

## SENATE APPROVES PRUDENT BUDGET (5-22-08)

SENATOR STEVEN PANAGIOTAKOS FIRST MIDDLESEX DISTRICT CHAIRMAN  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

May 14, 2008

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## SENATE APPROVES PRUDENT BUDGET

-Invests in Areas That Have the Most Impact on State's Residents-

(BOSTON, MA) - After two days of debate, the Massachusetts Senate passed a budget that acknowledges the economic atmosphere in Massachusetts and across the nation while taking into account the needs of the Commonwealth. The approximately \$28.085 billion budget makes targeted investments in core initiatives that focus on health care, education, and public safety.

"Now is the time for the Commonwealth to make decisions that will positively impact our overall fiscal health in the upcoming fiscal years," said Senator Steven Panagiotakos, Chairman of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means. "This budget makes those tough decisions while ensuring that our top priority is the health and well-being of the Commonwealth's residents."

With an economic outlook that continues to decline, the Senate worked to focus on areas that will have the most impact on the lives of Massachusetts residents. These investments include:

- \$33 million to implement health care cost saving measures, such as electronic medical records and access to primary care;
- \$6.5 million investment to focus on the treatment and prevention of substance abuse;
- \$21.3 million for Community Policing Grants, and \$4 million in Municipal Police Grants to put more police on the street;
- \$3.5 million for youth violence prevention grants - a Senate initiative first included in the FY08 budget;
- \$13 million for the Shannon anti-gang violence grants - the first time the Shannon grants have been included in the operating budget;
- An 8.1 percent increase in housing programs, to help low-income families afford to stay in their communities, and includes \$10 million to work toward ending homelessness in the Commonwealth;
- \$20 million for the community first initiative, which will allow seniors to choose to receive care without leaving their communities;
- \$57.5 million for the funding for the prescription advantage program;
- \$12 million for the Massachusetts Emergency Food Assistance Program to help cover the growing need for food assistance.
- \$5 million to expand universal pre-kindergarten;
- \$17.5 million for Extended Learning Time allowing for an additional 3,000 students to expand their school day or year in FY 2009;
- \$5 million for the early education rate reserve to provide salary to child care professionals;
- \$21.6 million for the METCO program.

The Senate has also continued its commitment to Massachusetts' 351 cities and towns, making an early agreement with the House of Representatives to provide a 4.43 percent increase in local aid. This increase includes \$223 million more in Chapter 70 education funding, fulfilling year three of the 5-year reform plan. The Legislature also committed to level funding the full

\$935 million municipalities receive from lottery sales despite a \$124 million shortfall.

During the debate, the Senate voted to further study the options and impacts of expanded gaming. The Senate also agreed to an amendment that would change the name of the Department of Mental Retardation to the Department of Developmental Services.

In total, the Senate borrowed \$210 million from the stabilization account.

The Senate and House of Representatives will now negotiate a compromise budget. The 2009 fiscal year begins July 1st.

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STATE CELEBRATES UPCOMING NAME CHANGE FROM DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL RETARDATION TO DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES (3-30-09)

Executive Office of Health and Human Services

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March 30, 2008

STATE CELEBRATES UPCOMING NAME CHANGE FROM DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL RETARDATION TO DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES

BOSTON - In honor of Developmental Disabilities Month, representatives of the Patrick Administration, members of the Legislature and advocates gathered today at the State House to celebrate the upcoming name change of the Department of Mental Retardation (DMR) to the Department of Developmental Services (DDS), which will take effect on June 30, 2009.

The name change, enacted through legislation in 2008, is the direct result of active engagement and input from advocates, particularly self-advocates with developmental disabilities, who believe that changing the name of the Department of Mental Retardation to the Department of Developmental Services is a key step in promoting dignity and respect for people with disabilities. In addition, the agency's new name will also better reflect the range of services and supports offered.

"Changing the agency's name to the Department of Developmental Services reflects the Patrick Administration's commitment to promoting dignity and respect for people with disabilities," said Secretary of Health and Human Services Dr. Judy Ann Bigby. "We celebrate those who worked so hard to have the right name in the right place."

"The Department's name change affords the kind of dignity and respect that self-advocates and families have long been seeking and that they certainly deserve," added the Department's Commissioner Elin Howe.

"This name change is more than just symbolic," Senate President Therese Murray (D-Plymouth) said. "This is a significant step toward changing attitudes and perceptions about a population of people who are part of our society and deserve to be treated with the same respect and dignity as any other person. This wouldn't have been possible without the commitment and leadership of Senator Berry, Senator Spilka and Senator Brewer, and I want to congratulate them and everyone else involved. This is a great day for the Commonwealth."

