of this important matter. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or require further information.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Karen Schwalbe". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Karen Schwalbe  
Executive Director  
Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation



April 10, 2025

The Honorable James Arciero, House Chair  
The Honorable Brendan Crighton, Senate Chair  
Joint Committee on Transportation  
State House  
Boston, MA 02133

*Delivered Electronically*

Dear Chair Arciero, Chair Crighton, and Distinguished Members of the Committee,

On behalf of all 351 cities and towns that make up our great Commonwealth, we write today to offer our strong support for H.53 *An Act financing long-term improvements to municipal roads and bridges*. In a time of increased uncertainty regarding federal funding, residents will now look to state and local government to provide a steady hand through targeted, reliable investments in municipal roads and bridges.

H. 53 proposes a 50% increase to the Chapter 90 program, authorization of this investment for a period of 5-years, support for state-level transportation initiatives, and \$200 million for a culvert and small bridge program. We strongly urge the Committee to support this proposal that promises to deliver overdue bridge and culvert support alongside an historic and equitable investment in the Commonwealth's key road and bridge program.

We are incredibly grateful to Governor Healey and the teams at the Massachusetts Department of Transportation and the Executive Office of Administration and Finance for their deep exploration of the state's transportation needs. The [Transportation Funding Task Force](#) identified a need to invest further in the Chapter 90 program while also building supports for culverts and small bridges. The [Chapter 90 Advisory Group](#) went further to identify Chapter 90 program needs including a recommendation to increase program investment to adjust for inflation—citing a need for at least \$404.6 million per year to do so. The Advisory Group also recommended distributing new funding to adapt to contemporary life and work patterns and better support smaller communities. H. 53 moves these recommendations from planning to action.

As you know, Massachusetts roads and bridges are a critical component of our statewide transportation network, necessary for the safe and efficient transport of goods and people. Our roads, bridges, sidewalks, and paths are essential infrastructure – connecting residents and guests to the engagement that brings life — family, education, work, adventure, and opportunity. Our roadways are fundamental infrastructure to ensure resilience and stability in our economy and communities.

In the more than fifty years since its inception, the Chapter 90 program has established itself as an essential funding source to support cities and towns as they maintain 30,000 miles of roads and bridges under municipal control. With tightly capped property taxes and limited ability to raise revenues at the local level, communities do not have the resources to independently bring all their roads into a state of good repair and keep them there. Our most recent biennial Chapter 90 survey estimates that at least \$859 million is needed in FY25 alone to maintain local roadways. Further, as federal policy changes cause unpredictable consequences, amplifying state programs with proven success is a wise action by the Commonwealth.

Recent years' supplemental aid to the Chapter 90 program have brought tremendous relief to cities and towns while targeting increases to our most fiscally constrained communities. H. 53 continues this targeted investment while uplifting all communities by boosting funding in the program by 50%, with the increased \$100 million to be distributed based on road miles, while retaining the traditional formula for the historic \$200 million baseline investment. This recipe focuses on uplifting **all** 351 cities and towns.

As you consider this important bill, it's important to remember the following context for many shared goals by the Legislature:

- **Chapter 90 is a key program in responding to climate change:**  
Climate change will continue to impact our daily lives and stress local roadway conditions by decreasing the lifespans of capital infrastructure and exacerbating funding needs. Increased actions to fortify our electricity grid and build out much-needed clean energy development will tremendously increase activity in public rights of way, in turn affecting our roadway construction.
- **Chapter 90 is essential in promoting housing:**  
Housing development will remain a priority to ensure that those who desire to call Massachusetts home can do so and thrive. Expansion and enhancement of roadway infrastructure is critical to meet our housing goals.
- **Chapter 90 promotes roadway safety:**  
The [2023 Strategic Highway Safety Plan \(SHSP\)](#), our roadmap to improved roadway safety, promotes expanding resources to municipalities. Increasing investment in the Chapter 90 program is the most efficient and effective way to enhance municipal roadway safety by enabling communities to address urgently needed projects.

In addition to the proposed enhancement of the Chapter 90 program, H. 53 proposes \$200 million to support a culvert and small bridge program. Across the Commonwealth, approximately 17,000 culverts are under municipal care with many in need of upgrades and replacements to higher resiliency standards, especially as we face increased and unpredictable precipitation patterns. The Division of Ecological Restoration estimates that at least half of small bridges and culverts across the state are undersized, deteriorating, or poorly constructed and in need of replacement.

H. 53's investment would support upgrades of municipally-owned small bridges and culverts in order to protect public safety, improve climate change resiliency, and restore ecosystem connectivity. We are deeply grateful for this proposal and encourage the Legislature's support for this initiative.

We appreciate this opportunity to submit testimony, and we encourage the Committee to support H. 53 to amplify the Chapter 90 program, provide security to cities and towns through a multi-year authorization, and further invest in critical bridge and culvert infrastructure. If you have any questions or desire further information, please do not hesitate to have your office contact me or MMA Legislative Analyst Adrienne Núñez at [anunez@mma.org](mailto:anunez@mma.org) at any time.

Many thanks for your thoughtful attention to this important legislation and for your dedication and support for the cities and towns of Massachusetts.

Sincerely,



Adam Chapdelaine  
Executive Director & CEO

April 11, 2025

The Honorable Brendan P. Crighton, Senate Chair  
The Honorable James Arciero, House Chair  
Joint Committee on Transportation  
State House  
Boston, MA 02133  
*submitted by email to [Siobhan.Morrissey@mahouse.gov](mailto:Siobhan.Morrissey@mahouse.gov)*

***Re: H.53 An Act financing long-term improvements to municipal roads and bridges***

Dear Chair Crighton, Chair Arciero, and members of the Committee:

On behalf of the Massachusetts Rivers Alliance, The Nature Conservancy, Mass Audubon, and the Environmental League of Massachusetts, we are writing to submit testimony in support of H.53, *An Act financing long-term improvements to municipal roads and bridges*.

