

MassSenate

2025–2026 SESSION IN REVIEW HIGHLIGHTS

Affordability

The Massachusetts State Senate prioritized several practical initiatives this session as part of our **Affordability Agenda** to make life more affordable for residents.

Consumer Savings



We focused on ways to help residents save money and avoid costly pitfalls. We make live music more affordable by capping ticket resale prices. Consumers get added protection through new debt collection reforms, and we protect residents from scams by banning cryptocurrency ATMs. We also give shoppers a break through our annual sales tax holiday.

Education



We make higher education more affordable by fully funding tuition-free community college and creating a new student support fund to help with financial aid and stipends, ensuring more students can earn degrees without financial barriers. We have also guaranteed free breakfast and lunch for all K–12 students, allowing caregivers to keep more money in their pockets.

Energy



We are tackling high energy costs with a major legislative package designed to eliminate hidden fees, curb price spikes, and boost transparency—promising billions in long-term savings for households, while maintaining our commitment to our climate goals.

Healthcare



Our *Primary Care and You* bill cuts costs by shifting our healthcare system toward prevention. Investing in primary care providers means they can stay open and hire more staff, thereby reducing wait times, reducing ER visits and expensive specialty procedures. We also expand *ConnectorCare*, which helps residents access more affordable insurance with lower premiums, no deductibles, and reduced co-pays.

Housing



We expand options for affordable homeownership, provide several ways to tackle property tax relief, and ensure broker fees are not paid by renters. We also streamline the conversion of commercial space into residential units and allow two-family homes on any residential lot—helping more people find homes that fit their budgets.

Public Transportation



We are making public transportation more affordable and accessible. Residents with lower incomes now have expanded access to lower-cost options on the MBTA, and we made fare-free regional transit permanent, allowing all riders to use Regional Transit Authorities at no cost.

MassSenate

2025–2026 SESSION IN REVIEW HIGHLIGHTS

Affordability

Signed Into Law

AN ACT AUTHORIZING THE DIVISION OF CAPITAL ASSET MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE TO TAKE BY EMINENT DOMAIN CERTAIN LAND IN THE TOWN OF NORWOOD

Clears the way for the revitalization of Norwood Hospital, addressing the increased emergency transportation costs that have fallen on local communities and residents as a result of the hospital's multi-year closure.

Bill H.5553 | [Bill Text](#) | [Press Release](#) | *Signed into law on August 7, 2026*

FISCAL YEAR 2027 BUDGET POLICY PROVISIONS ON STREAMLINED LOCAL HOUSING PERMITTING

Includes numerous provisions to streamline local housing permitting, intended to boost new housing production in Massachusetts:

- Makes it easier for homeowners and developers to work with buildings or properties that don't fully meet current zoning rules because they were built under older codes;
- Provides reasonable timelines for projects to proceed under existing zoning rules;
- Modernizes the variance standard.

Bill H.5555 | [Bill Text](#) | [Fact Sheet](#) | [Press Release](#) | *Signed into law on July 9, 2026*

FISCAL YEAR 2027 BUDGET POLICY PROVISION ON *CONNECTORCARE* EXPANSION PILOT PROGRAM

Extends the *ConnectorCare* expansion pilot program through 2027. Since 2024, over 115,000 individuals have gained more affordable insurance, lower premiums, no deductibles, and reduced co-pays, further helping residents access preventive services and medications for chronic conditions.

Bill H.5555 | [Bill Text](#) | [Fact Sheet](#) | [Press Release](#) | *Signed into law on July 9, 2026*

FISCAL YEARS 2026 AND 2027 PROVISIONS FOR FARE-FREE REGIONAL TRANSIT

Provides \$40 million in Fiscal Year 2027 to sustain systemwide fare free regional transit service, following the success of the Fiscal Year 2026 budget which permanently codified fare-free service and allowed all passengers to utilize regional transit authorities for no cost.

Bill H.5555 | [Bill Text](#) | [Fact Sheet](#) | [Press Release](#) | *Signed into law on July 9, 2026*

Bill H.4240 | [Bill Text](#) | [Fact Sheet](#) | [Press Release](#) | *Signed into law on July 4, 2025*

FISCAL YEARS 2026 AND 2027 BUDGET FUNDING FOR TUITION-FREE COMMUNITY COLLEGE EDUCATION

Provides \$120 million in FY26 and \$137 million in FY27 to fund the *MassEducate* free community college program to ensure any qualified Massachusetts high school graduate can attend community college at no cost.

Bill H.5555 | [Bill Text](#) | [Fact Sheet](#) | [Press Release](#) | *Signed into law on July 9, 2026*

Bill H.4240 | [Bill Text](#) | [Fact Sheet](#) | [Press Release](#) | *Signed into law on July 4, 2025*

FISCAL YEARS 2026 AND 2027 BUDGET FUNDING FOR SCHOOL MEALS

Provides \$360 million across two fiscal years for universal school meals, ensuring all students in Massachusetts can receive free breakfast and lunch at school, regardless of their family's income.

Bill H.5555 | [Bill Text](#) | [Fact Sheet](#) | [Press Release](#) | *Signed into law on July 9, 2026*

Bill H.4240 | [Bill Text](#) | [Fact Sheet](#) | [Press Release](#) | *Signed into law on July 4, 2025*

MassSenate

2025–2026 SESSION IN REVIEW HIGHLIGHTS

Affordability

Signed Into Law

FISCAL YEAR 2026 CONSOLIDATED SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET PROVISION ON PRIMARY CARE SCHOLARSHIPS

Provides \$10 million in scholarships for UMass Chan Medical School students who agree to pursue family medicine and practice in underserved communities in Massachusetts after they graduate, thereby addressing financial barriers to medical school education as well as the growing shortage of primary care physicians.

