

# *Senate Session Interim Report*

190TH GENERAL COURT 2017 - 2018

*MassSenate*





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# HANDS





# FREE BILL

# HANDS FREE BILL: S.2092

*An Act Banning the use of electronics while operating a motor vehicle*

## SUMMARY:

- 1** Bans the use of handheld mobile devices while driving
- 2** An initial violation results in a \$100 fine, a second time offense is a \$250 fine, and subsequent offenses are a \$500 fine and would be considered moving violations for insurance purposes
- 3** Passage of this bill puts Massachusetts in line with Connecticut, New Hampshire and New York

## SENATE LEADERS:



Senator Mark C. Montigny



Senator Thomas M. McGee



Senator Cynthia S. Creem



Passed: June 29, 2017



Status: Sent to House

## RESPONSE

*“It is critical for motorist and pedestrian safety that we join the fourteen other states that have already passed similar legislation. Prohibiting the use of hand held devices will also remove a major impediment to law enforcement charged with enforcing the current texting ban. As a vocal critic of the significant weaknesses in the current law, I look forward to working toward the successful passage of this important piece of legislation so that we may significantly reduce the number of horrific injuries and carnage caused by distracted drivers.”*

**–SENATOR MARK C. MONTIGNY  
(SECOND BRISTOL AND PLYMOUTH)**

*“If we can’t control our addictions to our phones, then tougher laws are called for. The existing law, while well intentioned, has proved inadequate. The 2010 law banned writing or reading any electronic messages on a handheld device while operating a vehicle but also allowed for adjusting your GPS or making a handheld phone call. That loophole has made the law difficult to enforce.”*

**–EDITORIAL** **The  
Boston  
Globe**

*“We believe texting has been reaching epidemic levels in Massachusetts. Deaths from auto accidents took a big dip decades ago as seat belts got more popular and cars were built to be safer. Deaths fell from about 50,000 a year to about 33,000 nationally. In recent years, deaths have been rising again, approaching 40,000 a year.”*

**–MARY MAGUIRE, AAA DIRECTOR  
OF PUBLIC AND LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS**





A stack of four books is shown on a wooden surface. The books have white, black, and orange covers. A bright red apple sits on top of the stack. The background is a blurred painting with yellow and blue tones. The text 'LANGUAGE LOOK' is overlaid in white, bold, sans-serif font.

# LANGUAGE LOOK

# OPPORTUNITY BILL



# LANGUAGE OPPORTUNITY FOR OUR KIDS BILL: S.2125

*An act relative to language opportunity for our kids*

## ***SUMMARY:***

- 1** Updates the existing statute relative to English language education in public schools to encompass the latest and best practices serving English Language Learners (ELLs)
- 2** Removes the current mandate requiring schools to use Sheltered English Immersion (SEI), or English-only programs, as the default ELL program model
- 3** Recognizes the value of bilingualism as a skill essential to improving career and college readiness and competitiveness in the global economy

## ***SENATE LEADERS:***



Senator Sal N. DiDomenico



Senator Sonia Chang-Diaz



Passed: July 27, 2017



Status: Signed into Law



## RESPONSE

*“We just want a bill that passes that gives kids a better chance. Schools and parents should be able to work together and decide what is the best approach for each student.”*

**–MARION DAVIS, SPOKESWOMAN FOR THE MASSACHUSETTS IMMIGRANT AND REFUGEE ADVOCACY COALITION**



*“Expanding learning opportunities to include bilingual programs in our public schools will better position the next generation of leaders and learners for academic success and help close the achievement gap. We can all agree that we want all Massachusetts students to learn and succeed in school, whether or not English is their first language. In the global and diverse communities we live in today, the ability to provide classrooms more flexibility to serve the unique needs of students is a smart and long overdue decision.”*

**EDITORIAL** **The Boston Globe**

*“To ensure that every child in the Commonwealth receives the high quality education that he or she deserves, we must rethink the way we approach educating our English language learners. By allowing for flexibility to implement new English learning programs, increasing parental involvement, and recognizing that multilingualism is a valuable asset in today’s global economy, this bill takes crucial strides to guarantee that every student receives a fair opportunity at educational success.”*

**–SENATOR SAL DIDOMENICO (MIDDLESEX AND SUFFOLK)**



# PROPERTY



# TAX RELIEF BILL

# PROPERTY TAX RELIEF BILL: S.2124

*An Act improving property tax abatements, application deadlines and deferrals*

## ***SUMMARY:***

- 1** Provides property tax breaks for low-income seniors, veterans, and the disabled
- 2** Gives cities and towns more options to adjust property taxes
- 3** Provides the option to extend time for higher interest payments

## ***SENATE LEADERS:***



Senator Michael D. Brady



Senator Cynthia S. Creem



Senator Patricia D. Jehlen



Passed: July 27, 2017



Status: Sent to House



## RESPONSE

*“Thank you to my fellow colleagues and staff who worked to piece this legislation together. This bill gives the cities and towns of our Commonwealth the opportunity to aid our senior citizens and military personal by developing existing property tax deferrals for them. This legislation provides the tax breaks and relief for those in need, most importantly our veterans, low-income seniors and the disabled.”*