Collectively, our organizations represent nearly 195,000 members across Massachusetts, and in the case of the Massachusetts Rivers Alliance, 86 additional member organizations. Our organizations share a common interest in protecting and restoring resilient rivers and streams across the Commonwealth.

We strongly support the governor's proposed \$200 million in line item 6121-2627 for a program within MassDOT to upgrade undersized and deteriorating culverts and small bridges. This funding will reduce the backlog of resilience measures, and help cities and towns manage flooding on their roadways. We also appreciate that these funds can be used for permitting and other services essential for beneficial project designs.

There are approximately 25,000 culverts and small bridges in the Massachusetts transportation network - the majority of which are undersized by modern standards. Undersized culverts and bridges are at risk of damage from increasingly heavy storm flows. In addition, they impede the movement and survival of fish and wildlife, create increased flood risk, and threaten the resiliency of our communities and ecosystems. Healthy rivers with unobstructed fish passage also support our \$11 billion commercial fishery, our \$450 million recreational fishing economy, and the Commonwealth's overall \$13.2 billion outdoor recreation economy.

The [Massachusetts Culverts and Small Bridges Working Group](#), co-chaired by the MassDOT and the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, made several findings and recommendations that underscore this funding need. The report recognized that Massachusetts has already begun to experience climate change predictions of more frequent severe precipitation events, and noted that these trends are putting a growing number of culverts and small bridges at risk due to increased storm flow. As the report specifically notes, "failing culverts and small bridges pose a direct threat to residents' safety and the Massachusetts economy."

This Working Group also found cost to be a substantial barrier to upgrading culverts and small bridges. It recommended expanding additional grant programs, including through legislative allocations.

H.53 would help meet a clearly demonstrated need to increase municipal funding for culvert and bridge replacement for our municipalities to manage the effects of increased storm flows, for resident safety, and for healthy ecosystems.

Thank you for your leadership and consideration. If you have questions or would like more information, please contact Heather Clish at [heatherclish@massriversalliance.org](mailto:heatherclish@massriversalliance.org) or 617-750-2982.

Sincerely,

Heather Clish  
Policy Director  
Massachusetts Rivers Alliance

Sam Anderson  
Director of Legislative and Government Affairs  
Mass Audubon

Steve Long  
Director of Policy and Partnerships  
The Nature Conservancy Massachusetts

David Melly  
Legislative Director  
Environmental League of Massachusetts



## MAYOR GINA-LOUISE SCIARRA

City of Northampton

Office of the Mayor

210 Main Street Room 12

Northampton, MA 01060-3199

(413) 587-1249 Fax: (413) 587-1275

mayor@northamptonma.gov

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June 5, 2025

Representative Lindsay Sabadosa

24 Beacon St.

Room 160

Boston, MA, 02133

Dear Representative Sabadosa,

I write today to express my heartfelt appreciation for your service to Northampton and about a top priority issue, local road and bridge funding through the Chapter 90 program.

As you and your colleagues chart the course for the Commonwealth through your deliberation on key fiscal initiatives, I wanted to take a moment and shine a light on the importance of investments in municipal roads and bridges. We are incredibly grateful for the Legislature's recent investments through Chapter 90, the Rural Roadway Funding Program, and supplemental investments fueled by Fair Share Surtax revenues. These increased investments have mitigated some of the loss of purchasing power brought on by inflation and have boosted our efforts to maintain and expand some of our most critical assets that make up our statewide transportation network.

In Northampton, these additional funds have helped us to conduct an extensive traffic calming study of several problematic intersections and roadways, and to design improvements which we hope to implement soon. These projects often are completed without fanfare, but I want you to know that these are critical investments for our community.

As you consider the proposed investments included in H. 53, *An Act financing long-term improvements to municipal roads and bridges*, please know that these proposals, if enacted, would dramatically elevate our roadway program.

The proposed multi-year Chapter 90 investment would offer stability to every city and town during a time of significant change. Such an investment conveys a strong message across the



## MAYOR GINA-LOUISE SCIARRA

City of Northampton

Office of the Mayor

210 Main Street Room 12

Northampton, MA 01060-3199

(413) 587-1249 Fax: (413) 587-1275

[mayor@northamptonma.gov](mailto:mayor@northamptonma.gov)

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Commonwealth and underlines the critical partnership our communities have with the Legislature.

In Northampton, this would equal \$7,684,940.33 over 5 years. Knowing that this funding is secured for our use, we are better able to take full advantage of the construction season, leverage this stability to secure competitive bids, tackle bigger projects, and overall, allow us to strategically deploy this funding. The proposed investment would be a game changer for the city and help keep the wheels moving for our private sector partners that are essential to complete this work.

Finally, I would be remiss to not emphasize the need in Northampton for support to repair and fortify culverts and small bridges. Investment for stabilization and repair of our bridges, including and especially the Clement Street Bridge, is necessary and increasingly unaffordable. The flooding in 2023 significantly undermined several culverts in the city, including one which has been closed since then absent funding for its repair. Much of our drainage is aging and undersized and we would welcome this infusion of money to stabilize this critical infrastructure. I know we are not alone in this need and very much appreciate the Legislature's proposals for increased investment for these often overlooked assets.

