

Mass. Municipal Association 2023-2024 Legislative Package



Fiscal Affairs

An Act creating a Municipal and Public Safety Building Authority

[Rep. Blais – H. 3802](#) | [Sen. Comerford – S. 1489](#)

Establishes a new independent state authority to assist municipalities with construction of or improvements to public safety or municipal buildings and facilities.

An Act to allow cities and towns to increase the local tax rate on meals

[Rep. Kerans – H. 2858](#) | [Sen. Eldridge – S. 1800](#)

Allows municipalities to adopt an increase to their local meals tax. Currently, municipalities can adopt a local tax of .75% and this bill would allow, by local option, municipalities to adopt an additional .75% tax for a new total of 1.5%.

An Act relative to a local option excise on the sale of alcoholic beverages for municipal substance abuse prevention and public health programs

[Sen. Creem – S. 1773](#)

Allows cities and towns the option to adopt a sales tax of up to 2% on the retail sale of alcoholic beverages to support local substance abuse and public health programs.

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Energy & Environment

An Act providing for the establishment of sustainable water resource funds

[Rep. Philips - H. 2099](#) | [Sen. Eldridge - S. 1293](#)

Permits water banking, a local option financing tool that will enable cities and towns to raise funds for sustainable long-term water infrastructure needs, while continuing to accommodate short-term initiatives with municipal, state, and federal funding.

An Act relative to monthly minimum reliability contributions

[Rep. Armini - H. 3135](#) | [Sen. Gobi - S. 2130](#)

Exempts municipal ratepayers, low-income ratepayers, community solar ratepayers, and owners of small-scale solar projects from having to pay a monthly minimum reliability contribution (MMRC).

An Act relative to paint recycling

[Rep. Haddad - H. 823](#) | [Sen. O'Connor - S. 551](#)

Establishes manufacturer responsibility for end-of-life recycling of paint, which can be safely and sustainably diverted from the waste stream.

An Act protecting wastewater and sewerage systems through the labeling of non-flushable wipes

[Rep. Garballey & Rep. Owens - H. 805](#) | [Sen. Eldridge - S. 480](#)

Requires manufacturers of disposable products such as diaper wipes, toilet wipes, household cleaning wipes, personal care wipes and facial wipes to label wipes that do not meet performance standards for flushing as "non-flushable".

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Municipal/Regional Administration

An Act to modernize municipal meetings, town meetings, and local elections

[Sen. Oliveira - S. 2043](#) | [Rep. Driscoll - H. 3025](#) | [Sen. Gobi - S. 2011](#)

Allows for a permanent option for remote/hybrid public meetings and participation. It would also create a mechanism for municipalities with open and representative town meetings to call for remote or hybrid meetings.

An Act relative to the effective enforcement of municipal ordinances and by-laws

[Rep. Donaghue - H. 2043](#) | [Sen. Eldridge - S. 1295](#)

Provides the local option to increase the cap for civil penalties under MA General Law Chapter 40, § 21D up to \$500 per violation (from \$300) and to collect associated reasonable fees and costs.

An Act advancing equity for rural communities receiving state grants

[Rep. Pignatelli - H. 3102](#) | [Sen. Mark - S. 1977](#)

Directs all state agencies that administer grant programs to give preference to rural communities that intend to use those funds to regionalize or share services.

An Act relative to legal advertisements in on-line only newspapers

[Rep. Pignatelli - H. 1723](#) | [Sen. Velis - S. 1137](#)

Allows for online publication of legal notices to satisfy the currently costly and archaic publishing requirements, so long as the newsite it is published on does not offer a print edition.

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An Act relative to Chapter 30B procurement parity

[Rep. Vitolo - H. 3127](#) | [Sen. Lewis - S. 2019](#)

Increases the procurement cap for municipal purchases under Chapter 30B from \$50,000 to \$100,000.

An Act relative to local opt-in for permanent outdoor dining

[Sen. Tarr - S. 1325](#)

Codifies the flexibility in outdoor dining ordinances first introduced through COVID recovery legislation, allowing municipalities greater control over outdoor dining permits.

An Act expediting veterans benefits

[Rep. Kilcoyne - H. 3513](#) | [Sen. Cronin - S. 2314](#)

Streamlines the state's system for financing benefits paid to veterans consistent with the same direct payment practices adopted by other state agencies.

An Act relative to a municipality's right of first refusal of agricultural and recreational land

[Sen. Moore - S. 45](#)

Extends the timeframe within which a municipality may be given the right of first refusal to purchase agricultural, horticultural or recreational land that is intended to be sold or converted from its use.

An Act returning liquor license control to municipalities

[Rep. McKenna - H. 367](#)

Strengthens municipal control over liquor licensing, including determining the number of licenses allowed within its municipality.

An Act providing for alternative delivery of infrastructure projects

[Sen. Tarr - S. 2069](#)

Improves the procurement/bidding process for public private partnerships.

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Personnel & Labor Relations

An Act relative to the State Retiree Benefits Trust Fund board of directors

[Rep. Peisch - H. 2629](#)

Adds two seats to the State Retiree Benefits Trust Fund (SRBTF) Board of Trustees to represent municipalities and regional school districts.

An Act relative to municipal unemployment insurance reform

[Sen. Creem - S. 1151](#)

Addresses loophole in state unemployment insurance law by making certain school system employees paid through municipal budgets ineligible to collect unemployment insurance benefits when school is not in session by extending them a "reasonable assurance" of employment.

An Act relative to the structure of the Commonwealth Employment Relations Board

[Rep. Scanlon - H. 1951](#) | [Sen. Tarr - S. 1223](#)

Modifies the membership of the Commonwealth Employment Relations Board (CERB) to include management representative, a labor representative, and a neutral party.

An Act relative to civil service

[Rep. Sabadosa - H. 2652](#) | [Sen. Gobi - S. 1686](#)

Authorizes a revocation of the Civil Service statute by local option, as long as necessary documentation is provided to the Legislature.

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Transportation & Public Works

An Act relative to municipal authority in public rights of way

[Rep. Ciccolo - H. 3156](#) | [Sen. Crighton - S. 2107](#)

Increases authority in municipal rights of way and helps compliance by utility companies.

An Act to assist municipal and district ratepayers

[Rep. Roy - H. 892](#) | [Sen. Velis - S. 589](#)

Requires that a regulatory impact statement be provided when rules and regulations pertaining to water, wastewater, and/or stormwater are proposed by the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs.