

**MEMORANDUM**

To: AIA MA GAC  
From: John Nunnari  
Date: 06/11/25  
Re: Legislative and Regulatory Update

**Legislative Update:****Since the last Update**

Throughout May and early June, Massachusetts politics have been marked by legislative inertia and rising uncertainty as major proposals—including tax relief, housing reforms, and budget negotiations—remain unresolved. In early May, the State House was filled with speculation over delayed action on high-profile issues, as legislative leaders offered few details on timelines or priorities. Cannabis policy reform gained attention, with lawmakers advancing proposals to clarify oversight and expand equity measures in the industry. Meanwhile, the Healey administration and legislative leaders faced pressure to respond to a court ruling that expanded the state's liability under the wrongful death statute, raising concerns about financial exposure.

By early June, frustration had grown over the continued lack of clarity on Beacon Hill. With end of July formal sessions ticking down leading into an August break, advocates, agencies, and lawmakers expressed mounting concern that little meaningful legislation might pass before deadlines hit. The Senate passed its version of the budget, but differences with the House version left key funding and policy decisions hanging. In parallel, multiple sectors—including education and construction—have been left waiting on long-promised initiatives. The political climate remains foggy, with observers awaiting clearer direction from leadership as hopes for sweeping legislative action this session begin to dim.

**Looking Forward**

Five months into the legislative session, Massachusetts lawmakers have made limited progress beyond budget-related bills, despite mounting pressure from advocacy groups. The House recently passed a long-anticipated cannabis bill, while the Senate is still drafting measures on data privacy and reproductive rights. The most advanced proposals include a \$1.3 billion income surtax spending bill and the fiscal 2026 state budget, both now in conference committee. As lawmakers weigh interim budget options ahead of the July 1 deadline, their work unfolds alongside national tensions over a sweeping federal tax and spending bill—dubbed either “big and beautiful” or “big and ugly”—that could have significant implications depending on its outcome.

**AIA MA Bill Tracking**

To view the current status of all AIA MA tracked legislation, [please click here](#)

A schedule of all Legislative Events can be found on the [Legislative Events](#) of AIA MA's website.

To review previous Legislative or Regulatory Reports or minutes from GAC meetings, please click [here](#)

**Regulatory Update:**

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

There have been no **Notices of Public Review of Prospective Regulations** or new **Regulations** since the last Legislative and Regulatory Update dated 04/07/2025

CMR's tracked include: 105 CMR – State Sanitary Code; 225 CMR 22.00 – 26.00 – Energy Codes; 248 CMR – Plumbing/Gas Fitting Code; 257 CMR – Water Treatment; 271 CMR – Sheet Metal; 310 CMR – DEP; 314 CMR – Water Pollution Control; 521 CMR – Architectural Access; 522 CMR – Boiler Rules; 524 CMR – Elevator; 527 CMR – Fire Code; 528 CMR – Pipefitter and Refrigeration; 780 CMR – Building Code

Copies of all codes listed above can be found on the [State Boards and Construction Regulations](#) page of AIA MA's website

### **Board of Building Regulation and Standards**

At its June 10, 2025 meeting, the Massachusetts Board of Building Regulations and Standards (BBRS) approved minutes from prior meetings, reviewed regulatory updates, and discussed a proposal to align carbon monoxide alarm references by replacing NFPA 720 with NFPA 72 for consistency. While members agreed the change could reduce confusion, they requested a detailed comparison of the standards before moving forward. The board also voted not to adopt the solar setback guidance document and upheld a hearing officer's decision in a discretionary appeal case. Members were reminded of Governor Healey's directive to eliminate unnecessary regulatory burdens, and it was agreed the board would meet in July and recess in August.

### **MA Board of Registration of Architects (MBRA)**

At its June 10, 2025 meeting, the MBRA reviewed regulation changes prompted by Governor Healey's initiative to reduce barriers to licensure. The board discussed proposed amendments—particularly those related to alternative education pathways for examination eligibility—and approved language to move forward to public hearing. Changes included accepting NCARB-evaluated alternate education, removing gendered language, allowing concurrent educational enrollment (e.g., through IPAL), and eliminating the requirement that out-of-state continuing education be “substantially equivalent.” Broader regulatory revisions proposed by board members were tabled to preserve focus on the Governor's targeted reforms. Application processing improvements and updates on national regulatory matters were also reviewed.

### **Board of Fire Prevention Regulations (BFPR)**

At its June 5, 2025 meeting, the Massachusetts Board of Fire Prevention Regulations (BFPR) approved multiple sets of committee meeting minutes and received updates on ongoing NFPA 1 2024 code review efforts. Committees reported steady progress on finalizing revisions to key chapters, permit and certificate tables, and general formatting, with most 2024 reviews nearing completion. The Board discussed forming a work group to address the increasing use of portable lithium-ion battery systems and potential gaps in regulatory oversight. While no specific date was set, staff indicated that once committee reviews conclude—potentially within the coming weeks—draft regulations will be prepared for public hearing and subsequent promulgation. Several electrical code interpretations were also approved, and the Board deferred discussion of certain committee minutes and technical questions to a future meeting.

### **Board of Elevator Regulation**

At its June 3, 2025 meeting, the Board of Elevator Regulations reviewed multiple variance petitions—including those concerning fire recall key switches, pit clearances, and modernization projects in both new and existing buildings—approving several with conditions such as signage, documentation, or inspection requirements, while deferring others pending more information. A notable request related to non-compliant elevators at the MBTA's Wellington Station was denied due to safety and precedent concerns. The Board also discussed code compliance, inspector authority, licensing updates, and efforts to align Massachusetts regulations with ASME A17.1 standards. Throughout, the Board emphasized its ongoing commitment to balancing public safety with practical design and modernization challenges.

**Massachusetts Sheet Metal Board**

At its May 21, 2025 meeting, the Massachusetts Sheet Metal Board approved allowing individuals with a Rhode Island unrestricted journeyman license to sit for the Massachusetts exam without additional requirements. Those with Rhode Island education but no license must complete an additional 150 hours of coursework before qualifying for the Massachusetts J1 license. For restricted (J2) licenses, holders must complete Massachusetts Sheet Metal Level 3 coursework. Equivalent rules were also adopted for Connecticut. The Board also discussed an advisory opinion regarding pressure testing of factory-fabricated duct systems, highlighting concerns about sealants, manufacturer warranties, and installation standards. Members agreed manufacturers should be informed of Massachusetts pressure testing requirements but chose not to formally adopt the advisory at this time.

**Bureau of Pipefitters, Refrigeration Technicians, and Sprinkler Fitters**

At its May 21, 2025 meeting, the Bureau of Pipefitters, Refrigeration Technicians, and Sprinkler Fitters approved several applicants to sit for licensure exams based on their education and experience, including those with credentials from other states. Appeals were considered on a case-by-case basis, with some denials upheld due to insufficient pipefitting education. Apprentice license renewals were granted with reminders to complete required coursework. The Office of Public Safety reported 56 inspections in April and noted a decline in fines, attributing it to more focused enforcement. The Bureau also discussed scheduling a future subcommittee meeting and adjourned without addressing any unexpected topics.

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