Bill H.5470 | [Bill Text](#) | [Fact Sheet](#) | [Press Release](#) | Signed into law on June 12, 2026

RESOLUTIONS DESIGNATING 2025 AND 2026 SALES TAX HOLIDAYS

Sets the annual sales tax holidays for weekends in August of 2025 and 2026.

Resolution S.3119 | [Resolution Text](#) | [Press Release](#) | Passed by the Legislature on June 11, 2026

Resolution S.2530 | [Resolution Text](#) | [Press Release](#) | Passed by the Legislature on June 12, 2025

AN ACT RELATIVE TO AFFORDABLE CAR RENTALS

Helps make car rentals more accessible by shifting primary insurance liability onto the renter's personal auto insurance, thereby reducing costs while maintaining necessary protections.

Bill S.2616 | [Bill Text](#) | [Fact Sheet](#) | [Press Release](#) | Signed into law on November 26, 2025

FISCAL YEAR 2025 SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET FUNDING FOR HIGHER EDUCATION STUDENT SUPPORT

Maintains financial aid benefits for students attending public colleges and universities through the establishment of a student support fund. The bill also appropriates \$18.3 million to strengthen student financial aid assistance and maintain existing stipends for students.

Bill H.4761 | [Bill Text](#) | [Fact Sheet](#) | [Press Release](#) | Signed into law on November 25, 2025

FISCAL YEAR 2026 BUDGET POLICY PROVISION ON RESIDENTIAL BROKERS' FEES

Requires any residential broker fee to be paid by the party that reaches out to the broker, ensuring that landlords do not initiate contact and then pass fees on to tenants.

Bill H.4240 | [Bill Text](#) | [Fact Sheet](#) | [Press Release](#) | Signed into law on July 4, 2025

FISCAL YEAR 2025 SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET FUNDING FOR MBTA INCOME-ELIGIBLE REDUCED FARE PROGRAM

Supports low-income public transit riders with lower incomes with an investment of \$20 million in Fair Share funding for the MBTA's income-eligible reduced fare program.

Bill H.4227 | [Bill Text](#) | [Fact Sheet](#) | [Press Release](#) | Signed into law on June 24, 2025

MassSenate

2025–2026 SESSION IN REVIEW HIGHLIGHTS

Affordability

In Final Deliberations

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BOND BILL PROVISIONS ON INCREASING ACCESS TO HOUSING

Includes a robust collection of housing provisions to spur production and lower housing costs:

- Allows two-family homes on all residentially-zoned lots, subject to reasonable local limitations;
- Creates a new, easier process for converting commercial properties into residential units;
- Requires timely review processes for housing construction projects;
- Provides incentives to communities building housing;
- Helps increase the number of home inspectors;
- Doubles MassDevelopment loan caps to support housing construction.

Bill S.3228 | [Bill Text](#) | [Fact Sheet](#) | [Press Release](#) | Passed by the Senate on July 23, 2026

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BOND BILL PROVISION ON AN AFFORDABLE HOMEOWNERSHIP PILOT

Supports the development and construction of permanently affordable homeownership units by aiding the creation of a pilot program. Authorizes \$2.5 million to fund the creation of units for low- and moderate-income households, including units within mixed-use developments.

Bill S.3228 | [Bill Text](#) | [Fact Sheet](#) | [Press Release](#) | Passed by the Senate on July 23, 2026

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BOND BILL PROVISION ON MUNICIPAL TAX RELIEF

Gives cities and towns the option of providing enhanced tax relief in the form of a rebate to taxpayers with low or middle incomes who already receive the residential tax exemption. Creates an additional tool on top of the established residential exemption, which gives property tax relief to local residents by shifting more of the residential tax burden onto vacation homes and investment properties.

Bill S.3228 | [Bill Text](#) | [Fact Sheet](#) | [Press Release](#) | Passed by the Senate on July 23, 2026

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BOND BILL PROVISION ON PREDATORY TICKET SCALPING

Institutes a 110 per cent cap on prices charged by ticket resale platforms for music concert tickets.

Bill S.3228 | [Bill Text](#) | [Fact Sheet](#) | [Press Release](#) | Passed by the Senate on July 23, 2026

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BOND BILL PROVISION ON CRYPTOCURRENCY ATM MISUSE

Responds to the use of cryptocurrency kiosks as tools in predatory scams by fully banning the operation of such kiosks in Massachusetts. Scammers in recent years have directed older adults to use crypto kiosks to send money which is often not recoverable when the fraud is discovered, leading some seniors to lose their entire life savings.

Bill S.3228 | [Bill Text](#) | [Fact Sheet](#) | [Press Release](#) | Passed by the Senate on July 23, 2026

MassSenate

2025–2026 SESSION IN REVIEW HIGHLIGHTS

Affordability

In Final Deliberations

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BOND BILL PROVISION ON FINANCIAL SCAM PROTECTION

Combats increasingly-sophisticated financial scams and strengthens protections for adults over the age of 60 and people with disabilities by giving banks, credit unions, investment advisors, and broker-dealers the tools to identify and prevent financial exploitation.

Bill S.3228 | [Bill Text](#) | [Fact Sheet](#) | [Press Release](#) | Passed by the Senate on July 23, 2026

AN ACT TO SAVE PEOPLE MONEY, REPAIR THE CLIMATE AND GROW THE ECONOMY

Cuts monthly electric and gas bills by eliminating extra fees and volatile price spikes, innovates cheaper and cleaner energy solutions, and avoids unnecessary and expensive infrastructure projects that have driven up rates.

Bill S.3143 | [Bill Text](#) | [Fact Sheet](#) | [Press Release](#) | Passed by the Senate on July 1, 2026

AN ACT RELATIVE TO PRIMARY CARE FOR YOU

Requires health care providers and insurers to invest more heavily in primary care services. Additionally, it ensures fairer compensation for community health centers, which serve as the frontline of primary care for many residents, and grows Massachusetts' primary care workforce by unlocking matching federal funds to train and recruit more primary care doctors.

