

At The State House...

Legislation

May was a busy and exciting month at the State House. The Joint Committee on Public Health considered several bills that I strongly support, including a bill that I filed regarding asthma management. Many individuals and groups came to testify in support of the bill, including representatives from the Boston Urban Asthma Coalition, Children's Hospital Boston, and the Asthma Regional Council. As you know, asthma is an issue that disproportionately affects our community and is one of the most important public health issues in the Commonwealth. In addition to my asthma management bill, the committee also heard testimony on several bills regarding health disparities in the Commonwealth.

I also testified in front of the Public Housing Committee this month on a bill that I filed regarding public housing innovation. The bill would help municipalities create greater and more equitable access to public housing. In addition to the public housing innovation bill, I submitted testimony on an additional public housing bill that I filed that would help the City of Boston leverage more municipal and state funding to ease the burden of property taxes and increase affordable housing opportunities. Both of these bills aim to make the state a more affordable place for families to live and raise their children.

The House and Senate also considered legislation in May concerning health education, children's mental health, and identity theft.

Budget

I would like to thank all of you that contacted my office regarding the budget. I value your thoughts and input. I assure you that I will keep your perspective in mind throughout the remainder of the budget process as I advocate for our community.

This past week, our colleagues in the Senate finalized their budget. The Senate joined the House in developing a budget that strongly supports issues important to our community: public health, education, public safety, and health care. The Senate budget includes improved funding for important public health initiatives including substance abuse services and teen pregnancy prevention programming. They also joined the House in making a strong commitment to the Commonwealth's education system by providing the same \$220 million in Chapter 70 funding that the House provided in its budget. The Senate echoed the House's support of public safety by including funding for the Shannon Grant and local community policing programs. Finally, the Senate stood with the House in budgeting the appropriate funds to properly implement the state's new health care reform legislation.

I encourage you to contact my office and your State Senator's office as the Legislature moves into the conference committee part of the budget process. I will continue to

advocate for the issues that matter most to our community and that I fought so hard to include in the House version of the budget.