

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

JOURNAL OF THE HOUSE.



WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2026.

[14]*

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Wednesday, February 11, 2026.

Met according to adjournment at eleven o'clock A.M. with Mr. Donato of Medford in the Chair (having been appointed by the Speaker, under authority conferred by Rule 5, to perform the duties of the Chair).

At the request of the Chair (Mr. Donato), the members, guests and employees joined with him in reciting the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

Pledge of
allegiance.

Silent Prayer.

The Speaker having taken the Chair, at the request of Representatives Mariano of Quincy, Chan of Quincy and Ayers of Quincy, the members, guests, and employees stood in a moment of silent tribute for the Honorable Arthur Tobin, who passed away on January 16, 2026.

Arthur Tobin.

Arthur Tobin was a life-long public servant. He was a veteran of the Korean War, a State Representative, a State Senator, President of the Quincy City Council, Mayor of Quincy, Chair of the Quincy School Committee, and Clerk-Magistrate of Quincy District Court – a role that he served in for 44 years. In each of those roles, Mr. Tobin worked tirelessly to better the lives of the people that he served, setting a shining example for each of us who sought elected office after him. Mr. Tobin was married to Shirley Tobin, who passed away one day before her husband. Together, Arthur and Shirley Tobin raised 7 children, and were grandparents to 20 grandchildren and 24 great-grandchildren. It's truly impossible to overstate the impact that Mr. Tobin had on Quincy, and on the people who knew him, other than to say that we are all better because of that privilege.

Appointments to a Joint Special Committee.

The Speaker announced that (under the provisions of House order No. 5011) he had appointed Representatives Peisch of Wellesley, Hogan of Stow, Moran of Lawrence and Day of Stoneham to the special joint committee established for the purpose of considering the initiative petitions transmitted to the Clerk of the House of Representatives by the Secretary of the Commonwealth in accordance with the requirements of Article XLVIII of the Amendments to the Constitution.

Initiative
petitions.

The House Minority Leader announced that (under the provisions of House order No. 5011) he had appointed Mr. Vieira of Falmouth to the special joint committee established for the purpose of considering the initiative petitions transmitted to the Clerk of the House of Representatives by the Secretary of the Commonwealth in accordance with the requirements of Article XLVIII of the Amendments to the Constitution.

Id.

Remote Participation.

Notice had been received from House Counsel that, under the provisions of House Rule 49, Representatives Armini of Marblehead, Ferguson of Holden, Lombardo of Billerica, Ultrino of Malden and Xiarhos of Barnstable had been approved to participate remotely for today's formal sitting.

Remote participation.

Petitions.

Petitions severally were presented and referred as follows:

By Representative Jones of North Reading, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 5102) of Bradley H. Jones, Jr., Richard M. Haggerty and Jason M. Lewis (by vote of the town) relative to the charter of the town of Reading. To the committee on Municipalities and Regional Government.

Reading,—
charter.

By the same member, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 5103) of Bradley H. Jones, Jr., Richard M. Haggerty and Jason M. Lewis (by vote of the town) that the town of Reading be authorized to establish a means tested senior citizen property tax exemption in said town. To the committee on Revenue.

Reading,—
senior tax
exemption.

Severally sent to the Senate for concurrence.

Petitions severally were presented and referred as follows:

By Representative Kassner of Hamilton, a petition (subject to Joint Rule 12) of Kristin E. Kassner and others relative to senior property tax credits.

Tax
credits.

By Representatives Sabadosa of Northampton and Livingstone of Boston, a petition (subject to Joint Rule 12) of Lindsay N. Sabadosa and Jay D. Livingstone relative to the concealment of the death of child born out of wedlock.

Child death
concealment.

By Representative Sabadosa of Northampton and Senator Comerford, a joint petition (subject to Joint Rule 12) of Lindsay N. Sabadosa and Joanne M. Comerford relative to taxation of certain foreign government pension benefits.

Foreign
pensions,—
taxation.