Bill S.3116 | [Bill Text](#) | [Fact Sheet](#) | [Press Release](#) | Passed by the Senate on June 18, 2026

AN ACT RELATIVE TO BENEFITS FOR TEACHERS

Allows longtime public school teachers the opportunity to buy into an enhanced savings program if they missed out when the program was first launched a quarter century ago.

Bill S.3109 | [Bill Text](#) | [Fact Sheet](#) | [Press Release](#) | Passed by the Senate on June 4, 2026

Passed by the Senate

AN ACT RELATIVE TO VETERAN PROPERTY TAX WORK-OFF

Bolsters the targeted tax relief offered to veterans and spouses of deceased or disabled veterans by allowing them to reduce their property taxes by up to \$2,000 per year in exchange for providing volunteer services to their municipality, an increase from the current \$1,500 cap, under a provision local governments can choose to adopt.

Bill S.1948 | [Bill Text](#) | [Press Release](#) | Passed by the Senate on January 15, 2026

AN ACT AUTHORIZING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A MEAN TESTED SENIOR CITIZEN PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTION

Creates a statewide property tax exemption program for eligible seniors in participating communities. Municipalities would be able to opt in or out of the senior citizen property tax exemption by a vote of their town meeting, city council, or other local legislative body. Makes relief available, in participating communities, to seniors who are age 65 or older, own and occupy the eligible property, have lived there for at least the last ten years, and meet certain financial requirements. Allows municipality to set the annual amount for their local senior tax exemption, which would be spread proportionally across the town or city's residential tax levy.

Bill S.2902 | [Bill Text](#) | [Fact Sheet](#) | [Press Release](#) | Passed by the Senate on January 15, 2026

MassSenate

2025–2026 SESSION IN REVIEW HIGHLIGHTS

Affordability

Passed by the Senate

AN ACT TO PREVENT PROPERTY TAX BILL SHOCKS

Gives cities and towns the ability to shield taxpayers aged 65 and older who own and occupy their home, enrolled in MassHealth, or living with children under age six from the shock of an extraordinarily high tax bill in a year when the community's residential property tax levy rises by more than 10 per cent. Gives cities and towns the further option of expanding eligibility to cover people with children under the age of 18.

Bill S.2917 | [Bill Text](#) | [Fact Sheet](#) | [Press Release](#) | Passed by the Senate on January 15, 2026

AN ACT RELATIVE TO MUNICIPAL TAX RELIEF

Gives cities and towns the option of issuing a rebate to eligible taxpayers who received the residential tax exemption in the prior fiscal year. Requires that the rebate amount be the same for all eligible taxpayers. Allows cities and towns to determine their residents' eligibility and set their own thresholds around assets, income, or other factors. Boosts the existing senior property tax exemption by giving municipalities the option of further expanding eligibility and raising the limit of possible exemption from \$500 to \$1,500.

Bill S.2915 | [Bill Text](#) | [Fact Sheet](#) | [Press Release](#) | Passed by the Senate on January 15, 2026

AN ACT RELATIVE TO SENIOR PROPERTY TAX DEFERRAL

Expands eligibility for the Senior Tax Deferral program by lowering eligibility to seven years of state residency. Gives more time to heirs to plan for and pay the deferred taxes by delaying an increase in the interest rate for deferred taxes until a year after the taxpayer's death and delaying the date on which a foreclosure petition may be filed until 18 months after their death. Prioritizes current military servicemembers by ensuring that these interest rate and lien changes are mirrored in an existing property tax deferral for active members of the military.

Bill S.2914 | [Bill Text](#) | [Fact Sheet](#) | [Press Release](#) | Passed by the Senate on January 15, 2026

FISCAL YEAR 2026 BUDGET POLICY PROVISION ON EMPLOYEE RETIREMENT SAVINGS

Helps thousands of private sector workers prepare for a secure retirement by creating a statewide retirement savings program for employees whose workplaces do not otherwise provide access to a savings plan.

Bill H.4240 | [Bill Text](#) | [Fact Sheet](#) | [Press Release](#) | Passed by the Senate on June 30, 2025

AN ACT RELATIVE TO FAIRNESS IN DEBT COLLECTION

Protects against predatory debt collection practices by limiting how long consumer debts can be collected, adding transparency to the process, and ensuring people can keep more of their wages.

Bill S.2559 | [Bill Text](#) | [Fact Sheet](#) | [Press Release](#) | Passed by the Senate on July 17, 2025

MassSenate

2025–2026 SESSION IN REVIEW HIGHLIGHTS

Housing Accessibility and Affordability

Across Massachusetts, residents are struggling with rising housing costs—and many, especially young people, worry about whether they can build a future here. In response, the Massachusetts Senate has ***made housing a central focus of its legislative agenda***, embedding ***key policies and funding across major bills and budgets***.

Building More Housing

We prioritized policies that make it faster, more predictable, and more financially feasible to build new housing. Major permitting reforms stabilize zoning rules from the moment a building permit application is filed through the completion of construction, preventing projects from being derailed by midstream regulatory changes. We also strengthened environmental permitting efficiency, expediting wetlands reviews while maintaining strong safeguards.

Our Economic Development Bond Bill expands housing production tools even more, requiring automatic two-family zoning and enabling easier commercial-to-residential conversions, among other things.

Finally, cutting the sales tax on certain building materials lowers construction costs in the face of tariffs, helping more projects move forward. Over time, that means more apartments and homes being built.

Keeping Housing Affordable

We also worked to create far more housing that people can actually afford. A package of tax-relief tools gives cities and towns the ability to reduce property tax costs and put savings directly into residents' pockets.

By doubling and tripling key housing funds, the state can build more affordable homes and renovate older ones, increasing the number of places where residents can live without being priced out. By investing billions to modernize and upgrade public housing, the Senate is making sure that tens of thousands of older residents, families, and people with disabilities can continue living in safe, healthy homes.

Fighting for Renters

We advanced several measures that support renters and strengthen the multifamily housing market. We created construction sales tax relief for multifamily developments serving low-, moderate-, and middle-income residents—lowering costs for projects that produce rental homes.

We also got rid of unfair broker fees, saving thousands of dollars for renters hoping to find that new apartment.



MassSenate

2025–2026 SESSION IN REVIEW HIGHLIGHTS

Housing Accessibility and Affordability

Signed Into Law

FISCAL YEAR 2027 BUDGET POLICY PROVISIONS ON STREAMLINED LOCAL HOUSING PERMITTING

Includes numerous provisions to streamline local housing permitting, intended to boost new housing production in Massachusetts. These updates reflect the Senate’s ongoing commitment to making Massachusetts more affordable for families and young adults, as well as progress following the Legislature’s passage of the Affordable Homes Act in 2024:

- Makes it easier for homeowners and developers to work with buildings or properties that do not fully meet current zoning rules because they were built under older codes;
- Requires local permitting authorities to account for the ‘public interest’ in housing production as a factor when considering whether to grant a variance;
- Locks zoning rules in place at the time a building permit application is filed and vests them throughout the building process so that projects are not jeopardized by changing rules midway through the project;
- Provides reasonable timelines for projects to proceed under existing zoning rules; and
- Modernizes the variance standard.

Bill H.5555 | [Bill Text](#) | [Fact Sheet](#) | [Press Release](#) | Signed into law on July 9, 2026

FISCAL YEAR 2026 CONSOLIDATED SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET PROVISION ON HOUSING CONSTRUCTION

Creates a new sales tax exemption to foster multifamily housing production and combat the negative impact of tariffs and inflation on housing development in Massachusetts. Applies to the sales of building materials used in the construction of approved affordable, moderate income, and middle-income housing projects, capped at \$35 million per year. Follows the Senate’s action through the Fiscal Year 2026 budget to study the removal of the sales tax for certain housing supply items.

Bill H.5470 | [Bill Text](#) | [Fact Sheet](#) | Signed into law on June 12, 2026

Bill H.4240 | [Bill Text](#) | [Fact Sheet](#) | [Press Release](#) | Signed into law on July 4, 2025

FISCAL YEAR 2026 BUDGET POLICY PROVISION ON RESIDENTIAL BROKERS’ FEES

Requires any residential broker fee to be paid by the party that reaches out to the broker, ensuring that landlords do not initiate contact and then pass fees on to tenants.

Bill H.4240 | [Bill Text](#) | [Fact Sheet](#) | [Press Release](#) | Signed into law on July 4, 2025

FISCAL YEAR 2026 BUDGET FUNDING FOR FIRST-GENERATION HOMEBUYERS

Provides \$500,000 to provide a matched-savings program, financial literacy, and homebuyer education for long-term home ownership stability and to assist first-generation homebuyers through the Saving Towards Affordable and Sustainable Homeownership program.

Bill H.4240 | [Bill Text](#) | [Fact Sheet](#) | [Press Release](#) | Signed into law on July 4, 2025

FISCAL YEAR 2025 SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET POLICY PROVISION ON EVICTION AND FORECLOSURE

Protects furloughed or otherwise unpaid federal employees from residential eviction or foreclosure during and immediately after any federal shutdown.

Bill H.4761 | [Bill Text](#) | [Fact Sheet](#) | [Press Release](#) | Signed into law on November 25, 2025

MassSenate

2025–2026 SESSION IN REVIEW HIGHLIGHTS

Housing Accessibility and Affordability

Signed Into Law

FISCAL YEAR 2025 SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET PROVISION FOR EMERGENCY HOUSING ASSISTANCE

Provides \$425 million to support emergency housing assistance for unhoused families across the Commonwealth. Adds cost controls and reporting mechanisms to ensure the responsible use of taxpayer dollars, while continuing to fund a system that serves Massachusetts mothers, fathers, and children in crisis.

Bill H.58 | [Bill Text](#) | [Fact Sheet](#) | [Press Release](#) | Signed into law on February 28, 2025

In Final Deliberations

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BOND BILL PROVISIONS ON INCREASING ACCESS TO HOUSING

Includes a robust collection of housing provisions to spur production and lower housing costs:

- Allows two-family homes on all residentially-zoned lots, subject to reasonable local limitations;
- Creates a new, easier process for converting commercial properties into residential units;
- Requires timely review processes for housing construction projects;
- Provides incentives to communities building housing;
- Helps increase the number of home inspectors;
- Doubles MassDevelopment loan caps to support housing construction.

Bill S.3228 | [Bill Text](#) | [Fact Sheet](#) | [Press Release](#) | Passed by the Senate on July 23, 2026

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BOND BILL PROVISION ON AN AFFORDABLE HOMEOWNERSHIP PILOT

Supports the development and construction of permanently affordable homeownership units by aiding the creation of a pilot program. Authorizes \$2.5 million to fund the creation of units for low- and moderate-income households, including units within mixed-use developments.

Bill S.3228 | [Bill Text](#) | [Fact Sheet](#) | [Press Release](#) | Passed by the Senate on July 23, 2026

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BOND BILL PROVISION ON MUNICIPAL TAX RELIEF

Gives cities and towns the option of providing enhanced tax relief in the form of a rebate to taxpayers with low or middle incomes who already receive the residential tax exemption. Creates an additional tool on top of the established residential exemption, which gives property tax relief to local residents by shifting more of the residential tax burden onto vacation homes and investment properties.

