



# Representative Jeffrey Sánchez

## Fall 2014 Newsletter

**Dear Friends and Neighbors,**

### Legislative Topics Included:

- Domestic Violence Prevention
- Gun Violence Prevention
- Substance Abuse and Recovery
- Economic Development
- Environment
- State Public Housing

### In this newsletter:

Legislative Updates **1-2**

Public Health Committees **3**

District Updates **4-5**

Developments in the Community **6**

I hope this letter finds you well and you are enjoying the start of another school year. We wrapped up formal legislative sessions here at the State House. My staff and I have been enjoying the ability to spend more time at events and meetings in the 15<sup>th</sup> Suffolk district. It's been a great summer, and I wanted to take a moment to tell you about what we have been up to, both in the office and out in the district. In this letter you will find information about where a number of my legislative efforts and community initiative have been focused. Please have a safe and fun fall and I hope you enjoy reading about this past summer. As always, please do not hesitate to contact my office with any questions, comments, or concerns.

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours in Service,

Representative

Jeffrey Sánchez



The Governor, myself, and Senator Keenan at the signing of important legislation surrounding compounding pharmacies this summer.

## Legislative Update:

Our formal session was a busy time at the State House and in the last few months of the session I worked hard on a number of significant bills that will have a positive and lasting impact on the concerns we face in our neighborhoods and communities. My goal was to make certain that the priorities and values of our district are reflected in the laws we enacted. I am proud of our progress in creating laws that protect our rights, improve our quality of life and create new opportunities for all of us to share in the promise of a better Massachusetts. We were successful in passing groundbreaking legislation related to domestic violence, gun control and substance abuse. We reached agreements on comprehensive reforms to our state public housing, elections and campaign financing laws. We passed a groundbreaking Minimum Wage Law which will increase wages to \$10.25 within the next 3 years. We also instituted sensible Unemployment Insurance reforms to assist local businesses. We adopted a balanced 2015 state budget centered on investments to education, health and human services, housing and public safety. In addition, long-term spending plans were approved to fund critical needs in transportation, environmental protection, water management and the public information technology projects. In a rare unanimous vote of both the House and Senate, and without Gubernatorial vetoes, we successfully passed legislation to reform the practice of pharmacy compounding in Massachusetts. I engaged academia, the FDA, members of Congress, pharmacists, patient safety organizations and others in a thorough investigation into the circumstances surrounding the 2012 meningitis outbreak linked to compounding New England Compounding Center in Framingham, which led to over 60 deaths and over 700 fungal meningitis infections nationally. My investigation uncovered an industry that operated without standards or oversight from state and federal agencies, allowing compounding pharmacies to produce medications for patients without any assurance that their products met even minimal quality and safety standards. This new law will define the boundaries of safe compounding which applies strict standards to all pharmacies producing compounded drugs in Massachusetts with strong oversight.

**Join the Conversation!**

[www.jeffreysanchez.org](http://www.jeffreysanchez.org)

## Domestic Violence

The House passed domestic violence legislation which creates new crimes for domestic assault and strangulation, gives victims 15 days of leave from work to receive counseling or medical attention and creates a six-hour “cooling off” period during which anyone arrested for domestic violence would be held in custody. This legislation establishes a first offense domestic assault and battery charge. Current law includes penalties for subsequent offenses but fails to include a first offense, making the statute unenforceable. This legislation also delays bail for offenders to provide the victim with time for safety planning and authorizes the revocation of bail in certain cases.

## Gun Violence Prevention

Last year we worked hard to engage residents in our community and beyond to understand the “iron pipeline” of guns which have permeated our community. We worked to look at gun violence utilizing public health principles to understand and invest in the upstream challenges that we must tackle to stop gun violence in our community and the Commonwealth. We labored for over a year to pass comprehensive gun violence legislation which, for the first time, provides local authorities, in conjunction with the court system, an avenue to deny a firearm identification (FID) card, authorizes licensed gun dealers to access criminal offender record information (CORI) and establishes a groundwork for improving school safety. As illegal gun trafficking continues to plague many communities throughout Boston, this bill aims to enhance record-keeping efforts and takes decisive steps to curtail gun trafficking. To address any loopholes created by secondary sales, the legislation requires the Department of Criminal Justice Information Services (DCJIS) to create an online portal for private sales. This will ensure that secondary sales are subject to proper monitoring and information sharing.