**–SENATOR MICHAEL D. BRADY (SECOND PLYMOUTH AND BRISTOL)**

*“This is a very important step forward in updating the Commonwealth’s Property Tax Relief Programs for older adults. This legislation will assist communities in helping their older adults ‘age in place’.”*

**–DAVID STEVENS**



*“Older adults statewide face being forced out of their homes due to rising property values that increase tax bills they cannot afford on a fixed income. Residents who own their homes and would like to continue to live in them often have difficulties making ends meet as the years go by and their income loses its buying power. Deferring property taxes gives those seniors an opportunity to avoid making difficult choices of whether they can pay for heat, prescription drugs, or food in addition to the tax bill.”*

**–SENATOR PATRICIA D. JEHLLEN (SECOND MIDDLESEX)**

A photograph of children sitting at a wooden table, engaged in a painting activity. They are using white plastic containers as palettes. The background is filled with stacks of cardboard boxes, suggesting a storage or workshop area. The children are focused on their work, with one child in the foreground wearing a bright yellow shirt. The overall atmosphere is one of creative activity and learning.

# FAIR SHARE





# AMENDMENT



# FAIR SHARE AMENDMENT

*An Act to advance the Fair Share constitutional amendment to the ballot for consideration by voters in the 2018 statewide elections*

## ***SUMMARY:***

- 1** 4% income tax will apply only to individual annual income starting at \$1 million
- 2** Any income less than \$1 million would be taxed at the current state income tax rate of 5.1%
- 3** Requires the legislature to allocate the increased revenue solely to education and transportation investments



Passed: June 14, 2017



Status: 2018 Ballot



## RESPONSE

*“The best way to build a strong economy for all is to focus on the infrastructure that allows prosperity to happen: physical infrastructure like roads and transit, and the human infrastructure of quality education from early education to higher education. We have to pay for the things we say we believe in, and we should do it in a way that’s smart and that’s fair.”*

**-SENATOR SONIA CHANG-DIAZ (SECOND SUFFOLK)**

*“Massachusetts voters and their elected leaders understand that if we want an economy that works for all of us, we desperately need new investments in quality public schools for our children, affordable high-quality public higher education, and a reliable transportation system that lets people get to school, work, and around their communities.”*

**-DEB FASTINO, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF**



*“If we are serious about helping working families and building a stronger economy for everyone in Massachusetts, we must invest in our public schools, public higher education and a transportation system that works. The tax revenue generated by the Fair Share Amendment will make those investments possible.”*





A close-up photograph of a cannabis plant. The image shows several green, serrated leaves and developing flower buds. The buds are covered in trichomes and have a yellowish-green color. The background is blurred, showing more of the plant and some warm, golden light. The word "MARIJUANA" is overlaid in large, white, bold, sans-serif capital letters.

# MARIJUANA





**BILL**



# MARIJUANA BILL: S.2090

*An Act to ensure safe access to marijuana*

## *SUMMARY:*

- 1** A balanced approach to adult use of recreational marijuana in Massachusetts
- 2** Establishes low tax rates to abolish the illicit market while implementing rigorous safeguards to protect public health and safety
- 3** Establishes provisions to ensure that communities who have been disproportionately impacted by the war on drugs will be able to participate in the cannabis industry

## *SENATE LEADERS:*



Senator Patricia D. Jehlen



Senator William M. Brownsberger



Passed: July 20, 2017



Status: Signed into Law

## RESPONSE

*“Since receiving this committee assignment, I’ve talked to my Senate colleagues and heard their ideas and concerns. Together we found ways to move forward on this issue and build a comprehensive piece of legislation. We took steps to increase economic opportunities for local business owners and farmers; we set aside funds for research, communities affected by the War on Drugs, and those whose marijuana convictions can be sealed; and we established that the CCC will create public awareness campaigns to reduce youth use, reduce impaired driving, and educate about responsible usage. These are only a few of the measures included in the Senate bill, but I’m incredibly proud of members for remaining dedicated to passing a bill that maintains the voters’ will and implements a safe, regulated, and legal marijuana market.”*

**-SENATOR PAT JEHLLEN (SECOND MIDDLESEX)**

*“The law passed by voters was well-crafted and required no alteration. However, we respect the need for compromise, and while we don’t approve of every provision of this bill, we are satisfied that the outcome will serve the interests of Massachusetts residents and allow the Commonwealth to displace the unregulated marijuana market with a system of taxation and regulation.”*

**-MATTHEW SCHWEICH, DIRECTOR OF STATE CAMPAIGNS  
FOR THE MARIJUANA POLICY PROJECT**



*“We commend the Senate for holding the line on a number of important issues and the subsequent advocacy effort to defend the law. Now it’s time to provide funding that will allow the regulators to establish the rules that will govern marijuana cultivation and sales.”*

**-JIM BORGHESANI, SPOKESPERSON FOR THE 2016  
“YES ON 4 CAMPAIGN”**



A photograph of three pregnant women standing side-by-side, each holding her belly. The woman on the left is wearing a red top, the middle one a brown top, and the right one a green top. The background is blurred, suggesting an outdoor setting. The text 'PREGNANT FAIRNESS' is overlaid in the center in a large, white, bold, sans-serif font.

# PREGNANT FAIRNESS



A close-up photograph of a pregnant woman wearing a grey hoodie. Her hands are resting on her belly. The text 'WORKERS ACT' is overlaid in large white letters.