Bill S.3228 | [Bill Text](#) | [Fact Sheet](#) | [Press Release](#) | Passed by the Senate on July 23, 2026

ENERGY AFFORDABILITY BILL SECTION ON BUILDING ENERGY CODE

Locks in the energy code for developers at the time they file a building project's permit application, so that code changes do not interrupt a project midway through development.

Bill S.3143 | [Bill Text](#) | [Fact Sheet](#) | [Press Release](#) | Passed by the Senate on July 1, 2026

ENVIRONMENTAL BOND BILL PROVISION ON STREAMLINED ENVIRONMENTAL PERMITTING

Reforms permitting requirements to reduce timelines for qualifying projects, contingent on meeting robust standards—seeking to align Massachusetts' rigorous protections with a more efficient review process.

Bill S.3064 | [Bill Text](#) | [Fact Sheet](#) | [Press Release](#) | Passed by the Senate on April 15, 2026

MassSenate

2025–2026 SESSION IN REVIEW HIGHLIGHTS

Housing Accessibility and Affordability

In Final Deliberations

ENVIRONMENTAL BOND BILL PROVISION ON HOME BUYING PROTECTIONS

Requires that home sellers and landlords inform prospective homebuyers and tenants about the flood risk of a residential property, along with any history of flooding on the property.

Bill S.3064 | [Bill Text](#) | [Fact Sheet](#) | [Press Release](#) | Passed by the Senate on April 15, 2026

Passed by the Senate

AN ACT RELATIVE TO VETERAN PROPERTY TAX WORK-OFF

Bolsters the targeted tax relief offered to veterans and spouses of deceased or disabled veterans by allowing them to reduce their property taxes by up to \$2,000 per year in exchange for providing volunteer services to their municipality, an increase from the current \$1,500 cap, under a provision local governments can choose to adopt.

Bill S.1948 | [Bill Text](#) | [Press Release](#) | Passed by the Senate on January 15, 2026

AN ACT TO PREVENT PROPERTY TAX BILL SHOCKS

Gives cities and towns the ability to shield taxpayers aged 65 and older who own and occupy their home, enrolled in MassHealth, or living with children under age six from the shock of an extraordinarily high tax bill in a year when the community's residential property tax levy rises by more than 10 per cent. Gives cities and towns the further option of expanding eligibility to cover people with children under the age of 18.

Bill S.2917 | [Bill Text](#) | [Fact Sheet](#) | [Press Release](#) | Passed by the Senate on January 15, 2026

AN ACT AUTHORIZING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A MEAN TESTED SENIOR CITIZEN PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTION

Creates a statewide property tax exemption program for eligible seniors in participating communities. Municipalities would be able to opt in or out of the senior citizen property tax exemption by a vote of their town meeting, city council, or other local legislative body. Makes relief available, in participating communities, to seniors who are age 65 or older, own and occupy the eligible property, have lived there for at least the last ten years, and meet certain financial requirements. Allows municipality to set the annual amount for their local senior tax exemption, which would be spread proportionally across the town or city's residential tax levy.

Bill S.2902 | [Bill Text](#) | [Fact Sheet](#) | [Press Release](#) | Passed by the Senate on January 15, 2026

AN ACT RELATIVE TO MUNICIPAL TAX RELIEF

Gives cities and towns the option of issuing a rebate to eligible taxpayers who received the residential tax exemption in the prior fiscal year. Requires that the rebate amount be the same for all eligible taxpayers. Allows cities and towns to determine their residents' eligibility and set their own thresholds around assets, income, or other factors. Boosts the existing senior property tax exemption by giving municipalities the option of further expanding eligibility and raising the limit of possible exemption from \$500 to \$1,500.

Bill S.2915 | [Bill Text](#) | [Fact Sheet](#) | [Press Release](#) | Passed by the Senate on January 15, 2026

AN ACT RELATIVE TO SENIOR PROPERTY TAX DEFERRAL

Expands eligibility for the Senior Tax Deferral program by lowering eligibility to seven years of state residency. Gives more time to heirs to plan for and pay the deferred taxes by delaying an increase in the interest rate for deferred taxes until a year after the taxpayer's death and delaying the date on which a foreclosure petition may be filed until 18 months after their death. Prioritizes current military servicemembers by ensuring that these interest rate and lien changes are mirrored in an existing property tax deferral for active members of the military.

Bill S.2914 | [Bill Text](#) | [Fact Sheet](#) | [Press Release](#) | Passed by the Senate on January 15, 2026

MassSenate

2025–2026 SESSION IN REVIEW HIGHLIGHTS

Government Transparency & Accountability

The Massachusetts Senate has undertaken a wide-ranging set of reforms aimed at ***strengthening transparency, accountability, and efficiency across state government***, reflecting a commitment to ensuring residents have clearer insight into public decision-making and fiscal stewardship.

Expanding Public Records Access

Under our bill, the Senate, House and Governor would be explicitly required to comply with public records requests for the first time. We mandate disclosure of legislative records including voting histories, salary information, ethics filings, operating expenditures, and specific categories of contracts. We also create an independent appeals process to help members of the public resolve disputes over access.



Strengthening Transparency Through Updated Senate Rules

In our Senate rules, we require the publication of all committee votes taken by Senators in joint and Senate-only committees. We also mandate that written and in-person testimony submitted to committees be made publicly available online; direct committees to publish plain-language bill summaries online; and require cybersecurity training for all Senators and staff in addition to ethics, harassment, and implicit bias training mandates.

Reforming Joint Rules for Efficiency and Accessibility

The Legislature adopted comprehensive joint rules this session that modernize and streamline lawmaking. We require committees to post plain language bill summaries online, provide earlier public notice of hearings, and publish committee attendance and voting records. These reforms empower committees to take independent action on bills originating from their respective chambers while allowing formal lawmaking to continue throughout the full two-year session—providing greater flexibility and more time for thoughtful policymaking.

