

State Representative

Jeffrey Sánchez

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Friends and Neighbors:

Happy Spring! As we kick off the 2017-2018 legislative session, I wanted to take this moment to update you on what I'm doing to represent you in the State House.

There's a lot coming out of Washington these days. Between "alternative facts" and executive orders, it can be hard to keep up. There's also a lot of action here in Massachusetts as we figure out how to respond to the Trump Administration. From protecting our

immigrants to determining the future of healthcare, Massachusetts is at an interesting crossroads.

In April, the House takes up the state budget, where we will allocate funding for important programs that provide housing, healthcare, and legal services for our most vulnerable residents. We are also keeping a watchful eye on Washington to



understand how it affects us here in Massachusetts. In spite of the rhetoric, we will continue to foster a Commonwealth that stands up for our shared values. I look forward to having you join me.

Yours in service,



Jeffrey Sánchez
State Representative

Legislative Priorities

Healthcare

As Chair of the Joint Committee on Health Care Financing, I am charged with considering healthcare policies and their fiscal impacts. In addition to this role, I have filed and co-sponsored several pieces of healthcare-related legislation.

Office of Health Equity

Health disparities exist between racial and ethnic groups, even when health insurance coverage is equal. This legislation would establish a permanent Office of Health Equity aimed at collaborating with state agencies to address

the various factors that cause these inequalities.

Protecting Minors from

Tobacco

This legislation would improve public health by regulating e-cigarettes, including restricting the sale of these products to minors and prohibiting their use on school property.

Medical Debt

This legislation seeks to address medical debt, which has been identified as a major cause of financial distress and a prevalent barrier to healthcare access in Massachusetts, particularly for low-income consumers. Currently, almost a quarter of Massachusetts residents are unable to access care due to cost, while 18% report trouble

paying medical bills. This legislation encourages manageable payment plans for patients.

Healthcare Access

I co-sponsored two bills that address access to healthcare, including the **ACCESS Act**, which would guarantee copay-free contraceptive access for women in Massachusetts, regardless of any changes in federal policy. The **Healthy Youth Act** would ensure that, if school districts choose to offer sexuality education, it be age-appropriate and medically accurate. This bill would leave the choice up to parents about whether their children participate in school-based sexuality education.

Election Laws

Elections are our most sacred form of democracy. For this



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Thank You for Your Calls

The first month of the legislative session is a whirlwind of activity as legislators finalize bills and determine their priorities for the next two years. February 3 was the deadline to co-sponsor bills in the House, which is a way to indicate support for pieces of legislation.

Like many of my colleagues, I received an unprecedented number of phone calls, emails, and visits to my office in support of various bills. These contacts helped shape my priorities as I serve the people of Jamaica Plain, Mission Hill, Roslindale, and Brookline. If you were someone who contacted my office in the past few months, thank you for your engagement. I hope you continue to stay in touch.

Legislative Priorities (Cont'd)

(Continued from page 1)

reason, I signed on to two bills to encourage participation by the people.

Automatic Voter Registration

This bill enables voter registration agencies to consult with the Secretary of State to create an opt-out automatic voter registration system.

We the People Resolution

This legislation calls for a constitutional amendment in response to Citizens United to affirm that corporations are not people and money is not speech.

Education

Language Opportunities for Our Kids

Building on the momentum of last session, I have re-filed legislation that would increase the flexibility and quality of programs for English language learners. After implementation of a 2002 ballot initiative requiring classes be taught only in English, ELL students continue to fall behind their non-ELL classmates. In fact, only 64% of ELL students graduate high school. This bill would ensure ELL students can reach their full potential.

Housing

In the face of rising rents, the construction and maintenance of affordable housing in our neighborhoods remains a priority. For this reason, I co-sponsored several pieces of legislation to spur the creation of affordable housing.

Housing Bonding Bill

This bill would authorize \$1.7 billion in capital funding for the Affordable Housing Trust Fund, Housing Stabilization Fund, Housing Innovation Fund, and other housing programs.