# WORKERS ACT

# PREGNANT WORKERS FAIRNESS ACT: S.2093

*An act establishing the Massachusetts Pregnant Workers Fairness Act*

## ***SUMMARY:***

- 1** Guarantees reasonable accommodations and safety measures for pregnant workers
- 2** Makes it illegal for an employer to discriminate against, refuse to employ, or terminate an individual due to pregnancy or a condition related to pregnancy
- 3** This legislation would ensure that women's medical needs are addressed without imposing undue burden on employers throughout Massachusetts

## ***SENATE LEADER:***



Joan B. Lovely



Passed: June 29, 2017



Status: Signed Into Law



## RESPONSE

*“We’re thrilled that the Massachusetts Legislature has seen the bipartisan light to be able to get behind a health bill that’s really moms and apple pie.”*

—LINDA O’CONNELL, ACTING EXECUTIVE  
DIRECTOR OF MOTHERWOMAN



*“This is a proud day for Massachusetts and reinforces our dedication to protecting our residents especially as events in Washington threaten the safety and security of women. It is an absolutely positive measure that will only help women, families, and the entire community. No pregnant worker should have to choose between their health, the health of their baby, and their job security.”*

EDITORIAL **The  
Boston  
Globe**

*“I believe it is imperative that we provide pregnant workers, 40 percent of whom are the primary bread winner of their household, the certainty that they are able to keep their jobs without detriment to the health of their pregnancy.”*

—SENATOR JOAN B. LOVELY (SECOND ESSEX)



# BUMP





# STOCK BAN

# BUMP STOCK BAN: S.2177

*An Act making appropriations for the fiscal year 2017 to provide for supplementing certain existing appropriations and for certain other activities and projects*

## SUMMARY:

- 1** Bans bump stock and trigger cranks and classifies them under the same general law that governs machine guns
- 2** Establishes identical penalties, eighteen months to life in prison, for the use and possession of bump stocks and trigger cranks as current law holds for machine guns
- 3** Also instructs the Executive Office of Public Safety and Security to notify licensed owners and manufacturers of bump stocks and trigger cranks of the effective date of the changes

## SENATE LEADERS:



Senator Cynthia S. Creem



Senator Bruce E. Tarr



Senator Michael O. Moore



Passed: October 12, 2017



Status: Signed Into Law



## RESPONSE

*“This amendment is a necessary and appropriate response to the dangers inherent in these deadly devices. The horror of the mass shootings in Las Vegas is unfortunately just the latest incident which calls out for the adoption of more sensible gun laws both here and nationally.”*

**-SENATOR CYNTHIA S. GREEM (FIRST MIDDLESEX AND NORFOLK)**

*“Banning bump fire stocks would be one way Massachusetts could improve on its already strict gun laws. A bump stock was used in the Las Vegas mass shooting in October. Lawmakers have an opportunity to make MA the first state to ban these devices since the massacre.”*



**Massachusetts Coalition  
to Prevent Gun Violence**

*“Massachusetts has been a national leader on gun violence prevention and we’re proud of the Commonwealth for continuing this legacy through this first in the nation bump stock ban.”*

**-JOHN ROSENTHAL, FOUNDER OF**







# CRIMINAL REFORM





# JUSTICE BILL



# CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM BILL: S.2185

*An Act Relative to Criminal Justice Reform*

## **SUMMARY:**

- 1** Updates decades old criminal sentencing laws to improve outcomes of our criminal justice system
- 2** Repeals ineffective mandatory minimum sentences for low level drug offenders, reduces and eliminates over-burdensome fees and fines, reforms the bail system, allows for compassionate release of infirmed inmates, and reforms the juvenile justice system
- 3** Strengthens the procedural barriers to setting bail that is higher than a defendant can afford, to ensure individuals are not held solely because they are unable to pay

## **SENATE LEADERS:**



Senator William M. Brownsberger



Senator Cynthia S. Creem



Senator Sonia Chang-Diaz



Senator Jamie B. Eldridge



Passed: October 27, 2017



Status: Passed by House and Senate



## RESPONSE

*“We are extremely pleased to see meaningful reforms proposed that will help keep people out of prison and jail who do not belong there. The provisions relating to diversion, sentencing alternatives for people who are the primary caretakers of their children, and increasing the age for juvenile court jurisdiction help make sure that incarceration is a last resort instead of a first option. Too often, people’s lives are disrupted by unnecessary collateral consequences of criminal convictions; that’s why we stand by the important adjustments this bill makes to existing CORI law and the reduction and elimination of many challenging fines and fees. We thank the Senate for their leadership on these initiatives.”*



*“The Jobs Not Jails Coalition thanks the Senate for repealing a number of the long sentences on those charges with mandatory minimums on non-violent drug charges. When sheriffs in our state say 70% of prisoners have drug addiction issues, we need to get the people to drug treatment not to prison. And mandatory minimums fall disproportionately against people of color, which is a racial injustice. We’re glad the Senate took these steps to ensure justice and safety for all.”*

**—LEW FINFER, JOBS NOT JAILS COALITION**



*“The Massachusetts Senate recently passed watershed legislation that, among other things, retroactively reduces mandatory sentences and incorporates 18-year-olds into the state’s juvenile court justice system. As researchers, educators, and former criminal justice practitioners, we think the legislation is on solid ground. The Senate legislation is a step toward a more just and effective response to crime, and deserves strong consideration by the House and the governor.”*

**EDITORIAL**

**The  
Boston  
Globe**



# THE HEALTH

A close-up photograph of a female nurse with blonde hair tied back, wearing light blue scrubs and a black stethoscope. She is smiling and looking down at a clipboard she is holding. A name tag on her chest reads "Nurse Cecelia Alex".

