

MEMORANDUM

To: AIA MA GAC
From: John Nunnari
Date: 10/07/24
Re: Legislative and Regulatory Update

Legislative Update:**Since the last Update**

Governor Healey has taken bold action to push her clean energy reforms by attaching them to her FY 2024 budget closeout, bypassing traditional legislative processes. This move has drawn criticism from various stakeholders, including climate activists and the Massachusetts Teachers Association, who oppose her funding strategies and the perceived prioritization of corporate interests. Additionally, tensions have escalated within the Cannabis Control Commission following the controversial firing of its chairwoman, Shannon O'Brien, by Treasurer Deborah Goldberg, further complicating the state's political landscape.

The Governor recently launched the state's marketing campaign for the 250th anniversary of the Revolutionary War, positioning Massachusetts as a resilient underdog amidst challenges. Economic Development Secretary Yvonne Hao likened the state's current struggles to the Lexington Militia's stand against British forces, emphasizing local pride and unique strengths. However, the Healey Administration faces dissent from various groups, including gun owners opposing a new law and citizens concerned about local zoning mandates, illustrating the ongoing battles for local control and governance.

The July 31 deadline for the Massachusetts Legislature, originally established to streamline lawmaking, has become less significant in recent years, with more unfinished business spilling into election season. Legislative leaders now emphasize that lawmakers can continue to pass bills throughout their two-year term, suggesting that major laws could still emerge during the "lame-duck" period. As negotiations continue on pressing issues like clean energy reform and hospital oversight amid protests and ongoing political debates, the relevance of this deadline remains increasingly questionable.

Looking Forward

As the elections approach, candidates and their supporters are ramping up efforts to sway public opinion, while facing the challenges of dwindling campaign resources. Key issues include a deadline for opponents of a new gun law to gather signatures for a repeal attempt, and a looming Supreme Judicial Court case concerning a law aimed at increasing housing production. In the legislature, Democrats are focused on advancing clean energy and health care bills but lack a clear timetable for agreements, which could delay progress on important issues. Meanwhile, early in-person voting schedules are being finalized, with recent trends showing a significant increase in mail-in voting compared to prior elections.

To review minutes from previous GAC meetings or previous Legislative or Regulatory Reports, please click [here](#) and review the files located under the banner **2024 Government Affairs Committee Meeting Schedule**

AIA MA Bills

In total, AIA MA is tracking 162 pieces of legislation for the 2023-2024 legislative session. Based on assigned priorities, the breakdown is as follows:

- **High Priority:** 22 bills
- **Medium Priority:** 51 bills
- **Low Priority:** 68 bills
- **No Priority Selected:** 21 bills

Bills that have moved since the last report on **September 11, 2024**

****Note** – Other than monetary bills, all bills can still be acted upon by the Legislature during the **Informal Sessions** that span from the **July 31, 2024** end of **Formal Sessions** till the beginning of the new legislative session on **January 4, 2025**.**

- **High Priority** bills
 - No High Priority bills have moved
- **Medium Priority** bills
 - **HB 2874** (*Accessible Dwellings for Older Adults and People with Disabilities to Remain in Their Communities*): This bill was referred for further study on **September 12, 2024**, meaning it will likely need to be filed again next session.
 - **SB 816** (*Committing to Higher Education the Resources to Insure a Strong and Healthy Public Higher Education System*): This bill placed in the Senates Orders of the Day for the next session on **September 5, 2024**.
 - **SB 2365** (*Establishing a Zero Carbon Renovation Fund*): This bill placed in the Senates Orders of the Day for the next session on **September 5, 2024**.
- **Low Priority** bills
 - **HB 1348** (*Detached Accessory Dwellings*): This bill was referred for further study on **September 9, 2024**, meaning it will likely need to be filed again next session.
 - **HB 1382** (*Reducing Damage Caused by the Current Foreclosure Crisis in the Historic Districts Of Massachusetts*): This bill was last reported to House Committee on Third Reading on **September 9, 2024**,

The current status of AIA MA **High Priority** bills remains:

- **HB 764/SB 2090:** *An Act incorporating embodied carbon into state climate policy* – Was included in SB 2531 and ultimately sent to conference committee as **SB 2838:** *An Act upgrading the grid and protecting ratepayers*. **Still in conference.**
- **HB 315/SB 185:** *An Act relative to advancing the profession of commercial interior design* – Was attached to a favorable report by the Joint Committee. Was Engrossed in the Senate and sent to House Ways and Means (HWM). **Still in HWM.**
- **HB 2321/SB 1523:** *An Act relative to safe building materials* – Both bills referred to respective chambers Committees on Ways and Means (WM). **Both bills remain in respective WM's**

- **HB 3802/SB 1489:** *An Act creating a municipal and public safety building authority* – House bill referred to HWM and Senate bill received an extension order. **Status has not changed**
- **HB 568/SB 278/SB 309:** *An Act establishing a special commission to study the effectiveness of the Massachusetts School Building Authority* – All three attached to favorable report by Joint Committee and became SB 251. SB 251 ultimately became SB 2885 and was Engrossed by the Senate. **Currently in HWM.**
- **HB 469/SB 242:** *An Act establishing a green and healthy schools working group and implementation plan* – Both bills referred to respective chambers Committees on Ways and Means (WM) were they remain. **Both bills remain in respective WM's**
- **HB 1665:** *An Act relative to notice of contract, dissolution of lien* – **Bill was sent to study.**
- **HB 3019/SB 1978:** *An Act establishing gender-neutral bathrooms* – Both bills referred to respective chambers Committees on Ways and Means (WM). **Both bills remain in respective WM's**

To view the current status of all AIA MA tracked legislation, please click [here](#) and review the files located under the banner **Bills Tracked for the 2023-2024 Legislative Session**

Regulatory Update:

A schedule of all construction board regulatory meetings can be found on the [Regulatory Events Calendar](#) of AIA MA's website.

Notices of Public Review of Prospective Regulations (09/07/24 – 10/08/24)

No new Notices of Public Review of Prospective Regulations were issued during this period

New Regulations (09/07/24 – 10/08/24)

No new construction codes regulations were promulgated in this time period.

Board of Building Regulation and Standards

On September 25, 2024, Sarah Wilkerson, Commissioner of the Division of Occupational Licensure, informed AIA Massachusetts that the 10th edition of the 780 CMR Base Building Code (Massachusetts Amendments) will be officially promulgated on October 11, 2024. A concurrency period with the 9th edition will extend until January 1, 2025. However, the Board of Building Regulations and Standards (BBS) will discuss extending this period at their October 8 meeting due to delays in promulgating the code. Once finalized, AIA Massachusetts will notify members, and inquiries can be directed to Chris Rogers, Executive Director of Public Safety Boards.