In sum, I strongly urge you to advance and approve the proposed investments for road and bridge needs found in the Chapter 90 transportation bond bill. These investments will offer a steadying force to our communities and economy while enhancing the lives of taxpayers across the Commonwealth.

Thank you again for all your service, we are deeply grateful for your commitment to our shared success and leadership through challenging times.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Gina-Louise Sciarra".

Gina-Louise Sciarra



April 22, 2025

The Honorable James Arciero, House Chair  
The Honorable Brendan Crighton, Senate Chair  
Joint Committee on Transportation

Re: Support of H. 53, An Act financing long-term improvements to municipal roads and bridges

Dear Chair Crighton, Chair Arciero, and Honorable Members of the Joint Committee on Transportation:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit our support of H. 53, An Act financing long-term improvements to municipal roads and bridges. These funds are especially critical for the Northern Middlesex Council of Governments (NMCOG) region which includes Billerica, Chelmsford, Dracut, Dunstable, Lowell, Pepperell, Tewksbury, Tyngsborough, and Westford.

Chapter 90 is an indispensable resource for cities and towns across the Commonwealth, including the nine diverse municipalities in the Greater Lowell region. From dense urban centers to rural towns, Chapter 90 funding enables each community to address its unique infrastructure priorities, whether that's repairing aging bridges, resurfacing heavily traveled corridors, calming traffic near schools, or improving pedestrian and bicycle safety.

In Lowell, Chapter 90 supports major arterial repairs and multimodal upgrades critical to the region's economic activity. In communities like Chelmsford, Tewksbury, Westford, and Billerica, funds help manage high-traffic corridors and intersections that serve regional commuters. In smaller towns like Dunstable, Pepperell, and Tyngsborough, Chapter 90 is often the only viable funding source for basic road maintenance and capital improvements that ensure resident safety and connectivity.

In Tewksbury, in order to maintain our roadways at their current condition, the Town needs to invest approximately \$5 million per year, a figure that has more than doubled since 2021 due to rising construction costs. This number does not include the additional annual costs for essential improvements such as sidewalk construction (\$250,000), sidewalk design (\$100,000), and traffic signal upgrades (\$150,000), nor does it include the Town's local share of planned non-federally funded projects, such as the Town Center (\$200,000), Shawsheen/Beech/Foster intersection (\$200,000), and the Livingston Street Transportation Improvement Project (\$1.6 million). To meet these needs without borrowing, the town would need roughly \$6 million annually.

Tyngsborough would need to spend \$4 million annually to maintain current roadway conditions and to prevent the town from falling further behind in investment. The Town currently contributes about \$1 million locally, leaving a \$3 million gap each year.

In Pepperell, \$413,183 is used to maintain 84 miles of roadway; this is barely enough to repave one mile of roadway per year. With an average road life expectancy of about 20 years, the town needs four times that funding just to maintain basic cycle standards.

Chelmsford has a pavement backlog of more than \$39 million for 186.8 miles of roadway which includes routine and preventative maintenance and addressing structural improvements.

Dunstable identified their town's current roadway repair backlog at approximately \$8 million.

This funding gap is real, measurable, and growing. Chapter 90 funds is a critical investment that keeps our infrastructure safe, functional, and fiscally sustainable for the long term. And these funds are used not just for paving and potholes, but also to design and install modern traffic controls, crosswalks, accessible sidewalks, bike lanes, and lighting—investments that improve quality of life for every resident, support local businesses, and ensure the safety of all who travel through the region.

Across the Greater Lowell area, municipalities have demonstrated their ability to stretch these dollars further—implementing Complete Streets strategies, enhancing roadway efficiency, and prioritizing equity and accessibility. Yet, the demand for these types of improvements continues to outpace the available funding. The number of eligible and worthy projects continues to grow, from replacing deteriorating infrastructure to meeting community expectations for safer, more inclusive roadways.

We are deeply grateful to the Healey-Driscoll Administration, the House of Representatives, and the Massachusetts Senate for recognizing the importance of this funding and for delivering record levels of Chapter 90 funding last year. Communities in our region—urban, suburban, and rural alike—depend on this continued commitment to keep pace with infrastructure needs, long-term planning, and growing public demand for safe, efficient, and sustainable transportation networks.

On behalf of the municipalities of the Greater Lowell region, I respectfully urge the Committee to report favorably on the swift passage of H. 53.

Respectfully,



Jennifer Raitt

Executive Director

Northern Middlesex Council of Governments

On behalf of

Clancy Main, Town Manager  
Town of Billerica

Paul Cohen, Town Manager  
Town of Chelmsford

Kate Hodges, Town Manager

Town of Dracut

Jason Silva, Town Administrator  
Town of Dunstable

Andrew MacLean, Town Administrator  
Town of Pepperell

John Curran, Town Manager  
Town of Tewksbury

Colin Loiselle, Town Manager  
Town of Tyngsborough

Kristen Las, Town Manager  
Town of Westford

cc:

NMCOG Council Members  
The Honorable James Arciero  
The Honorable Mike Barrett  
The Honorable Simon Cataldo  
The Honorable Rodney Elliott  
The Honorable Colleen Garry  
The Honorable Tara Hong  
The Honorable Senator Cindy Friedman

The Honorable Marc Lombardo  
The Honorable Tram Nguyen  
The Honorable David Robertson  
The Honorable Margaret Scarsdale  
The Honorable Vanna Howard  
The Honorable Barry Finegold  
The Honorable Edward Kennedy



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
House of Representatives  
State House, Boston 02133-1054

April 10, 2025

The Honorable Brendan P. Crighton  
The Honorable James Arciero  
Joint Committee on Transportation  
Massachusetts State House  
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Chairs Crighton, Arciero, and Distinguished Members of the Joint Committee,

I write today in strong support of H.53, *An Act financing long-term improvements to municipal roads and bridges*.