John Anton, a self-advocate from Haverhill, said, "The name change means we'll all be treated equally and have a voice. I feel good, because I helped push the legislation for it at the State House. We're equal like everyone else. The new name shows more respect and dignity."

Craig Powers, a self-advocate from Brighton, said, "The name is like freedom now. It means getting more respect."

Self-advocate Charles Pina of Haverhill said, "The new name, Department of Developmental Services, is very respectful. It's important for us that we are seen as working individuals and are all human beings."

Sandy Houghton, a self-advocate from Hadley added, "Now with the new name, people will all have the opportunity to be accepted for who they are and for all their abilities and what they want to do."

Also at today's State House event, Commissioner Howe presented the agency's 2009 Dybwad Leadership Award to Luci Chansky of Newton, who has played a significant role in improving quality of life for individuals with developmental disabilities. Ms. Chansky chairs the Metro Region Citizen Advisory Board and the Newton/South Norfolk Area Advisory Board and serves on the Board of The Arc of Massachusetts.

The state also recognized with Commissioner's Exemplar Awards for their leadership in changing the name were:

Massachusetts Advocates Standing Strong  
 Senate President Therese Murray (Plymouth)  
 House Speaker Robert DeLeo (Winthrop)  
 Sen. Frederick Berry (Peabody)  
 Sen. Stephen Brewer (Barre)  
 Sen. Richard Moore (Uxbridge)  
 Sen. Steven Panagiotakos (Lowell)  
 Sen. Karen Spilka (Ashland)

Sen. Steven Tolman (Brighton)  
 Rep. Cheryl Coakley-Rivera (Springfield)  
 Rep. Michael Costello (Newburyport)  
 Rep. Kevin Honan (Brighton)  
 Rep. Barbara L'Italien (Andover)  
 Rep. Tom Sannicandro (Ashland)

Advocates and organizations recognized as State House Honorees, by region, were:

**METRO BOSTON SOUTHEASTERN MASSACHUSETTS**

The Corbett Family (Belmont) Elizabeth Ponte (Fall River)  
 Patricia Quatieri (Arlington) Regina Diener (Plymouth)  
 Roger Walsh (Norwood) Susan Harrington (Plymouth)  
 Fernald Developmental Center Ability Club (Waltham) Neil Lazzara (Dennis)  
 MRS Speaks Out Self-Advocacy Group (Waltham) Peter Lafferty (Berkley)

**WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS NORTHEASTERN MASSACHUSETTS**

The Pioneer Club / Mary "Betsey" Sullivan (Greenfield) Trek for Respect Committee (Haverhill)  
 Karlene Shea (Holyoke) Minute Man Arc - Blue Team (Concord)  
 Laurel Peltier (Amherst)

**CENTRAL MASSACHUSETTS**

Susan Moriarty (Gardner)

In addition, Massachusetts Advocates Standing Strong recognized the following individuals with awards:

Craig Smith (Brighton) Anne Fracht (Brighton)  
 John Anton (Haverhill) Buddy Bostick (Haverhill)  
 Rep. Michael Costello (Newburyport)

**About the Department of Mental Retardation / Department of Developmental Services**

The Department is dedicated to creating, in partnership with others, innovative and genuine opportunities for individuals with intellectual disabilities to participate fully and meaningfully in, and contribute to, their communities as valued members.

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## PATRICK: FINAL FY09 BUDGET (7-3-08)

Office of Representative Patrick, 3rd Barnstable District

Contact: Peggy Konner (617) 722-2090

July 3, 2008

## PATRICK: FINAL FY09 BUDGET

Boston: State Representative Matthew C. Patrick (D-Falmouth) and lawmakers voted in favor of the FY09 Budget Conference Committee Report. The Senate is expected to follow suit today and Governor Patrick is expected to sign it into law before the 4th of July celebrations begin.

Rep. Patrick was successful with help from Senate President Therese Murray in securing funding for the following programs in the FY09 Budget:

## Education

1) Funding of the "Pot Hole" account, this funds miscellaneous needs of school systems not addressed in the budget, and

2) Funding for school districts affected by Federal Impact Aid short falls. Impact Aid is designed to assist local school districts that have lost property tax revenue due to the presence of tax-exempt Federal property, or that have experienced increased expenditures due to the enrollment of federally connected children. This provides \$500,000 to the town of Bourne for the children that attend their schools from the Massachusetts Military Reservation.