Brownfields Tax Credit

I filed this bill to incentivize the construction of affordable housing by reducing the cost to

clean and build on contaminated land.

Vacancies in Foreclosed Homes

This bill would ensure stability in the foreclosure process by allowing homeowners and their families to remain in their homes and pay rent after foreclosure.

Lead Paint in Homes

I re-filed a bill from last session that would protect young children from lead paint exposure in older houses.

Immigration/Civil Rights

Since December, 53 civil rights incidents have been reported to the Attorney General's Office. Massachusetts continues to have strong LGBT non-discrimination laws despite the rollback of federal protections, but there are places we can improve. For this reason, I co-sponsored a number of bills to protect the civil rights of every resident.

Safe Communities Act

This bill would prohibit the state from disclosing information for the purpose of creating a Muslim registry and would ensure due process by preventing state resources from being used to enforce federal immigration law.

Limiting Prison Labor

In response to certain proposals to use Massachusetts prison inmates to help build a wall on the nation's southern border, this bill would require that any inmate work-program in the Commonwealth be performed within the boundaries of the Commonwealth.

Fundamental Freedoms Act

This bill would bar state participation in a discriminatory "registration" system based on religion, national origin, or other protected identity.

Arrest Data Transparency

Recent analysis revealed inadequate statewide data about arrests in the Com-

monwealth. This legislation would make this critical information available to policymakers and the public.

Environment

Our climate is changing and it is all of our responsibility to reduce our impact and ensure we are resilient. With that in mind, I focused on co-sponsoring 4 pieces of environmental legislation.



Rep. Sánchez with constituents on a clean energy advocacy day. Rep. Decker is pictured far left.

Energy Siting Board

Filed by Rep. Coppinger in response to the West Roxbury pipeline, this bill will require public health impacts to be part of the approval process for new energy facilities.

Environmental Justice

This bill would ensure equal protection and meaningful involvement of all people in the process of environmental laws, with focus on low-income and minority communities who are often most affected.

Renewable Portfolio Standard

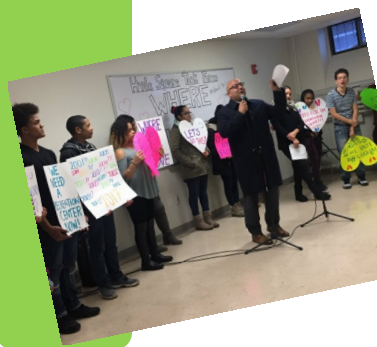
This bill would guarantee the Commonwealth stays on track to meet emissions-reductions goals by 2050 by increasing renewable energy statewide.

Gas leaks

If passed, this bill would incentivize the repair or replacement of gas pipes by prohibiting utilities from charging ratepayers for the cost of lost and unaccounted for gas.

Around the Neighborhood

It's been an exciting start to 2017 in Mission Hill, Jamaica Plain, Roslindale, and Brookline. The Hyde Square Task Force moved into the renovated space at Blessed Sacrament, while Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Development Corporation opened 40 affordable units of housing on Amory Street in Jackson Square. We met for the annual Mission Hill Youth Collaborative Breakfast to celebrate the organizations that mentored 11,482 youth in 2016. In Roslindale, the substation opened for business for the first time in 45 years and Brookline youth were honored for their role in the fight against tobacco.



Spotlight: Immigration

I spoke out in response to the President's numerous executive orders on immigration:

Donald Trump is building walls around himself at a time he should be opening a door to all Americans. As we saw at women's marches across the country, Americans are organized and ready to stand up against attacks on our constitutional rights.

This unilateral order for the construction of a wall between the United States and Mexico is an irresponsible and ineffective use of American tax dollars. I stand against this and against calls for unconstitutional

deportations without due process.

The President's executive order directs governors across the country to enter into immigration enforcement agreements with Immigrations and Customs Enforcement (ICE). In the face of these threats, I encourage Governor Baker to stand up for all immigrants in the Commonwealth.