By Representative Silvia of Fall River, a petition (subject to Joint Rule 12) of Alan Silvia, Thomas W. Moakley and Steven S. Howitt relative to the definition of electric mopeds.

Electric
mopeds.

Severally, under Rule 24, to the committee on Rules.

Paper from the Senate.

The House Bill relative to teacher preparation and student literacy (House, No. 4683, amended), came from the Senate passed to be engrossed, in concurrence, with an amendment striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in place thereof the text contained in Senate document numbered 2940.

Students,—
literacy.

Under suspension of the rules, on motion of Mr. Gordon of Bedford, the amendment was considered forthwith. The House then non-concurred with the Senate in its amendment; and on further motion of the same member, asked for a committee of conference on the disagreeing votes of the two branches. Representatives Gordon of Bedford, Cataldo of Concord and Marsi of Charlton were appointed the committee on the part of the House. Sent to the Senate to be joined.

Committee of
conference.

A Bill enabling the maintenance of private roads in the city of Gloucester (Senate, No. 2596), passed to be engrossed by the Senate, was read; and it was referred, under Rule 7A, to the committee on Steering, Policy and Scheduling.

Gloucester,—
private roads.

Reports of Committees.

By Mr. Galvin of Canton, for the committee on Rules and the committees on Rules of the two branches, acting concurrently, that Joint Rule 12 be suspended on the petition of Christopher J. Worrell for legislation to designate the Dorchester division of the Boston Municipal Court as Judge Leslie E. Harris courthouse. Under suspension of the rules, on motion of Mr. Ouellette of Westport, the report was considered forthwith. Joint Rule 12 was suspended; and the petition (accompanied by bill) was referred to the committee on the Judiciary. Sent to the Senate for concurrence.

Boston,—
Harris
courthouse.

By Mr. Chan of Quincy, for the committee on Consumer Protection and Professional Licensure, on House, Nos. 322, 361, 363, 378, 389, 402, 403, 444, 452, 455, 458 and 469, an Order relative to authorizing the committee on Consumer Protection and Professional Licensure to make an investigation and study of certain House documents relative to telemarketing, billboards and other related matters (House, No. 5080). Referred, under Joint Rule 29, to the committees on Rules of the two branches, acting concurrently.

Telemarketing,
billboards and
other related
matters,—
study.

Subsequently, Mr. Galvin of Canton, for said committees, reported asking to be discharged from further consideration of the order; and recommending that the same be referred to the House committee on Rules.

Under Rule 42, the report was considered forthwith; and it was accepted.

By Mr. McGonagle of Everett, for the committee on Veterans and Federal Affairs, on House, No. 3834, an Order relative to authorizing the committee on Veterans and Federal Affairs to make an investigation and study of a certain House document relative to voluntary contribution check-off boxes on municipal tax bills for support of local veterans' agents (House, No. 5100) [Representatives Thurber of Somerset and Gaskey of Carver dissenting]. Referred, under Joint Rule 29, to the committees on Rules of the two branches, acting concurrently.

Voluntary
contributions
for veterans,—
study.

Subsequently, Mr. Galvin of Canton, for said committees, reported asking to be discharged from further consideration of the order; and recommending that the same be referred to the House committee on Rules.

Under Rule 42, the report was considered forthwith; and it was accepted.

Subsequently, Mr. Galvin of Canton, for said committee on Rules, reported, on the foregoing order, a Bill in support of veterans and dependents through municipal tax bills (House, No. 3834). Read; and referred, under Rule 33, to the committee on Ways and Means.

Voluntary
contributions
for veterans.

By Mr. McGonagle of Everett, for the committee on Veterans and Federal Affairs, on House, No. 3886, an Order relative to authorizing the committee on Veterans and Federal Affairs to make an investigation and study of a certain House document relative to support for military connected families (House, No. 5101). Referred, under Joint Rule 29, to the committees on Rules of the two branches, acting concurrently.

Military
family
support,—
study.

