

2013-2014 Legislative Session MAPC Highlights (chronological order)

An Act financing improvements to the Commonwealth's transportation system (Chapter 18 of the Acts of 2013)

- One year transportation bond bill including Chapter 90 funding

An Act relative to transportation finance (Chapter 46 of the Acts of 2013)

- Estimated to result in up to \$800 million in transportation spending by 2018, and an average of \$600 million per year for five years.
- Dedicated motor vehicle sales tax to transportation, raised cigarette tax, applied sales tax to certain software services, raised the gas tax three cents and indexed it to inflation, mandated increased percentage of own-source revenue by transportation agencies (i.e. fares, fees, tolls, savings, etc.).
- Capped MBTA fare increases to 5% every 2 years.
- Established multiple commissions, some with RPA representation.
- Forward funded regional transit authorities.
- Required MassDOT to pay all employees out of operating budget (rather than capital budget) in two years.
- Gas-tax indexing and software tax were later repealed.

An Act financing the production and preservation of housing for low and moderate income residents (Chapter 129 of the Acts of 2013)

- Housing Bond bill authorized investments of \$1.4 billion over the next five years.
- Contained funding for many programs including Commercial Area Transit Node Housing Program (CATNHP), Early Education Capital Investment and Preservation Fund, and Low Income Housing Tax Credit
- Contained language change to Massworks statute: definition of transit-oriented development for purposes of matching grant program is now development within .5 miles of transit, not .25 miles.

An Act financing improvements to the Commonwealth's transportation system (Chapter 79 of the acts of 2014)

- Five year transportation bond bill authorizing the spending of \$13 billion.
- Authorized \$300 million for Chapter 90 spending on local roads and bridges.
- Authorized Complete Streets program for cities and towns adopting Complete Streets practices to receive additional funds; authorized for \$50 million.
- Included spending authorization for Green Line Extension and South Coast Rail
- Established an MPO study commission

An Act restoring the minimum wage and providing unemployment insurance reforms (Chapter 144 of the Acts of 2014)

- Increased minimum wage to \$11 gradually over the next three years, not indexed to inflation. Tipped workers minimum wage up to \$3.75.
- Combined with business-supported unemployment insurance reforms.

Authorized increase to the MAPC Assessment

- Ability to raise assessment to 50 cents in FY2015 included as outside section to FY2015 budget.
- MAPC Council voted to approve the increase on September 17.
- Increase translates into more than \$560,000 per year for MAPC to serve its cities and towns.

An Act relative to local housing authorities (Chapter 235 of the Acts of 2014)

- Implemented new training programs for board members and requires tenant board member seat on all boards.
- Created statewide waiting list for potential tenants (does not change tenant selection process).
- Created program to incentivize regional collaboration with four grants to regional housing authorities. Benefits include a 20% operating subsidy increase as well as ability to adopt innovative practices.
- Created series of benchmarks that housing authorities must reach; required housing authorities to produce an annual plan and undergo an annual independent audit; enabled DHCD to remove an executive director if the housing authority is chronically poor performing; required DHCD review of contracts exceeding \$100,000.
- Created 3 capital assistance teams to assist smaller authorities with construction and repairs.

An Act relative to credit for thermal energy generated with renewable fuels (Chapter 251 of the Acts of 2014)

- Lifted net metering cap on public projects to 5 percent of a utility's total power generation and 4 percent for private projects.
- Does not include other more controversial provisions such as a minimum energy bill.
- Includes a study commission on net metering to look at other changes necessary in the future.

An Act improving drinking water and wastewater infrastructure (Chapter 259 of the Acts of 2014)

- Water infrastructure finance bill authorized an additional \$50 million in bonding capacity for the Clean Water Trust (the renamed Water Pollution Abatement Trust) and placed criteria including best management practices on loans that are subsidized further than the 2% standard rate.
- Established Water Infrastructure Advisory Committee (similar to Water Infrastructure Finance Commission on which MAPC's Martin Pillsbury served).
- \$3 million for Planning and Technical Assistance Grants for communities and regional planning agencies for asset management, green infrastructure, and pollution abatement planning.
- Created program (subject to appropriation) providing matching funds to offset fees incurred when municipalities join the MWRA or another regional system.
- Established commission of stakeholders to study ways to better coordinate between municipalities and utilities.
- Created local option water infrastructure surcharge of up to 3% on property taxes.

An Act relative to the reduction of gun violence (Chapter 284 of the Acts of 2014) (Metro Mayors Priority)

- Gave police chiefs opportunity to petition court to deny an Firearms Identification Card (FID) card to someone who passed background checks.
- Brought Massachusetts into the federal background check system and created web portal to more efficiently provide background checks for private sales.
- Established new crimes and increases penalties for other gun-related crimes.
- Established new gun trafficking unit within the State Police
- Several provisions promoted suicide prevention and school safety.

An Act providing for the preservation and improvement of land, parks, and clean energy in the Commonwealth (Chapter 286 of the Acts of 2014)

- Environmental Bond Bill authorized spending of \$2.2 billion spending over four years.
- Authorized funds for MAPC and CMRPC to plan a regional aqueduct trail network with the MWRA and to cities and towns for construction.
- \$10 million for Climate Change Adaptation Planning Grants, a regional adaptation management plan grant program, providing financial assistance to RPAs to develop and implement plans. Also included

climate change infrastructure grants to municipalities (\$10 million) and a coastal buyback program (\$20 million).

- Environmental Planning Funds: \$11.55 million to allow municipalities, RPAs, non-profit organizations, and other entities to plan for and assess the impacts of infrastructure investments such as road, sewer, and water projects, develop municipal master plans and open space preservations plans, advance environmental equity and promote smart growth principles, and engage the public in environmental planning efforts.
- MA Food Trust: Authorized \$2 million for healthy food access program

An Act Promoting Economic Growth Across the Commonwealth (Chapter 287 of the Acts of 2014)

- Provided \$10 million to the Brownfields Redevelopment Fund (later reduced to \$3 million).
- Expanded I-Cubed program to 8 projects per municipality and financing up to \$600 million.
- The City of Boston was granted additional liquor licenses and the authority to appoint its licensing board was transferred from the Governor to the Mayor. The cap for liquor licenses in other municipalities was not lifted.
- Modified the TIF program to make it easier for cities and towns to enter into agreements.
- Established Transformative Development Fund for technical assistance, equity investments, and collaborative workspaces in Gateway Cities (later reduced by 9C cuts). One of many provisions providing funding for workforce and economic development initiatives.

An Act to promote municipal collaboration and regionalization throughout the Commonwealth (H3822)

- Bill would incentivize regional or joint grant applications for state grants, update existing state laws regarding joint services, and establish a joint powers act that would more easily enable regional collaboration
- Engrossed in House and Senate

An Act promoting the planning and development of sustainable communities (H4065)

- Zoning reform legislation reported favorably out of committee.

An Act providing for disposition of surplus state real property based on smart growth land use policies (H2902)

- Reported favorably out of committee.

An Act providing for the establishment of a Comprehensive Adaptation Management Plan in response to climate change (S2028)

- Would require state to establish a comprehensive adaptation management plan that would guide state actions. Also refers to regional plans produced by regional planning agencies.
- Engrossed in Senate.

Budget items:

- **District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA):** Increased to \$2.8 million in FY2014 and FY2015 from \$2 million. Statewide program that enables RPAs to provide technical assistance to cities and towns
- **Shannon Grant:** Increased from \$6.25 million (FY2013) to \$7 million (FY2014) to \$8.25 million (FY2015). Anti-gang and youth violence program.
- **Brownfields Redevelopment Fund:** Received \$15 million in supplemental budget during 2014 and \$10 million in economic development bill (later reduced to \$3 million due to 9C cuts).
- **Brownfields Tax Credit:** Extended via FY2014 budget.
- **Community Innovation Challenge Grant:** \$4 million in FY2014 and \$3 million in FY2015 (later reduced via 9C cuts). Regionalization grant program.

- **Community Preservation Act:** FY2014 and FY2015 budgets sent up to \$25 million of surplus to CPA Trust Fund. \$25 million transferred in 2013 and \$11.2 million transferred in 2014.
- **Mass in Motion:** \$250,000 for the program was included in the FY2015 budget.