Balancing Constitutional Safeguards with Legislative Accountability

In response to a Supreme Judicial Court order, we adopted a resolution to provide documents related to our financial operations in four requested areas to the Office of the State Auditor. We also created a new public web page to provide real-time financial data to the public.

Promoting Long-Term Stability and Fiscal Oversight

We continued to make significant fiscal decisions aimed at improving long-term efficiency and stability. The final Fiscal Year 2027 budget dedicates an additional \$51 million to the Commonwealth's Stabilization Fund, raising its balance to a historic \$8.2 billion. We also took steps to strengthen fiscal oversight of some aspects of state government to ensure responsible stewardship of public resources while enhancing transparency. And we did it all without raising taxes or fees.

MassSenate

2025–2026 SESSION IN REVIEW HIGHLIGHTS

Government Transparency & Accountability

Signed Into Law

FISCAL YEAR 2027 BUDGET FUNDING FOR STABILIZATION FUND

Adds \$51 million to the state's 'Rainy Day' Stabilization Fund, which is projected to reach a historic \$8.2 billion balance by the end of Fiscal Year 2027.

Bill H.5555 | [Bill Text](#) | [Fact Sheet](#) | [Press Release](#) | Signed into law on July 9, 2026

FISCAL YEAR 2025 CLOSEOUT SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET POLICY PROVISION ON SHERIFFS

Directs an investigation into sheriffs' Fiscal Year 2025 spending deficits to include analyses of compliance with state finance law, spending on programs that are outside-required operations, and payroll changes over time. Funds no-cost phone calls program and Section 35 treatment programs for people with alcohol and substance use and withholds funding the remainder of the sheriffs' deficit until the Inspector General (IG) reports on sheriff spending. The IG issued a final report on June 1, 2026.

Bill H.4761 | [Bill Text](#) | [Press Release](#) | Signed into law on November 25, 2025

AN ACT RELATIVE TO THE 2026 STATE PRIMARY ELECTION DATE

Sets the 2026 state primary election date for Tuesday, September 1, 2026; ensures the primary date complies with state and federal requirements and that local clerks are given necessary time to send and process vote-by-mail ballots for Massachusetts residents; gives election officials the ability to meet a required federal timeline for sending ballots to military servicemembers and citizens overseas.

Bill H.4531 | [Bill Text](#) | [Press Release](#) | Signed into law on September 23, 2025

FISCAL YEAR 2026 BUDGET FUNDING FOR STABILIZATION FUND

Invests \$33 million in the Stabilization Fund. Since 2017, when the Fund's balance was \$1.3 billion, the Legislature has grown the account by 523 per cent as of FY24.

Bill H.4240 | [Bill Text](#) | [Fact Sheet](#) | [Press Release](#) | Signed into law on July 4, 2025

JOINT RULES OF THE 194TH GENERAL COURT

Ensures committee votes are made available online, sets earlier deadlines for committee reports, requires publicly posted bill summaries, and requires added review time for conference committee reports. Gives members of the public lengthier notice periods ahead of hearings and guaranteed livestream access.

[Joint Rules Text](#) | [Fact Sheet](#) | [Press Release](#) | Adopted on June 26, 2025

AN ACT EXTENDING CERTAIN COVID-19 MEASURES ADOPTED DURING THE STATE OF EMERGENCY

Extends the hybrid public meeting option, allowing cities and towns to offer remote participation through June 2027. The extension applies to public bodies and representative town meetings. Hybrid meetings enable more civic participation by residents who otherwise might have limited access to public meetings.

Bill H.62 | [Bill Text](#) | [Press Release](#) | Signed into law on March 28, 2025

SENATE RULES FOR THE 194TH GENERAL COURT

Improves transparency, public participation, and efficiency by making committee votes and testimony publicly accessible online, requiring bill summaries to be posted by the Ways and Means Committee, and mandating regular cybersecurity training for all Senators and staff.

[Senate Rules Text](#) | [Fact Sheet](#) | Adopted on February 13, 2025

MassSenate

2025–2026 SESSION IN REVIEW HIGHLIGHTS

Government Transparency & Accountability

In Final Deliberations

AN ACT PROMOTING TRANSPARENCY AND PUBLIC ACCESS IN STATE GOVERNMENT

Promotes freedom of information in the Executive and Legislative branches of government by providing new, greater levels of access to public records that are created by the Governor’s Office, the Senate, and the House of Representatives. The transparency measures would take effect at the start of the new term in January 2027.

Bill H.5469 | [Bill Text](#) | [Fact Sheet](#) | [Press Release](#) | Passed by the Senate on July 30, 2026

AN ACT IMPROVING CAMPAIGN FINANCE REPORTING BY STATE BALLOT QUESTION COMMITTEES

Brings accountability to ballot question campaigns and holds them to the same standard of disclosure already followed by candidates for office. The legislation would remedy a current void of nearly a year leading up to an election during which the ballot question campaigns are not required to report any financial data in a timely manner.

