

MEMORANDUM

To: AIA MA GAC
From: John Nunnari
Date: 10/11/2023
Re: Legislative and Regulatory Update

Legislative Update:**Since the last Update**

Beacon Hill has been marked with perplexing events and statements. Last week, Governor Healey held her significant bill-signing ceremony in the State House Library, celebrating a tax reform and relief bill. The bill has been in the works for almost two years and promises tax relief to parents, seniors, renters, and several other groups. This relief's estimated cost to the state is approximately \$1 billion annually.

However, amidst this celebration, Speaker Mariano voiced concerns over the challenges of assessing the state's need to address the escalating emergency shelter crisis. The Governor has proposed \$250 million to cater to this crisis, which has been intensified due to new migrants looking for shelter as per Massachusetts law. The Speaker, expressing his uncertainty, mentioned that they have yet to determine the eventual cost this might incur to the state. Efforts to get federal assistance for this crisis have been ongoing. The Governor, the Speaker, and the Senate President held a virtual meeting with the state's Congressional delegation to appeal to the Biden administration for more support, especially considering the strain migrants have placed on Massachusetts.

On the financial front, there were more challenges. The Senate restored \$80 million that the Governor had previously cut from the FY '24 budget. Furthermore, the Department of Revenue stated that tax collections were running \$170 million behind expectations for FY '24.

Massachusetts took a step back regarding clean energy when the Department of Public Utilities approved SouthCoast Wind's decision to cancel contracts, amounting to 1,200 megawatts of offshore wind power.

Lastly, the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) faced criticism and confusion over its short-lived podcast series "Spilling the T," which was taken down within 90 minutes of its debut.

Looking Forward

Massachusetts faces mounting challenges from the migrant influx, leading Gov. Maura Healey to declare an emergency and request \$250 million. The uncertainty looms over total costs and migrant flow impacted by cold weather. Nationally, border security debates heighten as the Biden administration waives 26 laws for Texas wall construction. House Democrats prioritize gun law revisions, while other legislative focus includes tax relief, housing, climate, and Green Line Extension issues. Events range from a climate conference to app-driver rights hearings, culminating in Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis's New Hampshire presidential campaign event.

AIA MA Bills

Since the September 11th report, of the 135 bills now being tracked by AIA MA, (111) bills have had their public hearing and (24) still need to be heard. The upcoming hearings below will be held on (13) of the remaining (24) tracked bills. ****Bold** denotes a proposed "High' priority bill**

- October 16th – Joint Tourism, Arts & Cultural Development
 - SB 2195 – An Act relative to State House restoration and management commission

- October 17th – Joint Municipalities & Regional Government
 - HB 2090 – An Act to improve parking and pedestrian safety
 - HB 2106 – An Act to improve parking and pedestrian safety
 - HB 2066 – An Act encouraging public-private partnerships to create affordable housing at public sites
 - SB 1318 – An Act to improve parking and pedestrian safety

- October 31st – Joint Committee on Telecommunications, Utilities and Energy (House only)
 - HB 3151 – An Act establishing a pathway to net zero buildings
 - HB 3192 – An Act relative to building energy and decarbonization
 - HB 3183 – An Act relative to the electrification of new and substantially remodeled or rehabilitated buildings
 - HB 3217 – An Act relative to consumer access to residential energy information
 - HB 3232 – An Act establishing a Zero Carbon Renovation Fund
 - HB 3691 – An Act relative to healthy and sustainable schools
 - SB 2127 – An Act relative to healthy and sustainable schools
 - SB 2144 – An Act relative to building energy and decarbonization

Regulatory Update:

Board meetings:

- Wed., Oct. 4th – Examiners of Plumbers and Gas Fitters
- Thurs., Oct. 5th – Board of Fire Prevention Regulations
- Tues., Oct. 10th – Board of Building Regulations and Standards
- Wed., Oct. 11th – Commonwealth Designer Selection Board
- Mon., Oct. 16th – Architectural Access Board
- Tues., Oct. 17th – Board of Registration of Architects
- Tues., Oct. 17th – Board of Elevator Regulations
- Wed., Oct. 18th – Board of Examiners of Sheet Metal Workers
- Mon., Oct. 23rd – Board of Electricians
- Tues., Oct. 24th – Board of Elevator Regulations
- Wed., Oct. 25th – Commonwealth Designer Selection Board
- Wed., Oct. 25th – Architectural Access Board (Subcommittee on Regs.)
- Mon., Oct. 30th – Architectural Access Board
- Tues. Oct. 31st – Board of Elevator Regulations

**Schedule of meetings can also be found on [AIA MA web-site](#)

No new **Notices of Public Review of Prospective Regulations** or **New Regulations** have been issued or promulgated by the Secretary of State since the last report on September 11, 2023.

Board of Building Regulations and Standards (BBRS)

At the October 10th meeting, the following occurred:

- The Board approved their September meeting minutes;
- Approved meeting minutes for the Building Codes Appeals Board (BCAB) and Building Official Certification Committee (BOCC);
- Board counsel Charles Kilb noted that the Administration appears to be moving on some regulations, and reiterated that once the 10th edition is cleared, he will begin the process of

scheduling the three public hearings. The hearings will occur sequentially over a three week period with one held in Boston, one in Springfield and the last to be virtual. All hearings will be held during normal business hours and comments will be closed one week after the last hearing.

- Board received a report from BOCC designee Andrew Bobola, Building Commissioner for the Town of Acushnet;
- Board approved BOWM nominee, Kevin Ross, and SEMBO nominee, Jeff Richards, for two open “at-large” seats on the BOCC. Board also approved the MA Municipal Associations (MMA) nominee, Kevin Sweet (Town of Wrentham) for the MMA designated seat.
- Board discussed a letter from state Rep. Tackey Chan regarding building official training, and discussed the guidance issued by the Healy Administration with regard to housing migrants in hotel/motels (issue pertain to change of use).
- Latest Meeting Minutes can be found [here](#)

Board of Registration of Architects (CBRA)

Next meeting is scheduled for October 17th

- August 8th meeting was cancelled

Latest Meeting Minutes can be found [here](#)

Architectural Access Board (MAAB)

Next meeting is scheduled for October 16th and 30th. The AAB has created a subcommittee that has been working on a complete overhaul of 521 CMR to align with the ADA. The subcommittee meets once a month and is open to the public to listen. Their next meeting is scheduled for October 25th. (schedule in the link below).

<https://www.mass.gov/service-details/aab-2023-meeting-list>