## Public Health, Health and Human Services, and Veteran's Affairs.

1) Funding for the Barnstable Drug Court,

2) Health services for Falmouth Veterans,

3) Funding for the Barnstable Council for Children Youth, and Families through Barnstable County for a director of service; and

4) Funding to address children's oral health and the Forsyth Institute's Center, a school-based demonstration project offering preventive oral health care to children in high need areas including Boston, Lynn, and the Cape and Islands.

## University of Massachusetts Agricultural Department

1) Funding to continue a program to control and eliminate the Winter Moth.

Patrick stated, "In FY09 predictions are that funding will be scarce and we need to be mindful of about the choices we make. I believe we were successful at striking a balance between taking care of our most vulnerable, paying our debts and staying within the bounds of these economic times."

## Selected highlights of the budget agreement include:

## Local Aid

Provided \$935 million in unrestricted local aid to cities and towns. Despite the fact that only

\$811 million was available from the Lottery Fund, the budget allocates an additional \$124 million to hold cities and towns harmless;

Provided over \$3.95 billion for Chapter 70 education funding, which is a \$223 million increase over last year's allocation.

The increase comes as part of a five year plan to move individual school districts toward their target-aid contribution level. Under the Legislature's plan, each school district would see an increase in Chapter 70 funding over last year;

Provided \$20 million for the Sewer Rate Relief fund to help control the water and sewer bills of ratepayers throughout the Commonwealth;

Provided \$21.35 million in community policing grants to cities and towns;

Provided \$30.3 million Payment in Lieu of Taxes ("PILOT") payments which represents a \$2 million increase over last year; and,

## Education

**With respect to Early Education and Care:**

Provided \$197.7 million for child care vouchers for those being served by the Department of Transitional Assistance; \$213.6 million for low income child care vouchers; and \$79.1 million for supportive child care to ensure that no children with active abuse or neglect cases will be without child care services;

**With respect to the Department of Education:**

Provided \$33.8 million for kindergarten expansion grants; \$61.3 million for regional school transportation; \$230 million for the special education 'circuit breaker'; and provided \$17.5 million, up \$4.5 million from last year, for Expanded Learning Time Grants; and,

**With respect to Higher Education:**

Provided an increase of \$3 million for higher education scholarships;  
 Provided an increase of \$13.4 million for state and community colleges; and  
 Provided an increase of \$24.2 million for the University of Massachusetts system.

**Public Safety**

Provided \$4 million in funding for municipal police training grants;  
 Provided over \$163 million for services at the Department of Youth Services (DYS);  
 Provided \$3.3 million for teachers' salaries to improve teacher retention at DHS;  
 Provided \$16.7 million for the State Police Crime Lab; and  
 Provided \$1.2 million to reduce recidivism rates at the Department of Corrections.

**Health and Human Services**

- Changed the name of the Department of Mental Retardation to the Department of Developmental Services and provided \$1.27 billion for that department;
- Provided \$685.4 million for the Department of Mental Health;
- Provided \$836.5 million for the Department of Social Services;
- Provided a \$1 million increase to Head Start programs;
- Provided a \$428,000 increase to the Healthy Families program;
- Provided \$23 million for salary adjustments for human service providers;
- Provided \$300,000 for the Office of the Child Advocate, which would act as an oversight agency for state agencies that handle child abuse and neglect; and,
- Provided \$25 million for the implementation of electronic medical records to be administered by the pending health care cost containment legislation.

**Economic Development.**

Continued funding for the Commonwealth's One-Stop Career Centers and increased funding for the Youth-at-Risk program by \$1.4 million;  
 Provided \$25 million for the Life Sciences Center and related programs;  
 Provided an increase of \$500,000 for the Office of Small Business and Entrepreneurship to provide additional community development grants; and  
 Provided a \$1.1 million increase for adult basic education services.

**Housing and Homelessness**

Provided \$8.25 million to support the implementation of the recommendations of the special commission to end homelessness in the Commonwealth. This funding will be combined with an additional \$1.75 investment by MassHousing;  
 Provided over \$5.75 million for the continuation of the Soft Second Loan Program;  
 Provided \$33 million for the Massachusetts Rental Voucher Program to provide rental assistance for income eligible households;  
 Provided \$500,000 to sustain the funding for the Tenancy Preservation Program to provide intervention services in cases where persons with mental disabilities are at-risk of being evicted and becoming homeless; and  
 Provided an increase of \$500,000 for the Alternative Voucher Housing Program to provide rental assistance for non-elderly persons with disabilities.

**Veterans**

Provided \$18.5 million for annuity payments to certain veterans and their families; and  
 Provided \$20.9 million for veterans' benefits payments to indigent veterans.

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