Subsequently, Mr. Galvin of Canton, for said committees, reported asking to be discharged from further consideration of the order; and recommending that the same be referred to the House committee on Rules.

Under Rule 42, the report was considered forthwith; and it was accepted.

Subsequently, Mr. Galvin of Canton, for said committee on Rules, reported, on the foregoing order, a Bill to enhance access, inclusion, support and equity for military connected families (House, No. 3886). Read; and referred, under Rule 33, to the committee on Ways and Means.

Military family support.

By Mr. Livingstone of Boston, for the committee on Children, Families and Persons with Disabilities, on a petition, a Bill establishing a special commission to study women and homelessness (House, No. 289).

Women and homelessness,—study.

By the same member, for the same committee, on a petition, a Bill establishing a special commission on two-generation approaches to childhood education (House, No. 291).

Childhood education,—study.

Severally read; and referred, under Joint Rule 29, to the committees on Rules of the two branches, acting concurrently.

By Mr. Livingstone of Boston, for the committee on Children, Families and Persons with Disabilities, on a petition, a Bill to end child homelessness (House, No. 226).

Children,—homelessness.

By the same member, for the same committee, on House, No. 215, a Bill supporting the development of children experiencing homelessness (House, No. 5090).

Id.

By the same member, for the same committee, on House, No. 285, a Bill relative to health care quality for children and youth (House, No. 5091).

Healthcare,—youth.

By Mr. McMurtry of Dedham, for the committee on Labor and Workforce Development, on a petition, a Bill clarifying the prevailing wage act to protect actions by the attorney general (House, No. 2115).

Prevailing wage law.

By the same member, for the same committee, on a petition, a Bill clarifying the prevailing wage law (House, No. 2120).

Id.

By the same member, for the same committee, on a petition, a Bill relative to compliance with the prevailing wage laws of the Commonwealth (House, No. 2162).

Id.

By the same member, for the same committee, on a petition, a Bill clarifying the process for paying the wages of dismissed employees (House, No. 2163).

Dismissed employees.

By Ms. Decker of Cambridge, for the committee on Public Health, on a petition, a Bill relative to Topical Steroid Withdrawal Syndrome (House, No. 4686).

Topical Steroid Withdrawal.

By the same member, for the same committee, on House, No. 586, a Bill relative to type 1 diabetes informational materials for the parents and guardians of students (House, No. 5092).

Type 1 diabetes.

By Mr. Madaro of Boston, for the committee on Revenue, on a petition, a Bill repealing the property tax exemption for Massport lessees (House, No. 3112).

MassPort,—property tax.

Severally read; and referred, under Rule 33, to the committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. Madaro of Boston, for the committee on Revenue, on a petition, a Bill relative to the valuation of long term residences (House, No. 3006).

Long-term residences.

By the same member, for the same committee, on a petition, a Bill relative to ensuring fairness and equity in the assessment of the value of property (House, No. 3212).

Property assessments.

By the same member, for the same committee, on a petition, a Bill relative to municipal tax collectors (House, No. 3266).

Municipal tax collectors.

By the same member, for the same committee, on a petition, a Bill relative to preserving information content of historic resources with community preservation funds (House, No. 3271).

Historic resources.

Severally read; and referred, under Rule 7A, to the committee on Steering, Policy and Scheduling.

Engrossed Bills.

Engrossed bills

Amending the charter of the town of Rockland (see Senate, No. 2716, amended) (Which originated in the Senate);

Bills enacted.

Authorizing the town of Williamstown to expand financial eligibility for senior property tax exemption (see House, No. 3026); and

Authorizing the town of Rochester to continue the employment of fire chief Scott Weigel (see House, No. 4235);

(Which severally originated in the House);

Severally having been certified by the Clerk to be rightly and truly prepared for final passage, were passed to be enacted; and they were signed by the acting Speaker and sent to the Senate.

Recess.

At six minutes after eleven o'clock A.M., on motion of Mr. Frost of Auburn (Mr. Donato of Medford being in the Chair), the House recessed until one o'clock P.M.; and two minutes before three o'clock, the House was called to order with Mr. Donato of Medford in the Chair.

