

MEMORANDUM

To: AIA MA GAC
From: John Nunnari
Date: 07/09/25
Re: Legislative and Regulatory Update

Legislative Update:**Since the last Update**

In late June, House and Senate leaders announced a long-awaited agreement on a \$58 billion state budget for FY26, reflecting a rare moment of harmony after months of closed-door negotiations. The compromise budget preserved many shared priorities, including surtax revenue investments in education and transportation, although differences over the underlying surtax framework and transparency remain. Days later, the House passed a tax relief bill and began deliberations on the Affordable Homes Act, while Governor Healey called for urgent action on her spending bills and raised concerns about rising healthcare costs and stalled economic development measures. Simultaneously, lawmakers faced external pressures, such as the Supreme Judicial Court's review of a climate case and federal criticism of Massachusetts' emergency shelter system.

As July began, contradictions emerged between public rhetoric and policy outcomes. While the budget avoided sweeping cuts, revenue concerns lingered, and the MBTA board postponed a controversial proposal to increase bus fares. Governor Healey urged the Legislature to move more quickly, especially on housing and infrastructure investments. Meanwhile, special interest lobbying intensified around the surtax, the use of AI, and regulatory reforms. Legislators headed into the holiday weekend with critical unfinished business and growing tension between long-term ambitions and short-term political calculations.

Looking Forward

The Fourth of July marked a pivotal moment for Massachusetts, with the signing of significant new federal and state laws that will shape the Commonwealth's fiscal and policy landscape for years. President Trump's sweeping legislation on tax, spending, and border security is expected to have wide-ranging effects, prompting Governor Healey to act decisively with a \$60.9 billion state budget that includes \$130 million in vetoes, key amendments, and a request for expanded authority to manage spending in response to potential federal impacts. To cushion the state from possible disruptions, lawmakers built in an \$800 million reserve. As the Legislature continues its year-round budgeting approach, attention also turns to pending supplemental spending bills, healthcare protections, and numerous non-budgetary proposals advancing through public hearings. With committee deadlines looming and public sessions scheduled, Massachusetts leaders are staying proactive and focused on ensuring fiscal stability and access to essential services amid a shifting national policy environment.

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.

Notices of Public Review of Prospective Regulations (06/11/25 – 07/08/25)

310 CMR – Department of Environmental Protection:

- Feb. 28, 2025 – **301 CMR 41.00** – Toxic or Hazardous Substance List – [Notice of Public Hearing](#) – Hearing to be held on 07/25/25 @ 1:00 p.m. Written comments accepted until 8/8/25 @ 5:00 P.M.

New Regulations (06/01/25 – 07/08/2025)

225 CMR – Department of Energy Resources:

- July 4, 2025 – **225 CMR 20.00** – Solar Massachusetts Renewable Target (SMART) Program – [Emergency Regulations](#) – **Effective Date: 06/20/2025**
- July 4, 2025 – **225 CMR 28.00** – Solar Massachusetts Renewable Target (SMART) Program 3.0 – [Emergency Regulations](#) – **Effective Date: 06/20/2025**

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

The BBRS met on July 8, 2025, and approved the June meeting minutes. The Executive Director reported on CSL activity and noted that subcommittees for the 11th Edition code update are nearly finalized, with only two vacancies remaining. The Board discussed low CSL exam pass rates and potential test issues, which will be investigated. Subcommittees were authorized to begin using the 2024 ICC code, and previously tabled code change proposals will be revisited in September. Commissioner Wilkinson outlined the Governor's regulatory reform initiative, encouraging BBRS to identify ways to streamline licensing and reduce burdens. A proposal to update carbon monoxide code references from NFPA 720 to 72 was debated; while considered non-technical, it was ultimately referred to a subcommittee for further review. The Board also noted the creation of the Embodied Carbon Interagency Council and BBRS's representation on it. Vineet Mehra was welcomed as a new board member representing mechanical engineers. The August meeting was canceled, and the next meeting is scheduled for September. No quasi-judicial matters were presented.

MA Board of Registration of Architects (MBRA)

The MBRA last met on June 10th and a summary of that meeting was included in the 06/11/2025 Legislative and Regulatory Report. The next meeting of the Registration board is August 12, 2025.

Board of Fire Prevention Regulations (BFPR)

The BFPR last met on June 5th and a summary of that meeting was included in the 06/11/2025 Legislative and Regulatory Report. The next meeting of the board is August 7, 2025.

Board of Elevator Regulation

The BFPR last met on June 3rd and a summary of that meeting was included in the 06/11/2025 Legislative and Regulatory Report. The next meeting of the board is July 15, 2025.

Massachusetts Sheet Metal Board

The next meeting of the board is July 16, 2025.

Bureau of Pipefitters, Refrigeration Technicians, and Sprinkler Fitters

The Bureau last met on June 18th. The next meeting has not been scheduled.

MAAB – Subcommittee on Regulations

At its June 25, 2025 meeting, the MAAB Subcommittee on Regulations made significant progress toward refining how exempted work interacts with the 30% accessibility rule. Members weighed multiple frameworks, ultimately leaning toward a simplified, more administratively clear model that exempts qualifying work unless it exceeds 120% of a building's full and fair cash value—effectively preserving a 75% cost exemption. This approach avoids the complexity of defining emergencies or categorizing project types, while still advancing accessibility goals. Discussions also included a possible four-year lookback period for cumulative work and emphasized the need to balance accessibility requirements with the fiscal constraints of schools and municipalities. Further refinement and consensus-building will continue as draft language is finalized.

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