# ACT



# THE HEALTH ACT: S.2202

*An Act Furthering Health Empowerment and Affordability by Leveraging Transformative Health Care*

## SUMMARY:

- 1 Focuses on both short and long term goals on how to fix our healthcare system to lower costs, improve outcomes, and maintain access
- 2 Addresses the healthcare system by analyzing best practices in other states and engaging stakeholders in a series of meetings over the last year
- 3 Implements more effective care delivery such as telemedicine and mobile integrated health, to reducing emergency room visits, to expanding provider versatility while also addressing price variation between larger hospitals and their smaller community hospital counterparts

## SENATE LEADERS:



Senator James T. Welch



Senator John F. Keenan



Senator Jason M. Lewis



Senator Harriette L. Chandler



Senator Karen E. Spilka



Passed: November 10, 2017



Status: Sent to House



## RESPONSE

*“We’re keeping care local more often at a lower cost, but we’re still fifth from the bottom in terms of reimbursement for our services. Market forces are not working to fix this unwarranted rate variation. The Senate’s health care bill unveiled today provides a path for remedy. It needs to go further, but the Senate in this bill has staked out a position where we would not be paid less than 90 percent of the average relative price.”*

**–DIANNE ANDERSON, PRESIDENT AND CEO**



*“Health care should be about people, and what people want most is to be healthy. The Senate bill understands the crucial role that social factors play in influencing health and – through the Prevention Trust – invests in what we know works to keep people healthy before they need expensive medical care.”*

**–MADDIE RIBBLE, MASSACHUSETTS PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC POLICY**



*“Passing The HEALTH Act is a phenomenal step forward for health care in the Commonwealth. Once again, we are setting an example for the nation by creating a health care system that will, among many things, maximize the impact community hospitals can have on our citizens, while keeping costs in check.”*

**– SENATOR JAMES T. WELCH (HAMPDEN)**

A photograph of a train, possibly a subway or commuter train, partially submerged in floodwater. The water is dark and turbulent, reaching up to the windows and doors of the train cars. The train is grey with purple and yellow accents. Several red emergency lights are visible on the front of the train. In the background, a modern building with large windows and a blue flag is visible. The text "CLIMATE MANAGEMENT" is overlaid in large, white, bold, sans-serif capital letters across the center of the image.

# CLIMATE MANAGEMENT








# ADAPTATION PLANNING BILL

IMAGE PROVIDED BY THE ENVIRONMENTAL LEAGUE OF MASSACHUSETTS

# CLIMATE ADAPTATION MANAGEMENT PLANNING BILL: S.2196

*An Act providing for the establishment of a comprehensive adaptation management plan in response to climate change*

## SUMMARY:

-  Establishes a comprehensive adaptation management action plan in response to climate change
-  A comprehensive adaptation management action plan (CAMP) would be established through a collaboration led by the Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs and the Secretary of Public Safety and Security
-  The plan would go into effect in 2018 with an update every five years

## SENATE LEADER:



Senator Marc R. Pacheco



Passed: November 8, 2017



Status: Sent to House



## RESPONSE

*“If gone unchecked, severe weather will wreak immense havoc on Massachusetts. An adaptation plan must be codified in statute to protect our economy, public health and built and natural infrastructures. We can make our communities more resilient to the harmful effects of climate change by using our unique system of federalism to forge our own paths and organize for survival. This is the fifth time the Senate has sent resiliency legislation to the House, and it is high time that these protections make their way to the Governor’s desk.”*

**—SENATOR MARC R. PACHECO (FIRST PLYMOUTH AND BRISTOL)**


*“The passage of this bill is all the more important in light of the denial of climate change science in our nation’s capital. Whether it’s a “bigger than usual” nor’easter, a heat-infused hurricane or just plain weather on steroids, it’s time for Massachusetts to plan for what was previously the unexpected and manage what is now the unavoidable by passing the climate change adaptation bill in the House and laying it before the Governor for his signature. If there was ever a time for Beacon Hill lawmakers to act, it is now.”*



*“Massachusetts needs a new energy law to help meet its deadline of cutting greenhouse gas emissions 25 percent by 2020. The state has made great progress, shedding coal and oil-fired generators in favor of cleaner burning natural gas, but will not reach the goal without tapping renewable energy sources faster...”*

**EDITORIAL** **The  
Boston  
Globe**





# WOMEN'S ACCESS





# HEALTH BILL



# WOMEN'S HEALTH ACCESS BILL: S.2210

*An Act relative to advancing contraception coverage  
and economic security in our state*

## SUMMARY:

- 1** Protects coverage for no-copay birth control in the face of federal threats
- 2** Requires insurers in Massachusetts to cover all unique forms of approved contraceptive methods without cost-sharing
- 3** Prohibits insurers from using tools like step therapy to undermine and delay access to contraceptives

