

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

JOURNAL OF THE HOUSE.



TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2026.

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Tuesday, February 17, 2026.

Met according to adjournment at eleven o'clock A.M., in an Informal Session, 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.

Message from the Governor.

A message from Her Excellency the Governor (under the provisions of Section 8 of Article LXXXIX of the Amendments to the Constitution) recommending legislation relative to validating certain proceedings of the town of Stow (House, No. 5129), was filed in the office of the Clerk on Friday, February 13.

Stow,—
town
meeting.

The message was read; and it was referred, under Rule 30, with the accompanying draft of a bill, to the committee on Election Laws. Sent to the Senate for concurrence.

Lunar New Year.

During the session, Ms. Howard of Lowell took the Chair, declared a brief recess and, on behalf of Representatives Chan of Quincy, Wong of Saugus, Nguyen of Andover, Howard of Lowell, Uyterhoeven of Somerville, Sangiolo of Newton and Hong of Lowell, paid tribute to the members of the Asian community of the Commonwealth on the occasion of Lunar New Year, as follows:

Lunar
New Year.

On Tuesday, February 17th, the new year of the lunar calendar began. The lunar calendar is the second oldest continuously used calendar in the world, with this year marking the 4,724th year. Many Asian cultures, including Chinese, Vietnamese, and Korean, celebrate the Lunar New Year as a time to spend with family sharing happiness and good fortune.

The lunar calendar is set in 12-year cycles using 12 different zodiac animals to symbolize each year. This year is the year of the Horse, the 7th animal of the 12-year cycle. Persons born this year are responsible, confident and enjoy both physical and mental challenges. This year brings fast changes, innovations and opportunities for transformation in people's interpersonal and economic life.

The House Asian Caucus warmly wishes everyone a happy Lunar New Year!

Resolutions.

Resolutions (filed with the Clerk by Representatives Chan of Quincy and other members of the House) recognizing the Asian American community's celebration of the Lunar New Year, the Year of the Horse, on February 17, 2026, were referred, under Rule 85, to the committee on Rules.

Lunar
New Year.

Mr. Galvin of Canton, for said committee, reported that the resolutions ought to be adopted. Under suspension of the rules, on motion of Ms. Howard of Lowell, the resolutions (reported by the committee on Bills in the Third Reading to be correctly drawn) were considered forthwith; and they were adopted.

Orders.

The following orders were referred, under Rule 24, to the committee on Rules:

Order (filed by Representatives Livingstone of Boston and Garcia of Chelsea) relative to extending until Wednesday, March 18, 2026 the time within which the committee on Children, Families and Persons with Disabilities is authorized to report on a current House document (House, No. 5069).

Extensions
of time for
committees
to make
reports.

Order (filed by Representatives Gordon of Bedford and Ayers of Quincy) relative to extending until Wednesday, March 18, 2026 the time within which the committee on Education is authorized to report on current House documents (House, No. 5123).

Order (filed by Representatives Haggerty of Woburn and Ramos of North Andover) relative to extending until Wednesday, March 18, 2026 the time within which the committee on Housing is authorized to report on current House documents (House, No. 4923).

Order (filed by Representatives Haggerty of Woburn and Ramos of North Andover) relative to extending until Wednesday, March 18, 2026 the time within which the committee on Housing is authorized to report on current House documents (House, No. 4932).

Order (filed by Representatives McMurtry of Dedham and Vitolo of Brookline) relative to extending until Wednesday, March 18, 2026 the time within which the committee on Labor and Workforce Development is authorized to report on current House documents (House, No. 5122).

Order (filed by Representatives Lewis of Framingham and Sabadosa of Northampton) relative to extending until Wednesday, March 18, 2026 the time within which the committee on Municipalities and Regional Government is authorized to report on a current House document (House, No. 5067).

Order (filed by Representatives Madaro of Boston and Philips of Sharon) relative to extending until Friday, March 13, 2026 the time within which the committee on Revenue is authorized to report on a current House document (House, No. 5079).

Order (filed by Representatives Madaro of Boston and Philips of Sharon) relative to extending until Wednesday, March 18, 2026 the time within which the committee on Revenue is authorized to report on current House documents (House, No. 5124).

Mr. Galvin of Canton, for the committee on Rules, reported that the orders ought to be adopted. Under suspension of the rules, in each instance, on motion of Mr. Wong of Saugus, the orders were considered forthwith; and they were adopted.

Communications.

Communications

From the Executive Office for Administration and Finance (see Section 2EEEEEE(e) of Chapter 29 of the General Laws) submitting a report on the activities of and expenditures from the Commonwealth Federal Match and Debt Reduction Fund as of December, 2025;

Federal Match
and Debt
Reduction Fund.