In rural districts like mine, many small towns lack the local revenue to take on large-scale infrastructure projects. While Chapter 90 funding helps, the traditional formula has long shortchanged communities with high road mileage but low populations. H.53 addresses this by adding \$100 million to be distributed based solely on road mileage. Towns in the 3rd Berkshire District could see a 62–84% increase in funding<sup>1</sup>—transformative support for long-overdue repairs. The bill’s five-year authorization also provides critical stability for long-term planning and budgeting.

H.53 also includes \$200 million for culverts and small bridges—critical investments for rural towns grappling with aging and failing infrastructure. Just last year in my district, the Brookside Road Bridge in Great Barrington was closed due to structural issues. Originally projected as a \$3.5 million, two-year repair, it has since escalated into an eight-year, \$50 million project<sup>2</sup>—severely impacting emergency services, local traffic, and economic activity. The closure has also disrupted Camp Eisner, a 67-year-old summer camp that serves 500+ children annually and supports many local businesses.

This situation is not isolated. Just four months later, the Kellogg Road Bridge in Sheffield also closed—further straining a neighborhood already facing a 20-minute detour. A temporary fix reopened the bridge, but it remains structurally unsound and will need full replacement within two years. This is part of a much larger trend: as of May 1, 2024, Berkshire County alone has 13 closed bridges and 34 more considered structurally deficient.<sup>3</sup> Statewide, that number rises to 470.<sup>4</sup>

To complement the goals of H.53, I have also filed HD.2730, *An Act relative to renewing and expanding the Accelerated Bridge Program*, which I look forward to bringing before the Committee later this session. Together, H.53 and HD.2730 offer a long-term, comprehensive approach to road and bridge investment—especially in communities too often overlooked despite carrying significant infrastructure burdens.

I respectfully urge the Committee to report H.53 out favorably. I appreciate the opportunity to share my perspective and am grateful for your continued leadership on this critical issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Leigh Davis".

State Rep. Leigh Davis, 3rd Berkshire District

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.iberkshires.com/story/77918/Chapter-90-Bond-Bill-Could-Bring-5.3M-to-Berkshire-Communities.html>

<sup>2</sup> [https://hwy.massdot.state.ma.us/ProjectInfo/Main.asp?ACTION=ViewProject&PROJECT\\_NO=613481#](https://hwy.massdot.state.ma.us/ProjectInfo/Main.asp?ACTION=ViewProject&PROJECT_NO=613481#)

<sup>3</sup> <https://berkshireplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/Berkshire-County-Bridge-Condition-Report.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> <https://artbbridgereport.org/state/profile/MA>



The Nature Conservancy in  
Massachusetts

April 9, 2025

The Honorable Brendan P. Crighton, Senate Chair  
The Honorable James Arciero, House Chair  
Joint Committee on Transportation  
State House  
Boston, MA 02133

**RE: Support of An Act financing long-term improvements to municipal roads and bridges**

Dear Chair Crighton and Chair Arciero and members of the Committee,

On behalf of the Nature Conservancy, I am writing to respectfully submit testimony in support of An Act financing long-term improvements to municipal roads and bridges, HB.53 filed by Governor Maura Healey.

The Nature Conservancy is a global conservation organization whose mission is to conserve the lands and waters on which all life depends. We have over 34,000 members across Massachusetts and have been deeply involved in efforts to address the impacts of extreme weather on the Commonwealth's infrastructure with the goals of enhancing safety, reducing maintenance costs and fostering healthy ecosystems.

Culvert replacement upgrade projects are a critical means of managing extreme storm flow, avoiding damage to roadway infrastructure and maintaining access to communities during emergencies. As you know, if we don't replace and/or upsize more culverts in Massachusetts, our public safety and infrastructure is at risk from heavy precipitation and severe storm events, which are occurring in greater frequency and duration now and are expecting to increase in the future. We strongly support the governor's proposed \$200 million in line item 6121-2627 for a program to upgrade culverts and small bridges.

As you may know, there is significant momentum given the initiatives that Massachusetts is leading on with respect to deploying more resilient culverts and bridges:

- Massachusetts Initiatives on Culverts ([The Governor's \\$8 billion transportation plan proposes to use \\$200 million to upgrade culverts and small bridges](#))
- [Massachusetts Culverts and Small Bridges Working Group Recommendations](#)

- [River Restoration: Culvert Replacement](#)
- [Accelerated Bridge Program](#)

The Nature Conservancy has been engaged in culvert and bridge upgrade projects and policies for twenty years. We are currently collaborating with MassDOT and local and regional partners to support under resourced rural communities to pursue bundling culvert upgrade projects for efficiency and cost-savings.

Thank you again for your leadership, time, and consideration. Should you have any questions or require further information, I can be reached at [slong@tnc.org](mailto:slong@tnc.org) and mobile number 617-312-5932.

Sincerely,



Steve Long  
Director of Policy and Partnerships  
The Nature Conservancy in Massachusetts

April 10, 2025

The Honorable Brendan P. Crighton, Senate Chair  
The Honorable James Arciero, House Chair  
Joint Committee on Transportation  
State House  
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Chairs Arciero, Crighton and Distinguished Members of the Joint Committee on Transportation:

Thank you to the Joint Committee for this opportunity to provide written testimony. I am writing in support of H. 53, *An Act Financing Long-Term Improvements to Municipal Roads and Bridges*.