We have many pressing issues to tackle here in our Commonwealth. Expanding our limited resources to enforce federal immigration laws is not in our purview. We must continue to be a safe and welcoming place for all people.

I subsequently met with public safety officials in the Baker administration to better understand how they interact with ICE, and to ensure due process is given to all people.

I co-sponsored legislation protecting immigrants and fundamental civil rights, and plan on partnering with community organizations to host "know your rights" information forums in the neighborhood. Please let me know if you are interested in participating in such a forum.

Health Care Financing

I am honored that Speaker Robert A. DeLeo appointed me House Chair of the Joint Committee on Health Care Financing for a second session. This promises to be an eventful two years for our healthcare system, and I look forward to working with my colleagues in the House and Senate.

Provider Price Variation Commission

The Special Commission on Provider Price Variation, which I co-chaired, issued its final report on Wednesday, March 15. The Commission spent the last six months tackling complex issues in healthcare, including the impact of healthcare market

forces and how transparency can be implemented meaningfully. Over the course of many meetings, a few common themes emerged. Commission members expressed concern regarding small businesses and the unique hurdles they face. There was also agreement that patients need more accessible, actionable, and understandable information, both when they choose a health plan and when they choose where to receive treatment. Finally, members agreed that future actions should not increase the financial burden on patients and employers.

The Commission's final report, including recommendations, is available on my website: jeffreysanchez.org/ppv.



Get in Touch!



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I am always available, whether you prefer to email, tweet, or send in a letter. I love hearing from constituents!



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Spotlight: Early Education

This past January, Speaker of the House Robert DeLeo visited the Nurtury Learning Lab in Bromley-Heath. It was a meaningful opportunity to show the Speaker Nurtury's innovative approach to educating and preparing young children for success.

One week later, I joined my colleagues in the House for a press conference to announce

the findings of the Early Education and Care Business Advisory Group and announce the framework for early education legislation we will work on this session.

Drawing on the conversations we had at Nurtury, our legislation will focus on improving access and opportunity for all our children in Massachusetts through a combination of funding and policy to professionalize the workforce.

It is clear that staffing is a major issue—with a 30 percent turnover rate and average salary just above the federal poverty guideline, retaining quality teachers is difficult. This is why the House will take up funding for early educators in the budget in April.

The second policy approach is to create a



pipeline of early educators. The House plans to consider legislation to establish core credentials, invest in scholarships, and focus on creating a career ladder to ensure we retain and recruit the best talent in our early education programs.

I look forward to working with my colleagues in the House and Senate to continue to push for high quality early education in Massachusetts. This is important for our children and an investment in our future.



Arredondo Memorial Bridge

On January 13th, legislation I filed was signed to officially designate the Jamaica way bridge over Route 9 in Mission Hill as the Lance Corporal Alexander Arredondo and Brian Arredondo Memorial Bridge, in honor of the Jamaica Plain brothers.

Lance Corporal Alexander Arredondo, a member of the U.S. Marine Corps, was killed in action in 2004 while serving his second deployment in Najaf, Iraq. After several years of struggling with the burden of his brother's death, Brian Arredondo, took his own life in 2011. Brian and Alex, only two and a half years apart, were very close. Victoria Foley, their mother described Alex as "optimistic and upbeat" and Brian as a "natural leader."

Since the death of the two boys, Carlos Arredondo and his wife Mélida, step-mother to Alex and Brian, have involved themselves with raising awareness for mental health, and military family and veterans' issues through the creation of the Arredondo Family Foundation, Inc.

This is an important chance to honor the sacrifice Alex Arredondo made for his country and to recognize the hardships faced by service members' families. The bridge is a reminder to families that they are not alone in this struggle.

An official naming ceremony will be determined at a later time.



**Lance Corporal
Alexander Arredondo (L)
and Brian Arredondo (R)**