

MEMORANDUM

To: AIA MA GAC
From: John Nunnari
Date: 04/07/25
Re: Legislative and Regulatory Update

Legislative Update:**Since the last Update**

In recent weeks, Beacon Hill has seen a flurry of activity shaped by federal policy uncertainty, affordability concerns, and strategic investments in public infrastructure. Governor Healey continues to brace for potential Medicaid and education funding cuts stemming from federal decisions, while also pursuing executive actions to ease energy costs and proposing significant state investments in child care and housing. Meanwhile, Attorney General Andrea Campbell has ramped up efforts to oppose federal rollbacks, including lawsuits over the dismantling of the U.S. Department of Education. These developments point to increasing fiscal pressure at the state level as officials seek to preserve critical services and expand equity in access, particularly in health care, early education, and workforce development.

At the same time, there are signs of progress and renewed regional connectivity. The launch of South Coast Rail passenger service reconnects cities like Taunton, New Bedford, and Fall River with Boston for the first time in nearly seven decades. This milestone underscores the state's commitment to long-term infrastructure development even as legislative leaders, including Speaker Mariano, express reluctance toward new taxes proposed in Governor Healey's budget. Ongoing debates over revenue, affordability, and sustainability are poised to shape budget deliberations throughout the spring, with particular attention on energy, housing, and transit priorities that impact the design and construction sectors.

Looking Forward

As the Massachusetts House prepares to release its revised FY26 budget, public hearings are underway to gather input on Governor Healey's \$62 billion proposal, with particular focus on health care and safety net programs like MassHealth. The state faces heightened fiscal uncertainty due to looming federal policy changes under President Trump, especially potential Medicaid cuts and an unstable economic outlook. With no clear federal guidance, state leaders must make critical budget decisions affecting the largest program in the state. Meanwhile, long-promised legislative transparency reforms remain stalled in a conference committee, and growing concerns over capital gains volatility and trade-related economic risks are fueling calls to revise revenue projections. As Speaker Mariano prepares to speak at a Chamber of Commerce forum, the state's fiscal stability hangs in the balance, with industry and government leaders alike bracing for a challenging budget cycle.

AIA MA Bill Tracking

Based on the recent legislative leadership and committee assignments, the legislative calendar is taking shape. With committee assignments finalized, the bill review process has begun. The Speaker and Senate President have directed committee chairs to assess and prioritize legislation, meaning key issues will emerge in the coming weeks. Committee hearings have slowly started, with more to be scheduled over the coming weeks and months.

Expected Timeline for AIA Massachusetts Review

- April – May: As committees have begun holding hearings, AIA Massachusetts has begun initial review and tracking of relevant legislation, particularly in school construction, municipal building policy, climate resilience, and public safety infrastructure.
- Mid-Spring to Early Summer: As priorities become clearer, AIA Massachusetts will refine its advocacy focus, identifying bills with momentum and those requiring lobbying efforts.
- Mid-Year (June – July): Fiscal considerations in Ways & Means will influence which bills advance, allowing AIA Massachusetts to adjust its legislative strategy accordingly.

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

To view AIA MA's Legislative Events calendar, 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 (03/07/25 – 04/07/25)**310 CMR – Department of Environmental Protection:**

- April 29, 2025 – **301 CMR 6.00 & 7.00** – Air Pollution Control – **Notice of Public Hearing**
– Written comments accepted until 5/9/25 by 5:00 P.M.

Board of Building Regulation and Standards

At its March 11, 2025 meeting, the Board of Building Regulations and Standards (BBRS) approved prior meeting minutes, reviewed updates from the Building Official Certification Committee (BOCC), and discussed progress on multiple subcommittee initiatives. Notably, the 11th Edition Subcommittee is close to finalizing recommendations regarding code chapter assignments and technical advisory committee composition, with a draft expected soon. The Solar Setback Subcommittee, which lacked quorum in its last session, plans to present recommendations at the next BBRS meeting. Construction Supervisor License data was also reviewed, with 112 new licenses issued and 1,297 renewals in February.

The board discussed high failure rates in CSL testing, noting limited data so far and requesting further analysis. Additionally, CEU extensions and various certification requests were approved, while [updates were shared on Stretch Code changes](#) and potential coordination between BBRS and DOER energy advisory committees. The Division of Occupational Licensure is preparing for a move to One Federal Street, with logistics and outreach underway.

MAAB Subcommittee on Regulations

At the March 26, 2025 meeting of the Massachusetts Architectural Access Board (MAAB) Subcommittee on Regulation, members focused on reviewing potential revisions to the longstanding 30% accessibility compliance threshold under 521 CMR. Three conceptual strategies were introduced, including using equalized assessed values (EQVs) for more equitable triggers, implementing a two-tiered threshold system based on project scope and property

value, and adopting the International Existing Building Code's (IEBC) tiered approach. While there was interest in enhancing equity, several members emphasized maintaining regulatory simplicity, expressed concern about enforcement challenges, and requested further education on IEBC standards and the ADA's disproportionality rule.

The subcommittee agreed to pause any immediate decisions and will revisit the proposals at its April 23 meeting after gathering expert input. Unanimous motions were passed to invite representatives from the Department of Revenue (DOR) and the Board of Building Regulations and Standards (BBRS) to provide insight on valuation practices and IEBC implementation, respectively. Additional public comment will be welcomed, and further analysis is expected on how proposed changes could affect small businesses, historic properties, and public accessibility efforts across Massachusetts.

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