Recess.

Reports of Committees.

Prior to the noon recess, By Mr. Michlewitz of Boston, for the committee on Ways and Means, that the Bill enhancing disclosure requirements for synthetic media in political advertising (House, No. 846), ought to pass with an amendment substituting therefor a bill with the same title (House, No. 5094). Referred, under Rule 7A, to the committee on Steering, Policy and Scheduling.

Political advertising.

Mr. Honan of Boston, for said committee, then reported that the matter be scheduled for consideration by the House.

Under suspension of Rule 7A, on motion of Mr. Michlewitz of Boston, the bill was read a second time forthwith. The amendment recommended by the committee on Ways and Means then was adopted; and the substituted bill was ordered to a third reading.

Subsequently, the noon recess having terminated (Ms. Hogan of Stow being in the Chair), under suspension of the rules, on motion of Mr. Jones of North Reading, the bill (having been reported by the committee on Bills in the Third Reading to be correctly drawn) was read a third time.

After debate on the question on passing the bill to be engrossed, (Mr. Donato of Medford being in the Chair) Mr. Jones of North Reading moved to amend it by adding the following:

“(c) This section shall not apply to a radio or television broadcasting station, including a cable or satellite television operator, programmer, producer or mobile application or streaming service when it is paid to broadcast materially deceptive audio or visual media or materially deceptive election-related communication.”.

The amendment was adopted.

On the question on passing the bill, as amended, to be engrossed, the sense of the House was taken by the yeas and nays, at the request of Mr. Hunt of Boston; and on the roll call 157 members voted in the affirmative and 0 in the negative.

[See [Yea and Nay No. 122](#) in Supplement.]

Therefore the bill (House, No. 5094, amended) was passed to be engrossed. Sent to the Senate for concurrence.

Bill passed to be
engrossed,—
yea and nay
No. 122.

Prior to the noon recess (Mr. Donato being in the Chair), By Mr. Michlewitz of Boston, for the committee on Ways and Means, that the Bill to protect against election misinformation (House, No. 76), ought to pass with an amendment substituting therefor a bill with the same title (House, No. 5093). Referred, under Rule 7A, to the committee on Steering, Policy and Scheduling.

Mr. Honan of Boston, for said committee, then reported that the matter be scheduled for consideration by the House.

Under suspension of Rule 7A, on motion of Mr. Michlewitz of Boston, the bill was read a second time forthwith. The amendment recommended by the committee on Ways and Means then was adopted; and the substituted bill was ordered to a third reading.

Subsequently, the noon recess having terminated (Mr. Donato of Medford being in the Chair), under suspension of the rules, on motion of Mr. Hunt of Boston, the bill (having been reported by the committee on Bills in the Third Reading to be correctly drawn) was read a third time.

After debate on the question on passing the bill to be engrossed, Mr. Sweezy of Duxbury moved to amend the bill by adding the following section:

“SECTION 6. Section 28 of chapter 53 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2022 Official Edition, is hereby amended by striking out, in line 1, the word ‘seventh’ and inserting in place thereof the following word: ‘eleventh’.”

After debate on the question on adoption of the amendment, the sense of the House was taken by the yeas and nays, at the request of the same member; and on the roll call 25 members voted in the affirmative and 132 in the negative.

[See [Yea and Nay No. 123](#) in Supplement.]

Therefore the amendment was rejected.

Mr. Gaskey of Carver then moved to amend the bill as follows:—

Section 1 (definitions)

In the definition of “Materially deceptive audio or visual media”, strike the words “concerning the safety or regular operations of an election or candidate’s appearance, speech or conduct that has been fabricated or intentionally manipulated” and insert in place thereof the following:

“purporting to depict a candidate for elective office or an election official engaged in speech or conduct that did not, in fact, occur, and that has been fabricated or materially altered using synthetic media so as to cause a reasonable person to believe the fabricated or altered speech or conduct actually occurred”.