## SENATE LEADER:



Senator Harriette L. Chandler



Passed: November 14, 2017



Status: Signed into Law



## RESPONSE

*“The ACCESS Bill serves as both a protection and an expansion of women’s healthcare initiatives. Despite regressive rollbacks in Washington by Congress and the Trump Administration, the Massachusetts Legislature knows the difference between political-platitudes and actually helping people. I hope this can serve as a model to the country. After all, fifty-percent of this nation is female. We can’t just go ignoring their needs.”*

**-SENATE MAJORITY LEADER HARRIETTE CHANDLER (FIRST WORCESTER)**

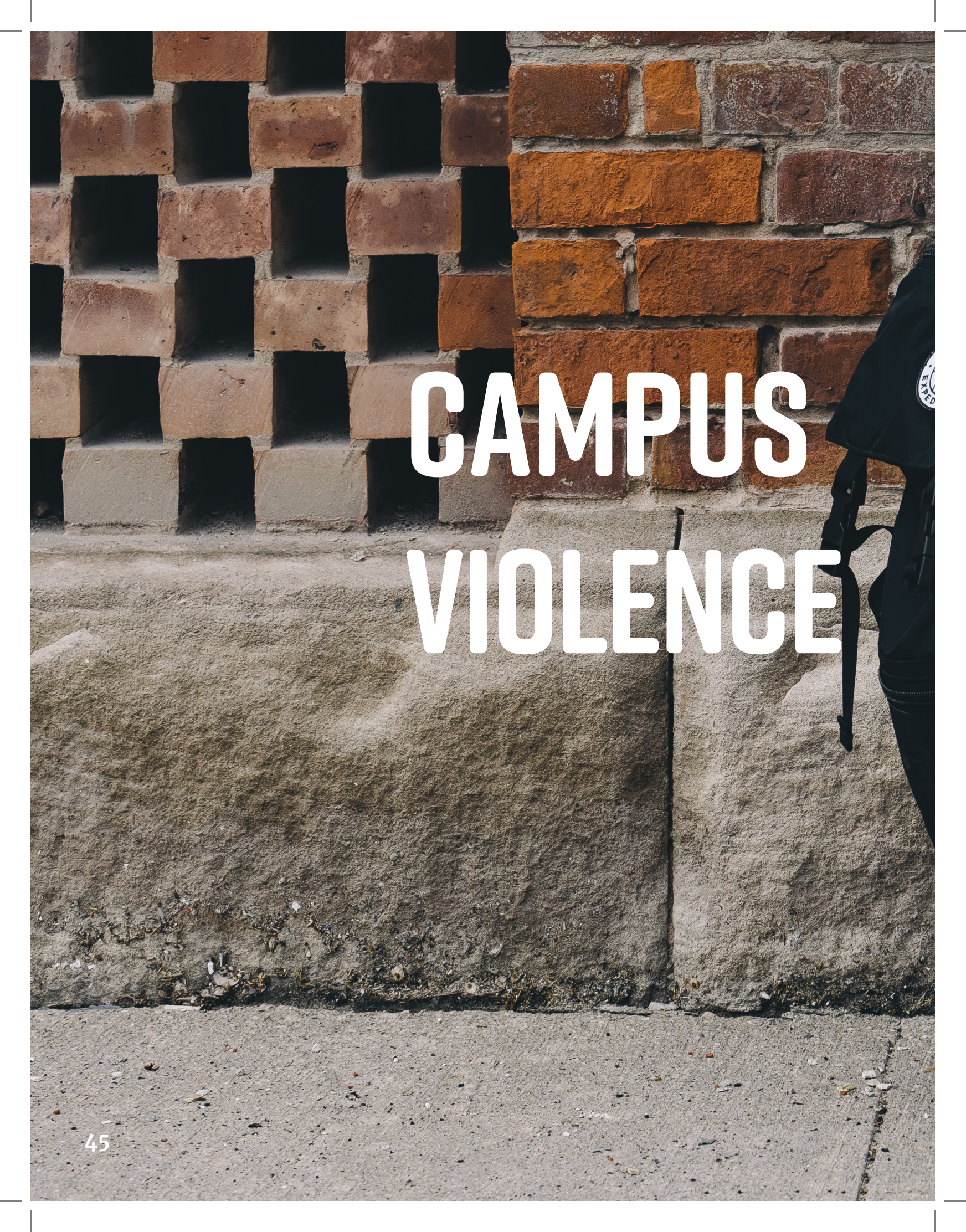
*“The national level will continue their egregious attack on women’s health, making the political resistance by states more important than ever. Barriers to birth control disproportionately hurt the poor, and it’s up to Massachusetts lawmakers to pass legislation like the ACCESS bill to protect them.”*

EDITORIAL **The  
Boston  
Globe**

*“Reliable and free access to contraception has been proven to improve women’s health, and promote economic security for all families, and it must be a guaranteed right for all Mass residents. I want to thank Majority Leader Harriette Chandler for her leadership in filing this important bill, and Senate President Stan Rosenberg and Senate Ways and Means Chair Karen Spilka for ensuring that access to birth control is the law of the land in Massachusetts.”*

**-SENATOR JAMIE B. ELDRIDGE (MIDDLESEX AND WORCESTER)**





# CAMPUS VIOLENCE



A person wearing blue jeans and grey sneakers stands against a brick wall. They are holding a black bag in their left hand and a handgun in their right hand. The text "SEXUAL PREVENTION BILL" is overlaid in large white letters.

# SEXUAL PREVENTION BILL



# CAMPUS SEXUAL VIOLENCE PREVENTION BILL: S.2191

*An Act concerning sexual violence on higher education campuses*

## ***SUMMARY:***

- 1** Establishes state-level policies for all higher education institutions in the Commonwealth
- 2** Ensures that fair procedures and appropriate services are in place at higher education institutions across Massachusetts for both the reporting party and the accused
- 3** Provides tools and training to our higher education institutions to help prevent sexual assault on our college campuses

## ***SENATE LEADERS:***



Senator Michael O. Moore



Senator Cynthia S. Creem



Passed: November 2, 2017



Status: Sent to House



## RESPONSE

*“As a legislator, and as a father, I recognize that there is more we should be doing to help prevent incidents of sexual assault on our college campuses. Through improved training, transparency and enforcement of policies, this bill supports initiatives that work to ensure our postsecondary institutions are implementing systems students can trust. The bill also helps to fill the void created by the recent rollback of Federal protections.”*

**–SENATOR MICHAEL O. MOORE (SECOND WORCESTER)**

*“While many institutions of higher education have made strides in addressing the critical issue of sexual violence in recent years, there is still much work to be done. The recent rollback of the 2011 Dear Colleague letter makes it clearer than ever that Massachusetts must ensure that students have access to appropriate responses and processes when sexual assault occurs, but also that institutions are implementing critical training, education and prevention strategies to reduce sexual violence. S.2191 is an important step to ensure that all students in the Commonwealth are able to fully access their right to higher education.”*

**–DEBRA J. ROBBIN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF**



**Jane Doe Inc.**

The Massachusetts Coalition Against  
Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence

*“I think it’s important for the state to get out ahead of this and make sure that these protections are codified in state law. So if there’s a rollback in any way, we’re assuring the best practices.”*

**–ALISA CHAPMAN, DIRECTOR OF COMPLIANCE AT  
MIDDLESEX COMMUNITY COLLEGE IN BEDFORD**








# HANDICAP PLACARD



The background of the page is a vibrant blue surface that is heavily cracked and textured, resembling old paint or a weathered wall. There are several areas where the blue surface has been peeled away, revealing a lighter, off-white material underneath. These peeling areas are most prominent on the left side and bottom left of the page. The cracks are dark and intricate, creating a complex web-like pattern across the blue surface.

# ABUSE BILL



# HANDICAP PLACARD ABUSE BILL: S.2178

*An Act relative to handicapped parking*

## ***SUMMARY:***

- 1** The improper use of handicapped parking placards deprives disabled individuals from the parking spots that they need, robs municipalities of millions of dollars in revenue, and disrupts parking availability on our streets
- 2** Inspector General's report revealed rampant abuse of parking placards, including placards used to park for free all day at spaces near the driver's work and placards belonging to dead people
- 3** This bill strengthens penalties and enforcement abilities, brings back revenue to local municipalities, and restores rights to disabled individuals

## ***SENATE LEADERS:***



Senator Eileen M. Donoghue



Passed: October 12, 2017



Status: Signed into Law



## RESPONSE

*“I applaud the Senate for taking this important step in support of a bill that will reduce chronic abuses of handicapped placards.”*

**–INSPECTOR GENERAL GLENN A. CUNHA**

*“The misuse of handicapped parking placards robs municipalities of much needed revenues and prevents persons with disabilities from finding accessible parking. This bill will benefit both disabled individuals and local governments.”*

**–EILEEN M. DONOGHUE (FIRST MIDDLESEX)**

*“This legislation would also benefit injured veterans, an often-ignored demographic group when it comes to accessibility. Can you imagine any legislator standing up to oppose such a morally just proposition? We can’t. This bill’s a no-brainer.”*

**EDITORIAL** **Sentinel & Enterprise**

# SENATE



# INITIATIVES

"There can be no keener revelation of  
a society's soul than the way in which  
it treats its children."

-Nelson Mandela, Former President of South Africa



*A Blueprint for Investing in Our Future*



*MassSenate*



# KIDS FIRST

## SUMMARY:

- 1 Seeks to invest in the health, welfare, and education of our youngest residents
- 2 With approximately 40% of our third graders not reading at grade level, Kids First lays out a framework to close the achievement gap by reducing the number of third-graders in half who are not reading proficiently by 2027
- 3 Focuses on improving the quality of early education, helping students who are learning English or have disabilities become ready for school and offering related services such as food assistance and health care