From the Executive Office for Administration and Finance (see Section 22C of Chapter 32 of the General Laws) submitting the triennial funding schedule for the Commonwealth's employee retirement obligations;

Employee retirement obligations.

From the Executive Office for Administration and Finance (see item 1595-6153 of Section 2E of Chapter 140 of the Acts of 2024) submitting a report on funds appropriated through the Communications Access Trust Fund transfer; and

Communications Access Trust Fund transfer.

From the Department of Public Utilities (see Section 9 of Chapter 149 of Acts of 2014) submitting their annual report on the prevalence of natural gas leaks in the natural gas system for calendar year 2025;

Natural gas leaks.

Severally were placed on file.

Annual and Special Reports.

The annual report of the Middlesex District Attorney (under Section 99R of Chapter 272 of the General Laws) submitting a report relative to wiretaps for calendar year 2025; and

Middlesex,—wiretaps.

A report of the Massachusetts Office of Victim Assistance (MOVA) (under item 0840-0100 of Section 2 of Chapter 9 of the Acts of 2025) submitting the Victim and Witness Assistance Board report relative to the Massachusetts Victims of Violent Crimes Compensation program;

Victims of violent crimes compensation.

Severally were placed on file.

Petitions.

Representatives Plouffe of Brockton and Sullivan-Almeida of Abington presented a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 5130) of Bridget Plouffe (by vote of the town) that the town of East Bridgewater be authorized to issue up to four additional licenses for the sale of all alcoholic beverages not to be drunk on the premises in said town; and the same was referred to the committee on Consumer Protection and Professional Licensure. Sent to the Senate for concurrence.

East Bridgewater,—liquor licenses.

Petitions severally were presented and referred as follows:

By Representative Sangiolo of Newton (by request), a petition (subject to Joint Rule 12) of Peter F. Harrington relative to condominium conversion of co-owned two-unit buildings.

Condominiums,—conversions.

By Representative Scanlon of North Attleborough, a petition (subject to Joint Rule 12) of Adam J. Scanlon for legislation to establish a missing-middle starter home development and home ownership program.

Starter home development.

By Representative Stanley of Waltham, a petition (subject to Joint Rule 12) of Thomas M. Stanley, John J. Marsi and James C. Arena-DeRosa relative to medication administration in rest homes.

Medications,—rest homes.

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

Papers from the Senate.

Bills

Modernizing protections for consumers in automobile transactions (Senate, No. 2945) (on Sente bill No. 228);

Automobile transactions

Relative to modernizing the pathway to becoming a certified public accountant (Senate, No. 2946) (on Sente bill No. 209); and

Certified public accountants.

Regarding fair housing practices in the Commonwealth (Senate, No. 2959) (on Senate bill No. 2947);

Housing,—
discrimination.

Severally passed to be engrossed by the Senate, were read; and they were referred, under Rule 33, to the committee on Ways and Means.

A Bill establishing residency requirements for the offices of mayor, city councilor and school committee in the city of Brockton (Senate, No. 2957) (on Senate bill No. 2510) [Local Approval Received], passed to be engrossed by the Senate, was read; and it was referred, under Rule 7A, to the committee on Steering, Policy and Scheduling.

Brockton,—
residency
requirements.

A petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 2956) of Liz Miranda (with the approval of the mayor and city council) for legislation to amend the operations of the city of Boston Finance Commission to establish the Boston Inspector General Oversight Commission, was referred, in concurrence, to the committee on Municipalities and Regional Government.

Boston,—
commission.

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 following petitions:

Petition (accompanied by bill) of Shirley B. Arriaga relative to the sale of parrots; and

Parrots,—
sales.

Joint petition (accompanied by bill) of Tackey Chan, Kate Donaghue and others relative to consumer protections for low valued legal tender scarcity;

Legal tender,—
scarcity.

Severally to the committee on Consumer Protection and Professional Licensure.

Under suspension of the rules, on motion of Mrs. Sangiolo of Newton, the reports were considered forthwith. Joint Rule 12 then was suspended, in each instance. Severally sent to the Senate for concurrence.

By Mr. Honan of Boston, for the committee on Steering, Policy and Scheduling, that the following bills be scheduled for consideration by the House:

The Senate Bill amending the veteran property tax work-off amounts (Senate, No. 1948); and

Property taxes.

House bills

Relative to impairment of health caused by infectious disease (House, No. 2826);

Infectious diseases.
Worcester Regional
Retirement System.

Further defining a quorum of the Worcester Regional Retirement System Board Advisory Council (House, No. 2926);

Authorizing cities and towns to provide a residential exemption to senior citizens (House, No. 3004);

Tax exemption,—
seniors.

Expanding the senior property tax exemption (House, No. 3102);

Id.

Creating a local option property tax cap for low-income seniors (House, No. 3234);

Id.