Bill S.2898 | [Bill Text](#) | [Press Release](#) | Passed by the Senate on January 15, 2026

Passed by the Senate

RESOLUTIONS RESPONDING TO THE SUPREME JUDICIAL COURT’S ORDER OF MAY 7, 2026, AND ENHANCING GOVERNMENT TRANSPARENCY

Affirmed the Senate’s intention to provide the Office of the State Auditor with documents related to its financial operations in response to the Supreme Judicial Court’s order on May 7, 2026, which specified that the Auditor’s request was limited to four Senate-specific financial areas: budgets, audits, balance-forward transactions, and monetary settlement agreements. The Senate committed to sharing these records while reserving its constitutional rights, particularly regarding the separation of powers. The resolution covers fiscal years FY21 through FY24

Resolution S.3104 | [Resolution Text](#) | Passed by the Senate on May 28, 2026

MassSenate

2025–2026 SESSION IN REVIEW HIGHLIGHTS

Response 2025: Protecting our Residents and Defending our Values

In response to federal actions under the second Trump Administration that threaten critical programs and institutions in Massachusetts, we launched our **Response 2025** initiative this session, a coordinated effort to **protect our residents, defend our values, and lead Massachusetts through a difficult time.**



The **Senate Committee on Steering and Policy** led this effort, working closely with Senate committee chairs and policy experts. Response 2025 focused on four key goals:

- ✓ Assessing federal actions to determine their real-world impact on Massachusetts.
- ✓ Identifying policy solutions to mitigate potential harm and safeguard residents.
- ✓ Prioritizing state responses based on need, feasibility, and effectiveness.
- ✓ Providing clarity to the public by cutting through misinformation and helping residents understand the state's role in protecting their rights and services.

This effort has produced important results, including:



Passing **nation-leading protections for immigrants**, banning local law enforcement from civil immigration arrests and adding paths to hold federal officers accountable for violating rights.



Continuing our commitment to **reproductive freedom**, protecting health care providers and patients, and **preserving rights for transgender citizens** through the Shield 2.0 Act.



Counteracting costly tariffs with sales tax breaks for construction materials so **Massachusetts can continue to build much-needed housing.**



Passing one of the **nation's strongest data privacy bills**, giving consumers more control over their data, focused on protecting kids.



Defending our free press by **protecting journalists** and their constitutional right to report facts and hold institutions accountable.



Fighting back against politically motivated book bans while protecting librarians and educators from personal attacks.

MassSenate

2025–2026 SESSION IN REVIEW HIGHLIGHTS

Response 2025: Protecting our Residents and Defending our Values

Signed Into Law

AN ACT REGARDING FREE EXPRESSION

Protects freedom of thought in Massachusetts schools and public libraries and safeguards open access to books and other educational materials.

Bill S.2726 | [Bill Text](#) | [Fact Sheet](#) | [Press Release](#) | *Signed into law on August 10, 2026*

PROTECT ACT: PROMOTING RULE OF LAW, OVERSIGHT, TRUST AND EQUAL CONSTITUTIONAL TREATMENT

Protects residents from overreach by federal immigration authorities and ensures that local and state law enforcement are not involved in federal immigration enforcement. Strengthens due process protections; limits civil immigration enforcement in courthouses, public school grounds, hospitals, and other sensitive locations; expands protections for victims of crime; and increases transparency, accountability, and clarity for correctional facilities and law enforcement relative to civil immigration enforcement.

Bill H.5620 | [Bill Text](#) | [Fact Sheet](#) | [Press Release](#) | *Signed into law on August 5, 2026*

FISCAL YEAR 2027 BUDGET PROVISIONS ON FOOD AND ECONOMIC SECURITY

Provides \$56.1 million for Emergency Food Assistance, an increase of \$6.1 million over Fiscal Year 2026, and \$21.5 million for the Healthy Incentives Program (HIP), which supports local farmers and access to healthy food. Protects access to benefits through Transitional Aid to Families with Dependent Children (TAFDC) and Emergency Aid to the Elderly, Disabled and Children (EAEDC), and includes a \$500 clothing allowance per child for families receiving TAFDC benefits.

Bill H.5555 | [Bill Text](#) | [Fact Sheet](#) | [Press Release](#) | *Signed into law on July 9, 2026*

FISCAL YEAR 2026 CONSOLIDATED SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET PROVISION ON IMMIGRANT LEGAL DEFENSE

Provides \$1 million for legal services to increase access to legal representation, advice, and advocacy for immigrants and refugees who are facing enhanced legal threats from the federal government. The funding is in addition to \$5 million allocated in the FY26 budget to establish the Massachusetts Access to Counsel Initiative.

Bill H.5470 | [Bill Text](#) | [Fact Sheet](#) | *Signed into law on June 12, 2026*

FISCAL YEAR 2026 CONSOLIDATED SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET PROVISION ON TAX CHANGES

Responsibly phases in implementation of conformity with recent federal tax policy changes. Federal policies continue to cause economic uncertainty, including the federal One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OB3) signed into law last July. Mitigates near-term revenue impacts in FY26 and FY27 associated with the OB3 tax changes without sacrificing the state's competitive edge or risking cuts to programs and services that residents depend on.

Bill H.5470 | [Bill Text](#) | [Fact Sheet](#) | *Signed into law on June 12, 2026*

FISCAL YEAR 2026 CONSOLIDATED SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET PROVISION ON HOUSING CONSTRUCTION

Creates a new sales tax exemption to foster multifamily housing production and combat the negative impact of tariffs and inflation on housing development in Massachusetts. Applies to the sales of building materials used in the construction of approved affordable, moderate income, and middle-income housing projects, capped at \$35 million per year. Follows the Senate's action through the Fiscal Year 2026 budget to study the removal of the sales tax for certain housing supply items.

Bill H.5470 | [Bill Text](#) | [Fact Sheet](#) | *Signed into law on June 12, 2026*

MassSenate

2025–2026 SESSION IN REVIEW HIGHLIGHTS

Response 2025: Protecting our Residents and Defending our Values

Signed Into Law

AN ACT STRENGTHENING HEALTH CARE PROTECTIONS IN THE COMMONWEALTH

Known as the *Shield Act 2.0*, fortifies protections for those seeking and providing reproductive and transgender care.

Bill S.2543 | [Bill Text](#) | [Press Release](#) | Signed into law on August 7, 2025

FISCAL YEAR 2026 BUDGET FUNDING FOR IMMIGRANT LEGAL DEFENSE

Provides \$5 million to implement an immigration legal services program to increase access to legal representation, advice, and advocacy for immigrants and refugees who are facing enhanced legal threats from the federal government.