I serve on the Board of Selectmen in the Town of Adams. In Adams and throughout the Berkshires, we have had numerous conversations about Chapter 90 funding as well as the funding not keeping pace with challenges faced by our municipalities, such as rising construction costs, inflation, and the impacts of climate change. We are incredibly grateful to see the H.53 bill filed as it is a reflection of the work of the Transportation Funding Task Force and the Chapter 90 Program Advisory Group who were tasked with the responsibility to assess program challenges and determine potential solutions. This bill would boost the Chapter 90 program to \$300 million per year which includes a 50% increase to the overall Chapter 90 program, providing groundbreaking investment in cities and towns from the Berkshires all the way to the Cape.

This bill is set to truly lift ALL communities while simultaneously prioritizing regional equity. This bill would distribute \$100 million of the \$300 million annual investment based on road miles. This adjustment to the typical apportionment will dramatically elevate the apportionment for Adams; and we are not alone. In small rural towns like Adams, we are extremely limited in our ability to generate municipal revenues. Local revenues alone could not generate the funding needed to maintain our 55.84 road miles. Using two formulas (one with the standard Chapter 90 formula and one with the focus on road miles) demonstrated that removing the population element from the Chapter 90 formula would provide more funding to communities in the Berkshires.

With this proposal, the town of Adams would receive nearly \$471,000 per year; an increase of \$185,000 over our usual allocation of \$280,000. In North Berkshire or the 1st Berkshire District, the total increase would be over \$1.7 million; in Pittsfield an increase of over \$651,000 and in South Berkshire or the 3rd Berkshire District an increase of nearly \$2.9 million. This is a commitment of additional dollars to Berkshire County through Chapter 90 in the amount of \$5,321,541. We see this investment in the well-being of all communities as transformative and truly a game changer!

As we all work together to continue to make strides towards our shared goals to nurture new homes, enhance our transportation networks and connectivity, and build our resilience in face of climate change and turbulent federal policy changes, H.53 is a critical investment that can improve the lives of residents across the Commonwealth.

I respectfully ask the Committee to favorably report out H.53. Thank you for your continued support of towns and cities across the Commonwealth. I sincerely appreciate this opportunity to share my thoughts and perspective with regard to H.53.

Sincerely,



**Christine D. Hoyt**

choyt@town.adams.ma.us

Town of Adams Board of Selectmen, Vice Chair

Massachusetts Municipal Association (MMA) Board of Directors, MSA District 1 Representative

Massachusetts Select Board Association (MSA) Officer, District 1 Representative

Local Government Advisory Commission (LGAC) Member

Berkshire County Select Board Association, President



Office of the  
Town Administrator

Senator Brendan Crighton  
Representative James Arciero

Joint Committee on Transportation Hearing testimony for April 10, 2025

Dear Senator Crighton and Representative Arciero,

I am the Town Administrator for Charlemont Massachusetts, a rural town in Franklin County with 56 road miles. Along with these road miles Charlemont is also blessed or to those of us trying to figure out how to maintain them cursed with more than 30 bridges due to our geographic layout. I am writing to you today in support of H.53.

Charlemont has 1,185 residents at our last census, of those residents more than a third are on fixed incomes, our annual budget sits at 4.5 million dollars, and 55% of it goes to schools all our other departments run on the remaining 45%. Our tax rate is one of the top 10 in Massachusetts. We currently receive around \$170,000 a year in chapter 90 funds.

Due to the financial constraints, we face, we have tried to be creative in addressing our roadways and bridges. We apply for grants every chance we get, save Chapter funds years to address projects and generally try to prioritize and repair what we can. This is no small feat with the average bridge costing more than our annual budget and the average road project needing more than 5 years of our Chapter 90 funds (and that is for a small project). To apply for funding, we have done a roadway assessment, and we have a top 10 bridges that need to be repaired list (yes you read that right we have so many bridges the same age that we have a top 10 priority list). In 2016 when we did the roadway assessment to just "fix" the roads in Charlemont we would have needed \$3 million + and this did not include bridge repairs.

For a town like Charlemont the change in Chapter 90 Funding would make a huge impact. One that not only would improve our infrastructure for residents and businesses in town, but also our safety, when roadways and infrastructure get closed and we must drive alternate routes, sometimes the alternate routes add more than 20 minutes on to reaching homes, this is not good in emergency situations. I hope this important act passes because of understanding its importance to rural communities in Massachusetts.

Thank you,

*Sarah Reynolds*

[administrator@townofcharlemont.org](mailto:administrator@townofcharlemont.org)

413-339-4335 ext. 8

The Honorable Brendan P Crighton  
Chair, Joint Committee on Transportation  
Massachusetts State Senate  
The State House, Room 109-C  
Boston, MA 02133  
[brendan.crighton@masenate.gov](mailto:brendan.crighton@masenate.gov)

The Honorable James Arciero  
Chair, Joint Committee on Transportation  
Massachusetts House of Representatives  
The State House, Room 134  
Boston, MA 02133  
[James.Arciero@mahouse.gov](mailto:James.Arciero@mahouse.gov)

Dear Senator Crighton and Representative Arciero,

On behalf of the Town of Cummington, we are writing to you today in support of *H.53 – An Act Financing Long-Term Improvements to Municipal Roads and Bridges*. As a small rural town in Western Massachusetts, Cummington relies heavily on Chapter 90 funding for the upkeep of our roads and bridges.