Expanding the senior property tax exemption (House, No. 3236);

Id.

Exempting the positions of police lieutenant and police sergeant in the city of Leominster from the civil service law (House, No. 4702) [Local Approval Received];

Leominster,—
civil service.

Designating a certain bridge in the town of Chelmsford as the Ferreira Brothers Bridge (House, No. 4723); and

Chelmsford,—
bridge.

Amending the charter for the town of Groton (House, No. 4795) [Local Approval Received];

Groton,—
charter.

Under suspension of Rule 7A, in each instance, on motion of Ms. Howard of Lowell, the bills severally were read a second time forthwith; and they were ordered to a third reading.

By Mr. Livingstone of Boston, for the committee on Children, Families and Persons with Disabilities, on House, Nos. 217, 237, 240, 245, 255, 274 and 294, an Order relative to authorizing the committee on Children, Families and Persons with Disabilities to make an investigation and study of certain House documents relative to parent supports, day care and other related matters (House, No. 4919).

Parent
supports, etc.,—
study.

By Mr. Chan of Quincy, for the committee on Consumer Protection and Professional Licensure, on House, Nos. 339, 355, 368, 371, 372, 373, 376, 385, 392, 393, 394, 396, 397, 398, 415, 426, 446, 463, 470 and 472, 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 funeral homes, motor vehicles and other related matters (House, No. 5081).

Funeral homes,
etc.,—
study.

By Mr. Rogers of Cambridge, for the committee on Higher Education, on House, Nos. 1436, 1437, 1446, 1460, 1464 and 4113, an Order relative to authorizing the committee on Higher Education to make an investigation and study of certain House documents relative to debt-free education and other matters (House, No. 5104).

Debt-free
education, etc.,—
study.

By the same member, for the same committee, on House, No. 1448, an Order relative to authorizing the committee on Higher Education to make an investigation and study of a certain House document relative to higher education opportunities (House, No. 5105).

Higher
education
opportunities,—
study.

By the same member, for the same committee, on House, Nos. 1439 and 1445, an Order relative to authorizing the committee on Higher Education to make an investigation and study of certain House documents relative to student representation and public private partnerships (House, No. 5106).

Student
representation,
etc.,—
study.

By Mr. McMurtry of Dedham, for the committee on Labor and Workforce Development, on House, Nos. 2077, 2132, 2135 and 2183, an Order relative to authorizing the committee on Labor and Workforce Development to make an investigation and study of certain House documents relative to human resources, commission sales rates, minors and meetings (House, No. 5070).

Human resources,
etc.,—
study.

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

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

Under Rule 42, the reports severally were considered forthwith; and they were accepted.

By Mr. Hunt of Boston, for the committee on Election Laws, on a petition, a Bill amending chapter 445 of the acts of 1960 and establishing a board of election commissioners in the city of Salem (House, No. 3907) [Local Approval Received].

Salem,—
election
commissioners.

By the same member, for the same committee, on a joint petition, a Bill relative to preliminary elections in the town of Longmeadow (House, No. 4309) [Local Approval Received].

Longmeadow,—
preliminary
elections.

By the same member, for the same committee, on a joint petition, a Bill providing for recall elections in the town of Charlemont (House, No. 4434) [Local Approval Received].

Charlemont,—
recall elections.

UNCORRECTED PROOF.

By the same member, for the same committee, on a joint petition, a Bill regulating elections in the town of Conway (House, No. 4498) [Local Approval Received].

Conway,—
elections.

By the same member, for the same committee, on a petition, a Bill authorizing remote participation at town meetings and special town meetings in the Town of Concord (House, No. 4522) [Local Approval Received].

Concord,—
town meetings.

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

Engrossed Bills.

Engrossed bills

Amending the charter of the city known as the town of Agawam to strike the reference to the board of appeals (see House, No. 4380, amended); and

Bills
enacted.

Authorizing the select board of the town of Arlington to place upon a town ballot a question to increase the number of licenses for the sale of all alcoholic beverages not to be drunk on the premises (see House, No. 4815);

(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.

Orders of the Day.

House bills

Directing the city of Boston Police Department to waive the maximum age requirement for police officers for Angel G. Rivera (House, No. 4389); and

Third
reading
bills.

Providing for a town administrator in the town of Hopedale (House, No. 4784);

Severally reported by the committee on Bills in the Third Reading to be correctly drawn, were read a third time; and they were passed to be engrossed. Severally sent to the Senate for concurrence.

Order.

On motion of Mr. Mariano of Quincy,—

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

Next
sitting.

At twenty-three minutes after eleven o'clock A.M., on motion of Mr. Soter of Bellingham (Mr. Donato of Medford being in the Chair), the House adjourned, to meet the following Thursday at eleven o'clock A.M., in an Informal Session.