## Substance Abuse and Recovery

After a compromise was reached between the House and Senate on July 31, 2014, in the House we passed legislation which was ultimately signed by the Governor into law that aims to increase opportunities for long-term substance abuse recovery in the Commonwealth by supporting a continuum of care and removing barriers that stand in the way of effective treatment. Substance abuse is a very personal yet public health crisis and we need to be there for people when they need us. This legislation will increase access and coverage to care for those who are affected by the scourge of addiction.

This law both increases access to care and improves the standard of care by removing prior authorization for substance abuse treatment if the provider is certified or licensed by the Department of Public Health. Additionally, it directs the Center for Health Information and Analysis to review the accessibility of substance abuse treatment and adequacy of insurance coverage and tasks the Health Policy Commission with recommending policies to ensure access and coverage for substance abuse treatment throughout the Commonwealth, as well as review denial rates for substance abuse treatment coverage by commercial insurers.

Speaking alongside my colleagues at a press conference in the State House following the passage of legislation surrounding substance abuse and recovery.

## Economic Development

After months of discussion, I worked with my colleagues to pass an economic development bill that included \$10 million for the Brownfield's Redevelopment Fund to encourage the development of vacant, blighted or abandoned parcels of land by providing loans and grants for environmental site assessment and cleanup. These funds have and continue to be instrumental in various development projects throughout the district to include Jackson Square in Jamaica Plain and Parcel 25 in Mission Hill. I am happy that the resources will be there when Jackson Commons and Parcel 25 move forward. The allocations made within the FY15 budget and this economic development package will allow more projects to move forward in the coming fiscal year. This legislation is intended to create jobs and spur economic development in so-called gateway cities also wound its way to the governor's desk.

## State Public Housing

Housing authority reform legislation aimed at making sure the local agencies and those in charge of public housing are properly trained and audited. As a product of Public Housing, I am acutely aware of the challenges public housing management and infrastructure face. This bill will address governance issues while at the same time seeks opportunities for communities to revitalize their state owned public housing developments.



Governor Patrick, myself, my staff and interns at the signing of "An Act Relative to Pharmacy Practice in the Commonwealth".

## District Update

### Bromley-Heath Summer Job/Camp Resource Fair

This summer I hosted a free summer camp and job sign up event for all parents and kids with-out programing with the Boston Housing Authority and the Bromley-Heath Collaborative. We had resource providers there with information on the programing that they had for the summer. We had BCYF, Big Brothers, Big Sisters of Greater Boston, Camp Harbor View, Hyde Square Task Force, ABCD and BPS Summer Arts intensive all in attendance. We were able to connect with over 50 families to link their children into either a summer camp or job for the summer.



## Back to School Jam

This year I hosted the 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Back to School Jam in three locations in my district. We partnered up with MCPHS University to bring a health resource fair to Bromley-Heath, Mission Main and the High Street Veterans housing in Brookline. This is my biggest event that I host every year and I always look forward to seeing the residents with their families. We had a great time, with over 600 residents celebrating to start of the school year. Our partners donated over 150 backpacks school supplies, water bottles and flashlights to the students that attended. The kids played musical chairs and other fun games. Thank you to MCPHS University for helping to put this event on and to all of the other resource providers that were able to come there and reach out to the residents. I hope to see you all there next year!

Pictured left: Residents during the backpack raffle at the Bromley-Heath Back to School Jam.

Pictured below: District Affairs Director Michael Baker and some of our interns grilling at Family Night at Bromley-Heath.

## Bromley-Heath Family Night

For the second year in a row I hosted a weekly barbecue in Bromley-Heath this summer. This year we called the event Family Night and partnered up with non-profits that serve the residents in the development including ABCD, Nurtury, Big Brothers, Big Sisters and JPNDC. We served food, played games, and provided information about resources in the area. This event served as a great place for community building through resident interaction. We had a great time interacting with the residents of Bromley-Heath again and my office and I are excited to continue this event next summer.



## Arborway Advisory Meeting

On June 10<sup>th</sup> my staff met to discuss recommendations on ways to improve the Arborway and other areas of Jamaica Plain with local community groups and members. It was a great way for residents to tell the Department of Conservation and Recreation, and local and state police about the problems that they experience as drivers, bikers, and pedestrians on the roadways. We discussed Kelley and Murry circles, specifically surrounding the need for crosswalks to improve safety. We will continue to work with DCR with regards to increased signage, and we are in the process of waiting for a traffic study along Centre street to help us determine the placement of crosswalks and signs.