Cummington has a population of 1016 residents with 605 registered voters. Cummington is 23.06 square miles in area with 53 road miles. Of those road miles, 32 miles are blacktop road and 21 miles of dirt road. There are 9 miles of State Highway that runs through Cummington. The current Chapter 90 funding formula relies too heavily on population and employment, which our small town has very little of. Rural towns like Cummington have road miles and the expenses that come with them, but not the population or the economy.

As you are aware, costs for machinery and materials, such as black top and gravel, continue to increase significantly. The current flat funding levels have made it difficult for municipalities such as Cummington to maintain their road infrastructure with these increased costs. The annual Chapter 90 funding for the town of Cummington has been roughly \$198,000. It costs the town of Cummington approximately \$48,000 annually just for grading our dirt roads **without additional material** leaving the balance of funds to support all our road and bridge repairs. The proposed increase in Chapter 90 funding and changing formula would be significant to the town, allowing the town to complete much needed repairs on roads and bridges as well as maintaining those repairs. According to the MMA website, "Apportioning the governor's proposed \$100 million increase for Chapter 90 based on road mileage would help municipalities that do not rank high under the traditional formula. These are often rural communities with very limited ability to generate revenue to support road and bridge maintenance and repair" (MMA). The town of Cummington is one of those towns that do not rank high under the traditional formula and would benefit considerably from this change.

We would like to express our sincere gratitude for your dedicated efforts in shaping Massachusetts' investment in local road infrastructure. Feel free to reach out with any questions.

Sincerely,

Kenneth Howes, Selectboard Chair [khowes@cummington-ma.gov](mailto:khowes@cummington-ma.gov)

Brian Gilman, Selectboard Member [bgilman@cummington-ma.gov](mailto:bgilman@cummington-ma.gov)

June Lynds, Selectboard Member [jlynds@cummington-ma.gov](mailto:jlynds@cummington-ma.gov)

Alan Taylor, Highway Superintendent [ataylor@cummington-ma.gov](mailto:ataylor@cummington-ma.gov)



TOWN OF HAWLEY  
MASSACHUSETTS 01339.

8 PUDDING HOLLOW ROAD  
TELEPHONE: 413-339-5518  
FAX: 413-339-4959  
WWW.TOWNOFHAWLEY.COM

6 May 2025

Dear Ms. Morrissey:

We are writing in support of the legislation H53 proposed by Governor Healey. Hawley has one of the smallest populations in the Commonwealth. Our budget is funded entirely by property taxes and State grants like Chapter 90 and Chapter 70. More than half our population consists of senior citizens, many of whom live on fixed incomes. Hawley has more culverts than people. We have no stores other than a small farm outlet, no stop lights, and no schools within our boundaries. Everyone uses the roads to obtain the necessities of daily life. Our public-safety system depends entirely on the public roads.

Hawley has 45 miles of roads to maintain, including Route 8A, a state-numbered, town-owned regional connector. This road connects southern Berkshire County to the recreation opportunities of Franklin County, notably the Berkshire East resort complex, which operates year round. A revision of the Chapter 90 formula like the one the Governor has proposed would make a tremendous difference to the structure of Hawley's small Highway Department and to our success in maintaining roadway infrastructure and public safety.

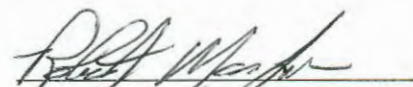
Hawley very much needs this help. Please get in touch if you have any questions.

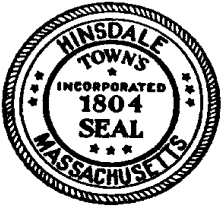
With thanks,

The Hawley Selectboard

  
Williams Cosby

  
Hussain Hamdan

  
Robert MacLean



**Town Administrator**  
39 South Street  
Hinsdale, MA 01235  
[Town.administrator@hinsdalema.gov](mailto:Town.administrator@hinsdalema.gov)  
413-655-2300, x355

## Town of Hinsdale

To all members of the State Legislature voting on HB53:

Governor Maura T. Healey of Massachusetts has introduced legislation to secure \$1.5 billion in funding aimed at enhancing municipal roads and bridges over the long term. The legislation allocates \$885 million towards the enhancement of transportation infrastructure, focusing on alleviating congestion, adapting to climate change, and upgrading deteriorating roadways. Essential considerations encompass the augmentation of annual Chapter 90 funds to \$300 million, the revision of the funding formula, the allocation of \$500 million for MassDOT's road and bridge lifecycle asset management initiative, and the provision of \$185 million for transportation capital endeavors.

Particularly noteworthy for our Town of Hinsdale is the anticipated alteration in the funding formula, which is expected to enhance assistance for small and rural municipalities that are in dire need of such support.

We express our gratitude to Governor Healy and Lieutenant Governor Driscoll for acknowledging our concerns and implementing measures to assist rural communities. Now we ask you to support this bill which will make a real difference to those us working and living on roads unsatisfactory roads in need of repair.

