

State Representative

Mission Hill

Jamaica Plain

Roslindale

Brookline

Jeffrey Sánchez

NOVEMBER | 2016

15TH SUFFOLK DISTRICT

Friends and Neighbors:

Thank you for reading my special edition November newsletter. For many people, this election represents the first time they will be casting their vote. The race for president has grabbed the attention of our nation—and rightly so. But it is also important to engage in state and local government, where many decisions have a direct impact on your day-to-day lives. It is with this in mind that I write this newsletter.

For those first time voters, I want to encourage you to remain involved in the time between elections. For the new residents in Boston and Brookline, I welcome you to our

community and hope we can become acquainted. And for those that I have known my whole life (or at least it seems that way), I hope we can continue to work towards building a healthier community.

In this issue, I will touch on my work as Chair of the Joint Committee on Health Care Financing, recap some of the work the Massachusetts House of Representatives accomplished this past session, and provide an update on some of the work my office has been doing in the community to ensure we stay engaged and connect with all of our neighbors.



Thank you for taking the time read this newsletter. I look forward to continuing to serve as your state representative. If there is any way I can be helpful, please do not hesitate to call or email.

Yours in Service,



Jeffrey Sánchez
State Representative

2015-2016 Legislative Recap

The House of Representatives had a successful 2-year legislative session, passing legislation that makes our communities healthier and prepares us for the future. Here is a brief overview of the legislation we passed in 2015 and 2016.

Transgender Accommodations

Bucking the tide of other states across the country, we voted in favor of a bill that would protect transgender individuals against discrimination related to gender identity or expression in public places, such as the T, restaurants, and parks. This bill gives respect to people for being themselves.

Gender Pay Equity

One of my proudest votes of the legislative session was in favor of gender pay equity. Our bill, now signed into law, is the result of over 20 years of tireless advocacy and is among the strongest legislation in the nation. For many women who have to feed and support a family, sometimes on one income, it is a struggle to survive. This law ensures that the hardest working women in the Commonwealth are paid what they deserve.

Clean Energy

A clear priority from the start of session, a clean energy bill was passed that requires

the largest expansion of renewable energy in the history of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Once complete, one-third of Massachusetts' energy will come from clean, sustainable offshore wind, hydro-power and solar sources. It will create the largest off-shore wind farm in the country and also require gas leaks be fixed during road repair.

Substance Abuse Prevention

Since I became Chair of the Joint Committee on Health Care Financing, I have visited over 30 hospitals and community health centers across Massachusetts to listen and

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2015-2016 Legislative Recap

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I learn about the unique issues that affect them. One of the most common issues I heard, both in hospitals and in our neighborhood, is the need to address the opioid abuse epidemic. Under the leadership of the Speaker of the House Robert DeLeo and Rep. Liz Malia, Chair of the Joint Committee on Mental Health & Substance Abuse, we passed an innovative substance abuse prevention bill that will become a model across the country. It requires a 24-hour screening and treatment plan in hospital emergency departments, limits first time prescriptions for opioids to 7 days (with some exceptions), and requires school screenings to help head-off possible addictions for children. Together, we will provide resources to those suffering from substance use and help them to regain their lives.

Public Records Reform

I am proud to have voted for a bill updating the public records law to increase transparency and improve access to public documents. In addition to capping costs for re-

quests, this legislation requires municipalities and agencies to create a predictable timeline for responses, for records to be provided electronically, and that commonly requested public records be posted online.

Ride-Sharing

I voted in favor of a bill creating regulations for ride-sharing companies like Lyft, Fasten, and Uber. Named the most innovative state in America by *Bloomberg* in January, Massachusetts continues this reputation by striking a careful balance of protecting public safety, while promoting innovative technologies. The final legislation, now signed into law, creates a new division to write regulations, mandates two-tier background checks, and requires cars to display a decal noting them as a ride for hire. It does not ban pickups at Logan Airport or the Boston Convention and Exhibition Center.

Criminal Justice Reform

One of my first votes in the 2016 was to repeal a 1989 law that automatically suspended driver's licenses for drug offend-



ers whose crimes had nothing to do with operating a motor vehicle. This is just the beginning of our effort to tackle inequalities in the criminal justice system.

Earned Income Tax Credit

In 2015, we expanded the Earned Income Tax Credit, a credit claimed by low- and middle-income working families. This will save low-income families \$1,459 per year and is an important step toward combatting income inequality in Massachusetts.

MBTA

We all know the T faces major problems, from derailments, smoking trains, and a maintenance backlog to buses stuck in traffic and Mother Nature. However, it is a key economic driver to our region. We are making investments to the system and as we continue to discuss the MBTA, I will focus on making sure the system is safe and reliable for the millions who rely on it.