In the definition of “Materially deceptive election-related communication”, insert after the words “verifiably false information regarding” the words:

“, with the specific intent to prevent or deter an otherwise eligible voter from casting a ballot,”.

Elections,—
misinformation.

Amendment
rejected,—
yea and nay
No. 123.

Amendment to Section 5 (new § 70 in chapter 56)

In subsection (a)(1), by striking out the words “within 90 days of an election at which a candidate for elective office will appear on the ballot,” and inserting in place thereof the following words:

“within 30 days immediately preceding an election at which a candidate for elective office will appear on the ballot.”

In subsection (a)(1), after the words “materially deceptive audio or visual media” insert the words:

“that is synthetic media and purports to be an authentic recording of the candidate or election official”.

In subsection (a)(2), after the words “materially deceptive election-related communication” insert the words:

“that is likely to cause substantial voter confusion or disenfranchisement”.

Add the following new subsection after subsection (a):

(a½) Nothing in this section shall apply to any communication that, at the time of distribution, is based on and substantially consistent with: (i) publicly available information published by a federal, state or local election official; or (ii) information later determined to be inaccurate, if the distributor, upon learning of such inaccuracy, takes reasonable steps to correct or withdraw the communication.

In subsection (b)(1), after “the attorney general may seek injunctive or other equitable relief” insert:

“; provided, however, that no prior restraint shall issue unless a court finds, after an evidentiary hearing, that the plaintiff has demonstrated by clear and convincing evidence that the communication is materially deceptive under this section and that there is no less restrictive means, including disclaimer or corrective notice, sufficient to remedy the harm”.

Add the following new subsection:

(b½) In any action under this section, it shall be an affirmative defense that the defendant: (i) clearly and conspicuously disclosed, in close proximity to the communication, that the relevant content was created or altered using synthetic media and does not depict an actual recording of the candidate or election official; or (ii) reasonably believed, based on specific facts, that the communication was accurate at the time of distribution.

Rewrite subsection (c)(2) as follows:

(2) This section shall not apply to a radio or television broadcasting station, including a cable or satellite television operator, programmer, producer or mobile application or streaming service, or to an internet website or regularly published newspaper, magazine or other periodical of general circulation, that carries materially deceptive audio or visual media or materially deceptive election-related communication prohibited by this section as part of bona fide news reporting or commentary, if the content is accompanied by a clear disclosure that questions the authenticity or accuracy of such media or communication.

Add a new subsection (d):

(d) This section shall be enforced in a viewpoint-neutral manner. No action shall be brought or maintained under this section based on disagreement with the political, ideological or policy views expressed in a communication.

After debate on the question on adoption of the amendments, the sense of the House was taken by the yeas and nays, at the request of the same member; and on the roll call 12 members voted in the affirmative and 145 in the negative.

[See [Yea and Nay No. 124](#) in Supplement.]

Therefore the amendments were rejected.

Amendments
rejected,—
yea and nay
No. 124.

The Speaker being in the Chair,—

On the question on passing the bill to be engrossed, the sense of the House was taken by the yeas and nays, at the request of Mr. Hunt of Boston; and on the roll call 154 members voted in the affirmative and 3 in the negative.

[See [Yea and Nay No. 125](#) in Supplement.]

Therefore the bill (House, No. 5093) was passed to be engrossed. Sent to the Senate for concurrence.

Bill passed
to be engrossed,—
yea and nay
No. 125.

Order.

Mr. Donato of Medford being in the Chair,—

On motion of Mr. Mariano of Quincy,—

Ordered, That when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet tomorrow at eleven o'clock A.M.

Next
sitting.

Mr. Frost of Auburn then moved that the House adjourn; and the motion prevailed. Accordingly, without proceeding to consideration of the matters in the Orders of the Day, at sixteen minutes after four o'clock P.M. (Mr. Donato of Medford being in the Chair), the House adjourned, to meet the following day at eleven o'clock A.M., in an Informal Session.