



# *The Commonwealth of Massachusetts*

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
STATE HOUSE, BOSTON 02133-1054

## **AARON M. MICHLEWITZ**

3<sup>rd</sup> SUFFOLK DISTRICT BOSTON  
STATE HOUSE, ROOM 243  
TEL: 617-722-2990  
FAX: 617-722-2998

Chairman  
House Committee on Ways and Means

[Aaron.M.Michlewitz@mahouse.gov](mailto:Aaron.M.Michlewitz@mahouse.gov)

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To the Members of the Massachusetts House of Representatives:

With this document, the House Committee on Ways and Means presents its recommendations for the Fiscal Year 2026 General Appropriations Act. The Committee's proposal makes fiscally responsible decisions and targeted investments that allow the Massachusetts economy to continue to grow and remain competitive while recognizing the financial realities the state is confronted with.

Over the last few years, the Commonwealth has seen large revenue growth in nearly every sector. Those increases largely went towards programs investing in those who bore the brunt of the COVID-19 pandemic. From housing stability, food security, and early education and care funding, the Commonwealth has attempted to meet the needs of our residents. Now, as revenue growth continues to slow and with Federal financial assistance in question, we as a Commonwealth need to determine how to continue to meet the needs of our residents. This budget aims to do that with major investments in housing, education, and workforce development all while keeping Massachusetts a competitive economic engine.

In January, the House and Senate Committees on Ways and Means, working closely with the office of Administration and Finance, agreed to a consensus tax revenue number for FY26 in the amount of \$43.164 billion. Of this total amount, \$34.095 billion is available for the FY26 budget after transfers to the pension fund, MBTA, and other agencies.

The FY26 budget is the third year that revenue from the Fair Share amendment will be allocated. The Committee has created a clear and transparent process on how the money is being spent and where it will be going. This budget makes \$1.95 billion in new investments into both education and transportation needs. These sectors are two of the main drivers of our economy, and the additional infusion of funds into these areas will help propel the Commonwealth forward. Some highlights of how the Fair Share funds will be allocated include: \$190 million for permanent universal school meals, \$80 million for the MassGrant+ program, and a combined \$500 million out of Fair Share towards the MBTA.

This budget delivers on a shared commitment to the cities and towns across the Commonwealth that we represent. The Committee budget fully funds 5/6th of the goal rate for Chapter 70 to meet the Student Opportunity Act (SOA) obligations. Chapter 70 is funded at its highest level ever at \$7.361 billion. This budget also includes additional funding to bring minimum aid up to \$150 per pupil, fully funding charter school reimbursement at 100%, and allocating \$485 million for circuit breaker transportation reimbursement. The budget also funds Unrestricted General Government Aid (UGGA) at \$1.309 billion, providing additional local aid to support our cities and towns.

Under the leadership of Speaker Ronald Mariano, the House has led the way in prioritizing workforce development initiatives so the Commonwealth can strengthen our economic vitality in the face of uncertain times. To ensure equitable growth in this endeavor, the FY26 budget focuses on competitiveness and job training, with investments including \$58.9 million for Adult Education, \$16.5 million for Youthworks Summer Jobs, \$10 million into the Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund, and \$9 million into Career Technical Institutes. These programs, among others, will allow our residents to take advantage of future economic growth in the Commonwealth.

No area has had a greater impact on our workforce than early education and care. The lack of adequate and affordable childcare threatens to be a drag on our economy. The House remains committed to investing more towards early education. As such, this FY26 budget will invest a total of \$1.67 billion towards early education. This includes fully funding the Commonwealth Cares for Children, or C3, grants at \$475 million and including reforms that will make the program more sustainable and more equitable for all families. This budget also includes \$15 million to reduce the income-eligible waitlist, \$18.5 million for Head Start grants, and \$20 million for childcare and referral agencies.

Housing and homelessness continue to see significant resource commitments in this budget. Massachusetts Rental Voucher Program (MRVP) and Rental Assistance for Families in Transition (RAFT) will be funded at \$258.1 million and \$207.5 million respectfully. Other successful programs such as HomeBase and Home and Healthy for Good will receive \$57.3 million and \$8.4 million respectfully. The House will also continue to fund the Shelter workforce assistance needs at \$10 million, giving our shelter system the workforce support it needs.

Healthcare continues to be the most significant area of investment in the budget, with a combined \$31.56 billion committed. \$22.4 billion of those funds are for MassHealth. \$207 million is allocated for the Chapter 257 rates, a large and well-deserved increase for human service workers across the Commonwealth. This budget also invests \$12.6 million towards the safe and successful youth initiatives.

The House remains committed to expanding treatment options and providing resources for those struggling with mental health and substance use disorders. We have focused on prevention, intervention, and long-term recovery. This budget will invest \$194.5 million into the Substance Use Disorder Trust Fund, allowing individuals across the addiction spectrum to access the services they need.

The Committee's budget makes investments in environmental programs, understanding the role they play in protecting public health and in making climate resiliency investments for the Commonwealth. The FY26 budget includes \$163.4 million for the Department of Conservation and Recreation, \$85.3 million for the Department of Environmental Protection. On top of that this budget contains \$25 million for the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center, and another \$20 million for the Green SchoolWorks program the House led the way over the last two years to help decarbonize and increase energy efficiency in our public schools through green energy projects.

I would like to thank all members of the House, including the members of the House Committee on Ways and Means, for their input during this unique process. I extend a special thank you to our Vice-Chair, Representative Ann-Margaret Ferrante of Gloucester, and our Assistant Vice-Chair, Representative Kipp Diggs of Barnstable, for their advice and assistance in creating this budget proposal.

I look forward to working closely with all the members of the House of Representatives during the upcoming debate. I know that we will work together to produce a fiscally responsible budget that reflects our shared priorities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Aaron Michlewitz". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Aaron M. Michlewitz  
*Chairman*