Bill H.4240 | [Bill Text](#) | [Fact Sheet](#) | [Press Release](#) | Signed into law on July 4, 2025

FISCAL YEAR 2025 SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET POLICY PROVISION ON THE RIGHTS OF SCHOOLCHILDREN

Codifies protections for K-12 students who are English language learners.

Bill S.2575 | [Bill Text](#) | [Fact Sheet](#) | [Press Release](#) | Signed into law on August 5, 2025

FISCAL YEAR 2025 SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET POLICY PROVISION ON IMPERSONATION OF AN OFFICER

Criminalizes the impersonation of a federal officer and increases penalties for impersonating a public official, including a federal officer.

Bill H.4761 | [Bill Text](#) | [Fact Sheet](#) | [Press Release](#) | Signed into law on November 25, 2025

FISCAL YEAR 2025 SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET FUNDING FOR MEDICAID OUTREACH

Allocates \$10 million to Health Care For All (HCFA) for a new outreach and education campaign on Medicaid work reporting requirements.

Bill H.4761 | [Bill Text](#) | [Fact Sheet](#) | [Press Release](#) | Signed into law on November 25, 2025

FISCAL YEAR 2025 SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET POLICY PROVISION ON IMMUNIZATION STANDARDS

Grants authority to the Department of Public Health (DPH) Commissioner to determine routine childhood immunizations and vaccination schedules rather than relying on the recommendations of the CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices.

Bill H.4761 | [Bill Text](#) | [Fact Sheet](#) | [Press Release](#) | Signed into law on November 25, 2025

FISCAL YEAR 2025 SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET POLICY PROVISION ON EVICTION AND FORECLOSURE

Protects furloughed or otherwise unpaid federal employees from residential eviction or foreclosure during and immediately after any federal shutdown.

Bill H.4761 | [Bill Text](#) | [Fact Sheet](#) | [Press Release](#) | Signed into law on November 25, 2025

FISCAL YEAR 2025 SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET FUNDING FOR SNAP Provides \$10 million for operational and technical enhancements at the Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA) to improve recipients' access to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits with the aim of forestalling harmful federal cuts.

Bill H.4761 | [Bill Text](#) | [Fact Sheet](#) | [Press Release](#) | Signed into law on November 25, 2025

MassSenate

2025–2026 SESSION IN REVIEW HIGHLIGHTS

Response 2025: Protecting our Residents and Defending our Values

In Final Deliberations

TRANSPARENCY AND PUBLIC ACCESS IN STATE GOVERNMENT PROVISION ON PRESS PROTECTION

Guarantees legal protections for journalists by allowing them to protect the anonymity of their sources. The ‘press shield’ provision would prohibit anyone from compelling a journalist to disclose the identity of a confidential source except under certain qualified circumstances.

Bill H.5469 | [Bill Text](#) | [Fact Sheet](#) | [Press Release](#) | Passed by the Senate on July 30, 2026

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BOND BILL PROVISION PROTECTING UNIONS AND WORKERS

Initiates a trigger for state-level labor protections that are consistent with existing federal labor law, in the face of the federal government’s ongoing assault on labor rights and organized labor.

Bill S.3228 | [Bill Text](#) | [Fact Sheet](#) | [Press Release](#) | Passed by the Senate on July 24, 2026

AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE MASSACHUSETTS DATA PRIVACY ACT

Establishes clear rights for Massachusetts residents regarding their personal data, including the right to know what information is being collected and the ability to opt out of having their data used for targeted advertising or sold to other companies.

Bill S.2619 | [Bill Text](#) | [Fact Sheet](#) | [Press Release](#) | Passed by the Senate on September 25, 2025

Passed by the Senate

FISCAL YEAR 2027 BUDGET PROVISION ON MUSEUM OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY

Appropriates \$1 million to help the Museum of African American History continue its work in the face of the Trump administration’s pressure to sanitize the way in which American history is told and recorded. The museum, with two campuses and its Black Heritage Trails, is committed to ‘connecting colonial and early African American history & culture in Boston and the larger New England area with the abolition of slavery and current explorations of race and the struggle for human rights.’

Bill H.5555 | [Bill Text](#) | [Fact Sheet](#) | [Press Release](#) | Passed by the Senate on May 21, 2026

AN ACT TO ENHANCE ACCESS, INCLUSION, SUPPORT AND EQUITY FOR MILITARY CONNECTED FAMILIES

Provides enhanced safety, stability and educational opportunities for military families.

Bill S.2709 | [Bill Text](#) | [Fact Sheet](#) | [Press Release](#) | Passed by the Senate on November 6, 2025

AN ACT CLARIFYING THE DUTIES OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL

Ensures a clear chain of command exists within the National Guard and that National Guard members receive training on how to identify whether orders violate Constitutional or statutory rights.

Bill S.2708 | [Bill Text](#) | [Fact Sheet](#) | [Press Release](#) | Passed by the Senate on November 6, 2025

MassSenate

2025–2026 SESSION IN REVIEW HIGHLIGHTS

Response 2025: Protecting our Residents and Defending our Values

Passed by the Senate

FISCAL YEAR 2025 SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET POLICY PROVISION ON NAME-CHANGE PETITIONS

Removing the automatic requirement of a public legal notice for name-change petitions filed in court.

Bill H.4761 | [Bill Text](#) | [Fact Sheet](#) | [Press Release](#) | Passed by the Senate on October 23, 2025

AN ACT AMENDING CERTAIN ARCHAIC LAWS

Removes offensive language from state statutes and repeals outdated, unconstitutional laws that impinge upon individuals' civil rights.

Bill S.2564 | [Bill Text](#) | [Fact Sheet](#) | [Press Release](#) | Passed by the Senate on July 24, 2025