## DACA Luncheon

This year I organized a series of meetings regarding Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) which brought together more than 42 individuals from different organizations to discuss the challenges and needs of DACA youth in the greater Boston area. DACA is a program through which U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services gives temporary lawful status to youth who entered the country before turning 16 years old. After completing an application, which includes paying a fee and showing evidence of residing in the country, the youth receive a driver's license and a work permit. The youth must renew their DACA application every two years. After welcoming all attendees at the DACA luncheon, we heard a presentation on the federal state of DACA from Attorney Elizabeth Badger and then a local overview from two leaders of the Student Immigrant Movement (SIM). The presentations were followed by an open forum where different organizations presented their concerns and ideas to work with the youth. The meeting demonstrated the existent overlap of efforts to work with this population and the potential for collaboration between organizations. The luncheon served as a platform to begin the conversation on the efforts needed to work with the youth. These meetings served to define the role of the different providers and how they can best build community and create an action plan for DACA renewal clinics. Organizations such as Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy (MIRA) Coalition, MA Law Reform Institute and Centro Presente were in attendance and are working hard to make an impact with these students who dream to do so much good in our communities.

### **John Regan from AIM Small Business Breakfast and BAPA meeting**

This spring I hosted a small business breakfast for all small business owners in my district. I was able to connect with these business owners on two issues that will be effecting them in the near future, one being the Affordable Care Act and the second being unemployment insurance. This meeting went well and by request of the Business and Professional Association (BAPA) in Jamaica Plain, we brought Mr. Regan back to answer more questions from business owners in my district.



Participants at the DACA Luncheon

### **Substance Abuse Events**

These last few months, I partnered up with non-profits in the area to host two separate substance abuse events. The first event was with the Boston Public Health Commission on April 26<sup>th</sup> and focused on education around substance abuse and proper Narcan training. This event was very informative and I would like to thank the Bromley-Heath Collaborative for helping to bring this awareness to our community.

The second event was called the Youth to Youth Substance Use BBQ. This event brought together the Roxbury/JP Substance Use Coalition with the Uprising Youth Leaders of Bromley-Heath to focus around the substance abuse issues that teens face. This event was well attended and brought together two different youth groups who are great examples of young leaders in our neighborhood.

With the increased funding from the legislature this year for substance abuse services, I hope that we can make a serious impact in Massachusetts. Drug use in our communities creates crime, ruins families and takes lives. Substance abuse is an issue that needs to be addressed on multiple levels and dealt with preventatively. I hope that these events left my constituents with a better understanding of this disease and how to help a loved one or yourself if you struggle with drug use.



## District Developments

### **Roxbury Crossing Senior Building**

I had the pleasure of working with Mission Hill Neighborhood Housing Services on the Roxbury Crossing Senior Building. We were able to leverage major State, Federal and City and Resources to make this building a reality after so many years of dedicated planning with all of our community partners. This 40 unit building will provide affordable housing opportunities for seniors and help in revitalizing Gurney street after decades of being empty contaminated lots of land at Mission Hill's gateway at Columbus and Tremont Street.

### **Mission Hill Parcel 25 Project**

This proposed project grew out of years of collaboration between Mission Hill Neighborhood Housing Services, hundreds of neighborhood residents, businesses, elected officials and neighboring institutions to revitalize the vacant and blighted parcels across from the Roxbury Crossing MBTA Station and create mixed-use, residential, retail and commercial development that will not only serve to enhance the Roxbury Crossing area of Mission Hill, but will offer new essential resources for many of the neighborhood's residents.

The Proposed Project, to be completed in three phases over a five year span, includes 98,000 gsf of residential space comprising 88 apartment units along Gurney street, 10,000 gsf of retail along Tremont street, 1,250 gsf of community space to be used for nonprofit or youth training space, and up to 196,500 of office space.

The Mission Hill neighborhood is ever-evolving, home to residents young and old alike, from all ethnicities and walks of life. Some neighbors have lived in Mission Hill their whole lives, others are just settling in. The Parcel 25 development reflects our dynamic and community-oriented neighborhood, creating essential affordable housing for elders, training and community space for youth, and retail space to bring new life to Tremont street. I will continue to work with MHNHS and all of our community to seek the resources necessary to complete this project which will add so much to our community.



**The Office of Representative Jeffrey Sánchez**

State House, Room 130 Boston, MA 02133

(617) 722-2130 Jeffrey.Sanchez @mahouse.gov