

# Mass. Municipal Association 2025-2026 Legislative Package



## Fiscal Affairs

### **Municipal and Public Safety Building Authority**

[Rep. Blais - H. 2571](#) | [Sen. Comerford - S. 1650](#)

Establishes a new independent state authority to assist municipalities with the 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. Gentile - H. 3106](#) | [Rep. Kerans - H. 3158](#) | [Sen. Eldridge - S. 1972](#)

Increases the local-option sales tax on meals upon approval by vote of the local legislative body.

### **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. 1940](#)

Allows cities and towns to adopt a sales tax of up to 2% on the retail sale of alcoholic beverages, with revenue dedicated to local substance abuse/public health programs.

### **An Act relative to transparency and accountability in charter school finance**

[Rep. Cabral - H. 521](#)

This bill would cap the basic "foundation" assessment on individual cities, towns and regional school districts used to finance charter school tuition payments at the statewide average required local contribution amount calculated under Chapter 70.

### **An Act authorizing the establishment of a means tested senior citizen property tax exemption**

[Rep. Galvin - H. 3099](#) | [Sen. Lewis - S. 2036](#)

This bill would allow cities and towns to grant an additional property tax exemption to qualifying seniors, at local option

# Mass. Municipal Association 2025-2026 Legislative Package



## Energy & Environment

### **An Act providing for the establishment of sustainable water resource funds**

[Rep. Philips - H. 2324](#) | [Sen. Eldridge - S. 1443](#)

Clarifies and strengthens the authority of cities and towns to establish water, stormwater, and wastewater utility fees to support the cost of expanded or upgraded water infrastructure, protect public health, and meet federal Clean Water Act and Safe Drinking Water Act requirements and other state and federal environmental requirements.

### **An Act relative to paint recycling**

[Rep. Arciero - H. 866](#) | [Sen. O'Connor - S. 647](#)

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. 945](#) | [Sen. Eldridge - S. 589](#)

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

### **An Act to further empower local climate action**

[Rep. Barber - H. 3449](#) | [Sen. Jehlen - S. 2292](#)

Expands the Municipal Fossil-Fuel-Free Building Demonstration Program beyond the existing cap of 10 municipalities.

# Mass. Municipal Association 2025-2026 Legislative Package



## Municipal/Regional Administration

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

[Rep. Gregoire - H. 3342](#) | [Sen. Oliveira - S. 2197](#)

Codifies the current authorization under OML to allow for options for remote meetings and participation for public bodies. The bill would also allow the option of remote or hybrid participation to both representative and open town meetings.

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

[Rep. Donaghue - H. 1669](#) | [Sen. Eldridge - S. 1082](#)

Allows a municipality to increase, at local option, the cap for civil penalties under Chapter 40, Section 21D.

### **An Act advancing equity for rural communities receiving state grants**

[Rep. Davis - H. 3311](#)

Directs the Division of Local Services to work with all state agencies to assign bonus points to rural communities.

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

[Rep. Arena-DeRosa - H. 2243](#) | [Sen. Velis - S. 1279](#)

Provides more options for municipalities to satisfy the publication requirement for legal notices, including, but not limited to, publication on its own website, and/or the website of a local, regional or statewide online newspaper that does not maintain a print publication.

# Mass. Municipal Association 2025-2026 Legislative Package



## Municipal/Regional Administration (cont'd)

### **An Act relative to Chapter 30B procurement parity**

[Rep. Vitolo - H. 3436](#) | [Sen. Lewis - S. 2165](#)

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

### **An Act to streamline veterans benefits**

[Rep. Kilcoyne - H. 3859](#)

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. 66](#)

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. 437](#) | [Sen. Oliveira - S. 279](#)

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. 2222](#)

Provides an alternative to traditional project delivery systems, in order to allow for greater private sector participation in the financing and delivery of projects, offering efficiency and innovation.

# Mass. Municipal Association 2025-2026 Legislative Package



## Personnel & Labor Relations

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

[Rep. Peisch & Rep. Garballey - H. 2837](#)

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**

[Rep Jones - H.2134](#) | [Sen. Moore - S. 1359](#)

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. 2173](#) | [Sen. Tarr - S. 1372](#)

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

### **An Act clarifying the process for paying the wages of dismissed employees**

[Rep. Roy - H. 2163](#) | [Sen. Finegold - S. 1332](#)

Amends the Wage Act to allow a 15-day period to cure claims of unpaid wages following a demand letter by an employee before such complaints may be brought. Since the 2022 Supreme Judicial Court decision in Reuter v. City of Methuen, all Wage Act violations risk treble (3x) damages, regardless of whether the employer remedies the violation prior to the filing of a suit.

# Mass. Municipal Association 2025-2026 Legislative Package



## Transportation & Public Works

### **An Act relative to municipal authority in public rights of way**

[Rep. Ciccolo - H. 3462](#) | [Sen. Crighton - S. 2250](#)

This bill would give municipalities increased authority over utilities that operate in public rights of way. When utilities delay in relocating poles and wires, municipalities would have the authority to move them and to charge utilities for non-performance. The bill would also give municipalities the ability to assess fees and levy taxes on utilities that operate in public rights of way, and would give municipalities the ability to pass bylaws or ordinances related to the licensing and permitting of utilities in the right of way.

### **An Act to assist municipal and district ratepayers**

[Rep. Roy - H. 1039](#) | [Sen. Velis - S. 675](#)

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.

### **An Act relative to the use of green lights for municipal emergency management vehicles**

[Rep. Doherty - H. 2599](#) | [Sen. Tarr - S. 1768](#)

This bill would allow municipal emergency management vehicles and departments of public works vehicles to mount or display flashing, rotating or oscillating green lights to promote visibility and roadside safety and regulate use.