## SENATE LEADERS:



Senator Sal N. DiDomenico



Senator Sonia Chang-Diaz



Senator Linda Dorcena Forry



Senator Jason M. Lewis



Senator Patricia D. Jehlen



Senator James T. Welch



Senator Joan B. Lovely



Senator Eric P. Lesser



Senator Richard J. Ross



Released: May 2, 2017



# Commonwealth Conversations



*Common Ground. Shared Leadership.*






**MassSenate**



# COMMONWEALTH CONVERSATIONS

## *SUMMARY:*

-  The Massachusetts State Senate conducted a series of statewide public forums, known as Commonwealth Conversations, in an effort to better understand the challenges and opportunities facing communities, residents and their families across the Commonwealth
-  The Senate heard about a range of issues, from creating more affordable housing, to improving transportation, and people's overall vision for stronger Massachusetts
-  Based on the feedback the Senate received during the listening tour, the Senate will craft a legislative agenda to help build a better Commonwealth

## *SENATE LEADERS:*



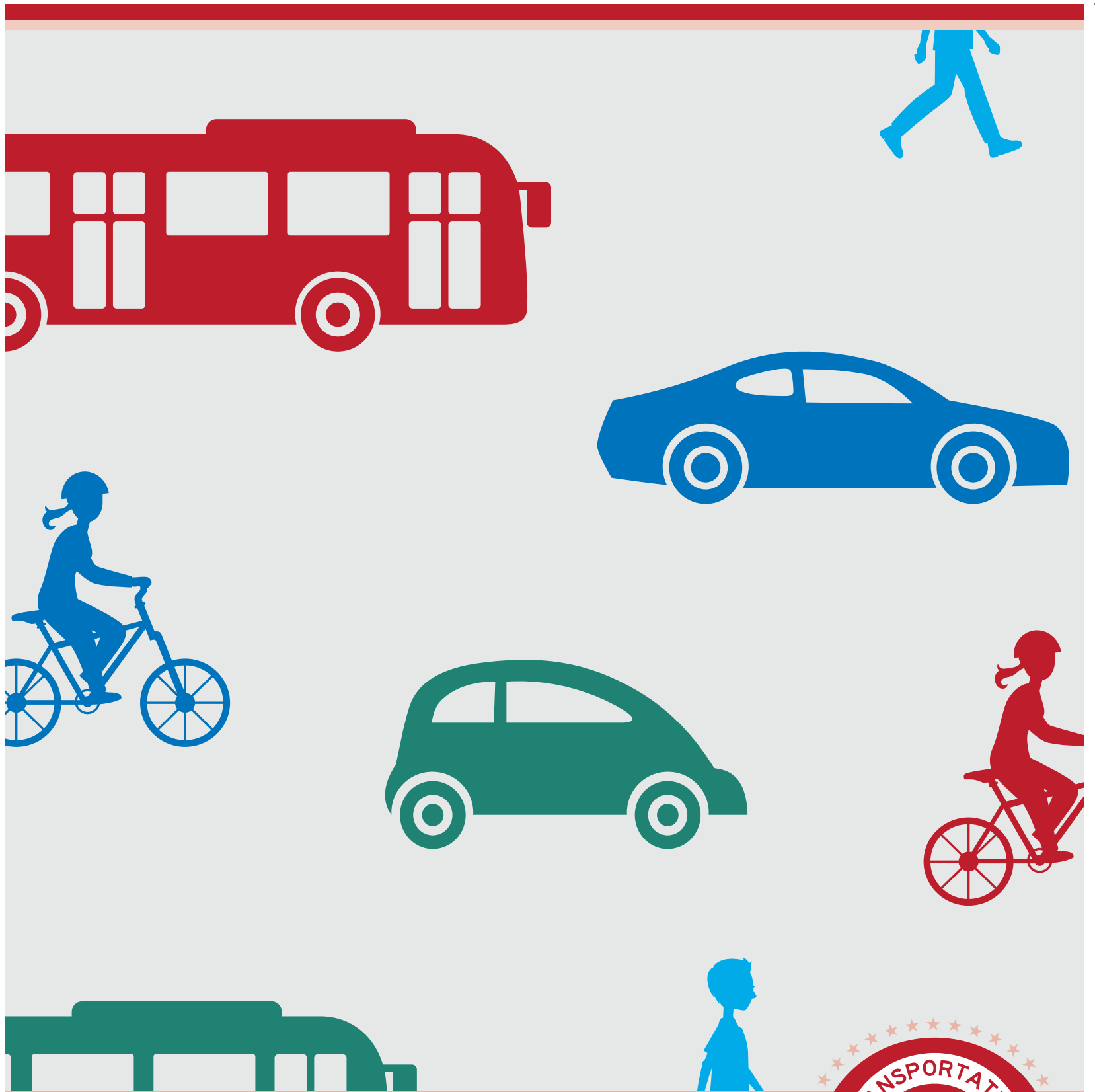
Senator Michael Rodrigues



Senator Bruce Tarr



Released: June 21, 2017



# *Fueling Economic Growth*

A Vision for the Commonwealth's 21st-Century Transportation System



Barr  
Foundation

**MASSMOVES**

*MassSenate*



# MASSMOVES

## *SUMMARY:*

- 1** MassMoves is a new component of the Commonwealth Conversations 2017, created to engage residents in articulating a 21st century vision for a statewide transportation system
- 2** Nine workshops were held at each Commonwealth Conversations tour stop, engaging over 700 residents, organizations and business people from every corner of Massachusetts
- 3** Participants expressed favor for additional investment in transportation through broad-based general taxes over targeted user fees. All nine transportation workshops support allowing local government to raise money for local transportation projects. The report also highlights transportation priorities in nine regions of Massachusetts