Health Care Financing Committee Updates

This was my first session serving as Chair of the Joint Committee on Health Care Financing. In this new role, I am charged with analyzing policy relating to the business of healthcare and how we pay for it. While challenging, it has been an opportunity to think about how our healthcare system is structured and how it can better serve patients.

Provider Price Commission

This fall marked the first meetings for the Special Commission on Provider Price Variation. I co-chair this Commission, whose purpose is to examine the reasons some medical providers are paid more than others for the same set

of services. With three meetings completed as of November 1st, our discussions have so far been fruitful and thought-provoking. Members of our Commission represent medical providers, insurers, employers, policymakers, and academic experts. The Commission will meet through March 15, 2017, when a report of our discussions and recommendations, if appropriate, is due.

Annual Cost Trends Hearing

On October 17, I urged stakeholders to tackle persistent health care disparities in my remarks at the Annual Cost



Representative Sánchez addresses the 2016 Cost Trends Hearing

Trends Hearing. These hearings conducted by the Health Policy Commission provide an opportunity for the Commonwealth to engage key stakeholders on the drivers of health care costs. As I sat through the two days of the hearing, the theme of health disparities continued through conversations on social determinants of health and behavioral health. Other topics during the hearing included pharmaceutical spending, health care cost growth, and changes in health care delivery. You can read my full opening remarks on my website at www.jeffreysanchez.org.

Session in Review: Around the District

In the past year, we have come together for numerous events, including our annual Back to School Jam, Summer Softball Series, Thanksgiving and Holiday Parties, Hispanic Heritage Month celebrations in local schools, and a water drive for Flint, Michigan. Thank you to every community member, organization, and institution that helped our neighborhood stay healthy and engaged.



Department of Conservation and Recreation

Our neighborhood has advocated for safer parkways along the Emerald Necklace and Arnold Arboretum since before I came to office in 2003. We have experienced small victories along the way, including a pedestrian crossing at Jamaica Pond and Eliot Street, the redesign of Kelley Circle, and most recently, the commitment from the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) to install missing speed limit signs along the Arborway. However, long-term safety issues persist, despite years of study.

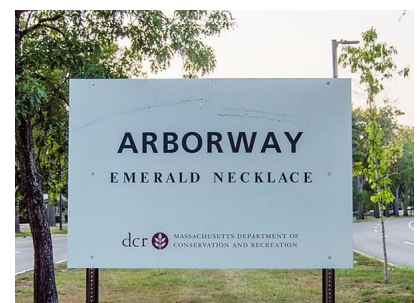
In the fall of 2015, DCR held 4 meetings to update the community on a 3-part planning process. In the

year since those meetings, I have pressed DCR to ensure these studies remain a priority.

Recently, DCR, announced updates on the progress of these projects:

The crosswalk improvement to **Perkins Street and Parkman Drive** at Cabot Estates will go before the Boston Landmarks Commission for approval soon and then will go the Boston Conservation Commission for final approval. The **Arborway** project will most likely hold a meeting in March 2017, although no firm dates are set. There did not appear to be an update on the **Centre Street** project, although short-term improvements

are under consideration. I will continue to ensure our community continues to be a focus for DCR. When public meetings are held, it is important for the community to attend and my office will be communicating with you so that everyone in the neighborhood has an opportunity to get involved.



Get in Touch!



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I am always available, whether you prefer to email, call, or mail in a letter.



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Open Enrollment (n): the period from November 1 to January 31 when individuals can shop for health or dental insurance.

Already a member?
Shop online to find a new plan.
Your costs and coverage may have changed.

Don't have insurance?
Look online at available options.
You may be eligible for low-cost plans.

1-877-MA-ENROLL

**To shop for coverage go to
www.mahealthconnector.org.**

#StopShopEnroll

Welcome Our New Legislative Aide — Your JP Liaison

In September, I hired Amanda Alvarez Villot as a legislative aide in my office. Originally from Philadelphia, Amanda will serve as point person for Jamaica Plain and Roslindale and as a liaison between the community and the State House. Alvarez, who is bilingual in English and Spanish, will also assist with legislative research in the State House

Amanda joins legislative aide Collin Fedor, who is the point person for Mission Hill and Precinct 5 in Brookline, to round out my district staff. Both work collaboratively to ensure your viewpoints are heard in the State House and conduct research under the leadership of my Chief of Staff, Sarah Sabshon. Please feel free to reach out to them with your thoughts and questions.



Community Survey

I am currently conducting a community survey seeking your opinion on a variety of topics confronting our neighborhood and the state.

Please visit www.jeffreysanchez.org/survey or contact my office for a paper copy of the survey.