

*The Commonwealth of Massachusetts*

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
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JOINT COMMITTEES:  
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PLYMOUTH COUNTY CAUCUS

April 6, 2017

The Honorable Robert DeLeo  
Speaker of the House  
Massachusetts State House, Room 356  
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Speaker DeLeo,

Thank you for hosting Chairmen and Vice Chairmen for the meeting earlier last month. I deeply appreciate the guidance as I learn how best to support the priorities of the House.

I am deeply grateful that you selected me to Chair the Special Legislative Commission on Behavioral Health Promotion and Upstream Prevention ("Promote Prevent Commission"). I wanted to invite you to attend our next meeting featuring national leaders in prevention:

**THE PROMISE OF PREVENTION**  
**Tuesday, May 9<sup>th</sup>, 1:00PM-3:00PM**

Conference Rooms, 21<sup>st</sup> Floor, One Ashburton Place, Boston, MA

The Commission would welcome the opportunity to have you serve as an acting Commissioner even if only for a portion of the meeting. Enclosed you will find a one-pager on the status of the Commission and the next meeting.

Last week, we held the Commission's "**State of the State on Behavioral Health**," featuring the following speakers: Secretary Sudders, U.S. Senator Ed Markey, DMH Commissioner Mikula, DPH Commissioner Bharel, and Trial Courts Chief Justice Carey.

I want to also express my appreciation for the vision you laid out at the Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce. I am especially excited about supporting your efforts to promote children's "social and emotional development," to address behavioral issues before they reach a "critical point," and to minimize the marijuana industry's negative consequences. Likewise, your leadership in seeking to establish a "substance addiction fund" funded by marijuana revenues is a service to millions of residents impacted by addiction.

As you consider how to direct the proposed fund, I respectfully request that you consider

allocating at least a portion of those dollars to substance-use prevention efforts. Like any other behavioral health problem, the consequences of addiction ripple through a family and increase the risk others, especially children, will develop addiction or another disorder later in life. Fortunately, decades of practice confirm investments in evidence-based prevention can prevent substance use, addiction, and other behavioral health issues. Continuing investments in treatment will serve the needs of those suffering today, but prevention can help us avoid the costly, tragic consequences for years and years to come.<sup>1</sup>

Thus, I wish to respectfully bring your attention to two bills I have filed this session:

**1. HD3374—An Act funding youth substance use prevention through a fee on licensed marijuana establishments**

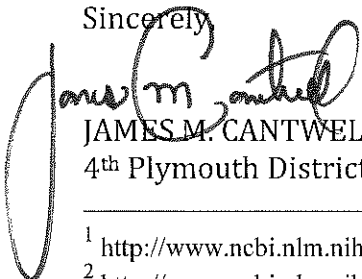
- Modeling casino gambling legislation allocation to compulsive gambling fund, requires the collection of an annual combined fee of \$2,000,000 from licensed marijuana retail stores, manufacturers, and cultivators
- Designates funding to the Prevention / Wellness Trust Fund [could be substance addiction fund] for evidence-based primary substance use prevention

**2. HD3115: An Act dedicating one-percent of the recreational marijuana excise tax to youth substance use prevention**

Regretfully, even with the historic investments in addiction services made by the Legislature, the Commonwealth invests comparatively and woefully little in prevention.<sup>2</sup> For example, as part of the Bureau of Substance Abuse Services' \$125 million budget, only \$8 million is directed to prevention efforts (a requirement of a federal block grant). This 16-1 funding gap does not account for the billions spent by private and public health insurers, non-profits, and other state agencies on responding to problems after they reach a critical point. Indeed, the Barnstable County Department of Human Services estimates that less than 1 percent of dollars are spent on prevention on Cape Cod, while 99 percent of dollars flow downstream to reactive systems like criminal justice and acute healthcare.<sup>3</sup>

Without significant investments in prevention, I fear we will continue to lose ground in the fight against substance use, including the opiate epidemic. We will also squander the opportunity to prevent the next substance use epidemic that is waiting in the wings. Allocating revenue from marijuana taxes and fees will firmly position our state—your House of Representatives—at the forefront in “unleashing the power of prevention” as called for by the best and brightest experts in public health, behavioral health, criminal justice, and education. Thank you for your leadership and for your consideration.

Sincerely,



JAMES M. CANTWELL  
4<sup>th</sup> Plymouth District

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3064963/>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK32775/>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.bchumanservices.net/library/2015/03/RSAC-Baseline-Report-FULL-REPORT-3-11-15-Final.pdf>

## **The Promote Prevent Commission: Where we stand, 4-6-2017**

### **Report to the Speaker of the House from House Chair Rep. Jim Cantwell**

#### **COMMISSIONERS:**

- All Commissioners have been selected and are actively working on the Commission
  - <http://www.promoteprevent.com/commission-members>
- I met personally with most of the Commissioners before the Feb. logistics meeting

**WEBSITE: PromotePrevent.com**, including language, mission, research resources, meeting notes, calendar, commissioner bios, etc.

#### **WORK TIMELINE:**

- Hold meetings from Feb. 2017 – Feb. 2018
- Hold at least 3 public hearings beginning this summer
- Existing Meetings:
  1. **Commission Kickoff, February 2017 [Held]**
    - Logistics meeting to inform Commissioners on mission and timeline
  2. **“State of the State on Behavioral Health”, April 3, 2017 [Held]**
    - Presentations on our state’s behavioral health challenges & work
    - Speakers: Sen. Ed Markey; HHS Secretary Sudders; DPH Commissioner Bharel; and DMH Commissioner Mikula;
  3. **The Promise of Prevention**, One Ashburton Place, May 9<sup>th</sup>, 1-3PM
    - Dr. Dennis Embry, Founder of the PAXIS Institute, Renowned Prevention Scientist
    - Select Authors of National Academy of Medicine Report, Unleashing the Power of Prevention:
      - J. David Hawkins, PhD, Endowed Professor in Prevention, University of Washington
      - William Beardslee, MD, Preventive Intervention Project, Harvard University’s Judge Barker Children’s Center
      - Jeff Jenson, PhD, Philip D. and Eleanor G. Winn Endowed Professor for Children and Youth, University of Denver
      - Laurel Leslie, MD, MPH, Vice President, Research, American Board of Pediatrics; Pediatrics Professor, Tufts University
    - Ben Fulton & Steve Lize, Results First Initiative, a project of the Pew Charitable Trust and MacArthur Foundation\*\*\*
  4. **Financing Prevention**, Health Policy Commission, June 6<sup>th</sup>, 1:30-3PM
  5. **System Change / Collaboration**, Health Policy Commission, July 11<sup>th</sup>, 1:30-3PM

#### **COMMISSION STAFF:**

- Ben Thomas (my aide) [benjamin.thomas@mahouse.gov](mailto:benjamin.thomas@mahouse.gov)
- Cate McNulty, Project Coordinator (Volunteer), [cate@promoteprevent.com](mailto:cate@promoteprevent.com)
- \*\*\***Pew Charitable Trust & MacArthur Foundation’s Results First Initiative** will likely be providing research and technical assistance for free to the Commission

Learn more at [PromotePrevent.com](http://PromotePrevent.com)