## *SENATE LEADERS:*



Senator Thomas M. McGee



Senator Michael J. Rodrigues



Senator Joseph A. Boncore



Released: September 26, 2017





# HEALTH CARE REFORM

## *SUMMARY:*

- 1** Senate President Stan Rosenberg convened the Senate Working Group on Health Care Cost Containment and Reform in the fall of 2016
- 2** The purpose of the Working Group was to explore best practice strategies used by other states to control health care costs while improving health outcomes and to identify approaches that Massachusetts should consider adopting
- 3** One of the main objectives is to reduce hospital readmissions and emergency department use

## *SENATE LEADERS:*



Senator Jim T. Welch



Senator Jason M. Lewis



Senator Harriette L. Chandler



Senator Karen E. Spilka



Senator John F. Keenan



Released: October 14, 2017



# *Affecting Change for Future Generations*

Millennial Engagement Initiative Report 2017





# MILLENNIAL ENGAGEMENT INITIATIVE

## *SUMMARY:*

- 1** This report presents recommended policies for each finding and unveils the Massachusetts Senate Millennial Agenda, including a set of bills filed in the Senate that touch upon each subject area
- 2** The Senate held 11 round tables to better engage and hear from millennials forming the core of the millennial agenda
- 3** This agenda includes everything from better transportation, veterans issues, college debt and greater transparency in government

## *SENATE LEADERS:*



Senator Eric P. Lesser



Senator Ryan C. Fattman



Released: October 25, 2017



# **TIME ZONE COMMISSION**



# TIME ZONE COMMISSION

## *SUMMARY:*

1

Initially spurred by a citizen's petition and passed by the Legislature as part of the 2016 economic development bill, the Senate-chaired Special Commission to Study the Commonwealth's Time Zone engaged in a research-driven analysis of whether Massachusetts should continue to switch time twice per year.

2

Based on extensive discourse with experts in fields of economic development, public health and safety, crime, transportation, and broadcast media, the Special Commission issued a final report of how remaining on daylight saving time would affect people living and working in Massachusetts.

3

Massachusetts could make a data-driven case for observing year-round daylight saving time, contingent upon regional action, later school start-times, and public awareness.

## *SENATE LEADER:*



Senator Eileen M. Donoghue



Released: November 1, 2017



# **CLEAN ENERGY FUTURE TOUR**



# CLEAN ENERGY FUTURE TOUR

## *SUMMARY:*

- 1** From May through September, the Senate Committee on Global Warming and Climate Change hosted 10 hearings throughout the Commonwealth to get input from constituents on pressing issues in clean energy and climate
- 2** From the Berkshires to the Cape, communities had an organized opportunity to express their ideas for sustainable legislation they want to see from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts
- 3** In order to keep our state healthy, sustainable and strong, residents voiced their support for an increase in our renewable portfolio standards, implementation of offshore wind, a lifting of the solar cap, commitment to energy storage and meeting the requirements of the Global Warming Solutions Act, among other priorities

## *SENATE LEADERS:*



Senator Marc R. Pacheco



Senator Jamie B. Eldridge



Senator Michael J. Barrett



Senator Joseph A. Boncore



Senator Jason M. Lewis



Senator Patrick M. O'Connor



Launch: May 8, 2017

## APPENDIX

### *H.3822 AN ACT FURTHER REGULATING EMPLOYER CONTRIBUTIONS TO HEALTH CARE*

*Establishes employer contribution health assessment and UI changes that build off of the existing employer medical assistance contribution; expected to generate \$200M in FY2018*



**Status: Signed into Law**

### *S.2192 AN ACT TO DIVERSIFY THE USE OF THE WORKFORCE TRAINING FUND TO SUPPORT THE WORKFORCE COMPETITIVENESS TRUST FUND*

*Ensures sustainable, predictable funding for the Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund and re-names the grants in honor of the late Senator Kenneth J. Donnelly*



**Status: Passed by Senate**

### *CH.58 AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE FIRST WEEK IN AUGUST AS ICE BUCKET CHALLENGE WEEK*

*Directs the Governor to annually proclaim the first week in August as Ice Bucket Challenge Week. Raises awareness and funds to fight ALS*



**Status: Signed into Law**

### *S.2113 AN ACT RELATIVE TO HEALTHY YOUTH*

*Ensures that school districts in the Commonwealth that elect to provide their students with sex education provide age-appropriate and medically accurate information that includes coverage of both abstinence and contraception*



**Status: Passed by Senate**



## ***S.2167 AN ACT TO FURTHER DEFINE STANDARDS OF EMPLOYEE SAFETY, ENSURE SAFE AND HEALTHY WORKING CONDITIONS FOR ALL STATE AND MUNICIPAL WORKERS***

*Provides all state and municipal workers with the same protections provided under the federal Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA), ensuring safe and healthy working conditions for all state and municipal workers*



**Status: Passed by Senate and House**

## ***S.2112 AN ACT TO PROMOTE MENTAL HEALTH EDUCATION IN MASSACHUSETTS HIGH SCHOOLS.***

*Provides an innovative mental health curriculum for schools to supplement existing health education curriculum and promote wellness*



**Status: Passed by Senate**