Thank you,

Robert D. Graves  
Town Administrator  
Hinsdale, MA



**TOWN OF LENOX**  
6 Walker Street, Lenox, MA 01240  
www.townoflenox.com

Jay R. Green, J.D.  
Town Manager

April 10, 2025

The Honorable Brendan P. Crighton, Senate Chair  
The Honorable James Arciero, House Chair  
Joint Committee on Transportation  
State House  
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Chairs Arciero, Crighton and Distinguished Members of the Joint Committee on Transportation,

I am writing in support of H. 53, An Act Financing Long-Term Improvements to Municipal Roads and Bridges. As you may know, the portion of this bill addressing the Chapter 90 Distribution Formula and its funding was informed by the work of an Advisory Group, made up of local government leaders and public works professionals from across the Commonwealth. Communities of all sizes were represented and worked together to provide solutions to improve a critical source of infrastructure funding for all 351 cities and towns. As a member of the Advisory Group, I am pleased to share with the Committee that it is satisfying to see recommendations generated by local government leaders be incorporated into legislation that will make a positive difference for ALL of our cities and towns from the Berkshires to the Cape & Islands. How often are we able to find consensus among local government leaders on a solution that benefits Boston and Gosnold? The Advisory Group was able to achieve consensus by compromise and worked through the lens that any changes to Chapter 90 should avoid negatively impacting communities. The Advisory Group's recommendations, we believe, achieve this balanced goal.

Thus, H.53 includes provisions to ensure that the existing amount of funding, \$200 million, be apportioned using the traditional distribution formula with the proposed \$100 million increase based on road mileage data alone. This is an important provision, as it acknowledges that while population and workforce may be elastic, our road miles are not and the cost of maintaining them increases annually. This dual formula distribution system addresses community equity by assisting municipalities that do not rank high using the traditional formula (large number of miles, but small population and bedroom community). These are rural communities with limited ability to generate revenues to augment Chapter 90 funds for their road maintenance.

For example, in my previous community, Adams, with limited levy capacity and capital funds, we had to rely on competitive grant sources to augment our approximately \$275,000 annual Chapter 90 distribution and "bank" our funds until we had enough to complete an impactful project. This results in deferred maintenance and continued deterioration of the 55-mile road system. Conversely, in my current community, Lenox, we have the benefit of robust capital funds, but we still must augment Chapter 90 funds with other capital funds to execute road projects. In recent years, Lenox has received \$274,376.29 with an annual local appropriation of \$500,000 for roadwork. If H.53 were to pass, Lenox would receive an increase of \$170,962.77 for a proposed total of \$445,908.10 or \$2,229,540.51 over five years. This is a similar financial impact for Adams. Looking at the benefit regionally, Berkshire County would see a \$5.3 million increase in Chapter 90 funding. That is impactful for our communities.

H. 53 also addresses the impact of inflation on the program. While the cost of putting our roads into a state of good repair (SOGR) has increased year over year, Chapter 90 has been level-funded since 2012 at \$200 million per year. MassDOT estimates that about \$405 million is needed to catch up with inflation and there are \$860 million of Chapter 90 eligible projects waiting to be funded. H.53's \$300 million per year for five years with the revised formula for 1/3 of the total annual distribution will make a significant positive impact



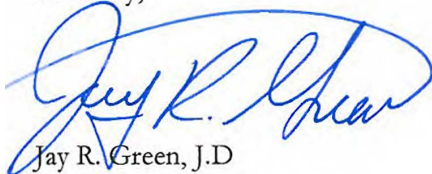
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6 Walker Street, Lenox, MA 01240  
www.townoflenox.com

Jay R. Green, J.D.  
Town Manager

for communities on their road projects. The multi-year authorization provides stability to communities, allowing us to better plan and program our Capital Improvement Plans (CIP) with dependable and impactful Chapter 90 funding. However, in order for H.53 to have the impact desired on our cities and towns, all three components must be part of the final bill. A formula change without a funding increase will not be impactful and an infusion of funding without dependability over a typical five-year CIP planning window will not move the funding out the door any faster.

I respectfully ask the Committee to favorably report out H.53. Thank you for taking the time to listen to our perspectives as local government officials. We appreciate the work that you do as legislators and value the partnership that the General Court has with our cities and towns.

Sincerely,



Jay R. Green, J.D



## **TOWN OF MONTEREY**

435 Main Rd. P.O. Box 308  
Monterey, MA 01245

To: The Joint Committee on Transportation  
Re: The Chapter 90 Bond Bill

Honorable members of the Massachusetts House of Representatives and Senate,

The Town of Monterey greatly appreciates your support for H. 53, An Act Financing Long-Term Improvements to Municipal Roads and Bridges, and Governor Healey's Transportation Bond Bill. We recognize all of the time and work this took to craft, and attention you are giving smaller towns, especially rural ones. As a small community of fewer than 1,100 people, very few commercial enterprises and 52 miles of road, the additional Chapter 90 support is invaluable. It will enable us to continue to maintain our roads and perhaps even to replace a few aging culverts. Multi-year authorization would give us a much sounder ability to plan future projects, particularly in light of escalating costs. This is vitally important work, and we are grateful for the timely help.

Yet, we ask that the Governor, House and Senate go still further and address significant changes to the regulatory framework that would allow this money to accomplish a great deal more. Seriously revamping Massachusetts' planning and oversight process for culverts and bridges would not just make the process more manageable for small towns and speed the urgent repairs to our infrastructure, it would also demonstrate a profound recognition of our need to conserve all of our resources: human, natural and economic.

Massachusetts values its environment, and has shown great commitment to protecting and preserving it for the sake of our residents and our future. In seeking to protect it, we have built an infrastructure of nearly intractable rules, regulations and administrative processes that are now hobbling us in the face of our aging infrastructure. But the current process and rules for replacing culverts with bridges and the egregious and absurdly expensive process for planning and building those bridges is going to literally bankrupt our towns and our state, not to mention result in the utter devastation of our transportation system.

Just in the state of Massachusetts we have surely built enough culverts and bridges that we have a solid bank of plans and structural know how to get culverts replaced and bridges built. If we can pre-build homes and put them up on site in only a few days, we can find a way to make the building and installing of bridges faster and more resource conserving and cost effective. It should not cost Great Barrington \$1.5-4.5 million and up to two years just to get a temporary bridge, with the final replacement requiring \$10.9-11.6 million, perhaps by 2030. And that is only one of many bridges in Great Barrington, one of 351 cities and towns in our state.

Phone: 413.528.1443 x114 Fax: 413.528.9452

[admin@montereyma.gov](mailto:admin@montereyma.gov)


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## TOWN OF MONTEREY


435 Main Rd. P.O. Box 308  
Monterey, MA 01245

This process is shamefully wasteful. It is wasteful of the human resources that go into the planning process. It is wasteful of the resources used to reroute traffic for years while the bridge is restored or replaced. It is wasteful of the natural and human resources used to construct the bridges over years and years. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has designed bridges that can be installed very quickly and effectively. Surely the technology and innovation exist to find more resource conservative solutions to this problem -- if only we are sensible enough to use them. We have too many culverts and bridges in need of replacement and repair to continue these wasteful practices. We urge you to overcome the political quagmire of regulation and find a way forward to allow us to support our environmental integrity while maintaining our transportation network.

Respectfully,

  
Justin Makuc, Chair

  
Susan Cooper  
-----  
Monterey Select Board

  
Frank Abbott

SB/rsm

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## Townsend Highway Department

177 Main Street, Townsend, MA 01469

(978) 597-1712

James Smith, Superintendent

April 7, 2025

Greetings,

As the Superintendent for the Town of Townsend Highway Department, I would like to express my support for the Chapter 90 program and the proposed multi-year bond bill.

With Townsend being a small community, with just over 100 miles of roadway, we rely heavily on Chapter 90 funding. This funding is essential in the maintenance and replacement of our bridges and roadways to ensure the safety of our residents and commuters traveling through Townsend.

As we are all aware, inflation has increased the cost of labor and materials drastically. This has greatly reduced the number of repairs and maintenance needed on our roadways. The proposed bond bill would increase our funding by 45%-60%. This would help to absorb some of the rising costs and increase the number of repairs we are able to make to our roadways.

I believe that it is important and essential to invest in the safety of our communities, residents and those traveling through our towns. This is our opportunity to properly fund chapter 90, allowing towns to develop and improve our roadways efficiently and effectively.

I thank you for giving this matter the attention it deserves.

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Sincerely,

James Smith

Highway Department Superintendent

Townsend, MA 01469

## Morrissey, Siobhan (HOU)

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**From:** Kyle Fox <kfox@westfordma.gov>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 7, 2025 4:33 PM  
**To:** Morrissey, Siobhan (HOU)  
**Subject:** Testimony in Support of H.53 – An Act Financing Improvements to Municipal Roads and Bridges

You don't often get email from kfox@westfordma.gov. [Learn why this is important](#)

Submitted by Kyle Fox, PE, Director of Public Works  
Town of Westford  
April 7, 2025

### **To the Honorable Chairs and Members of the Joint Committee on Transportation:**

I write in strong support of H.53, *An Act Financing Long-Term Improvements to Municipal Roads and Bridges*, and to express my appreciation for your continued partnership with Massachusetts cities and towns on transportation funding.

As the Director of Public Works for the Town of Westford, I see every day how critical Chapter 90 funds are to the maintenance and safety of our local roadways. Governor Healey's proposed Transportation Bond Bill, and particularly the historic \$1.5 billion multi-year authorization for Chapter 90, represents a transformative investment in municipal infrastructure. I urge the Committee to report favorably on H.53 and support its swift passage.

### **Why H.53 Matters to Our Community**

The proposed \$300 million annually for five years—of which \$200 million follows the traditional Chapter 90 formula and \$100 million is apportioned based on road miles—is an important step forward. This formula modification recognizes the challenges faced by rural and less-populous communities that often struggle to fund necessary repairs with limited local revenue.

The Town of Westford maintains more than 155 miles of roadway and confronts increasing costs year over year. Since 2012, Chapter 90 funding has remained level at \$200 million annually, while the cost of construction materials, labor, and compliance requirements have continued to climb. MassDOT estimates that \$404.6 million annually is now required to keep up with inflation—H.53 begins to address that shortfall in a meaningful way.

Additionally, the \$200 million proposed for a culvert and small bridge program would have a direct impact on Westford, where aging culverts and small bridge structures are increasingly vulnerable to extreme weather and climate change. These assets are often overlooked but are vital to maintaining safe and resilient local transportation networks.

### **The Value of a Multi-Year Authorization**

A five-year Chapter 90 authorization provides much-needed stability and predictability. It allows us to plan larger, more strategic projects with confidence, coordinate with utility work, secure contractors in advance of the construction season, and ensure efficient use of public funds. In uncertain economic and regulatory times, this level of certainty is invaluable for local governments.

I respectfully urge the Joint Committee on Transportation to:

- Support H.53 and the Governor's proposed multi-year Chapter 90 authorization;

- Recognize the importance of expanded culvert and small bridge funding;
- Acknowledge the role that predictable, sustained investment plays in protecting our roads and our residents.

Thank you for your consideration and continued advocacy on behalf of Massachusetts municipalities. I look forward to seeing this legislation advance and am grateful for the Committee's partnership.

Sincerely,

**Kyle Fox, PE**

Director of Public Works

Town of Westford

28 North Street

Westford, MA 01886

(978) 692-5520

[www.facebook.com/WestfordPublicWorks](http://www.facebook.com/WestfordPublicWorks)

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See <http://www.sec.state.ma.us/pre/preidx.htm>.