

Massachusetts House Minority Leader

Bradley H. Jones, Jr.

Proudly Representing the 20th Middlesex District



What's Going On At The State House?

December 2011 and January 2012

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Dear Friends,

Welcome to the December/January edition of "What's Going on at the State House," an e-mail newsletter I write to stay in touch with you and keep you posted on what I'm working on in the Legislature and in the 20th Middlesex District.

I apologize for the brief hiatus from my email updates. I hope you all enjoyed a relaxing and joyful holiday season with your loved ones. Now that the holidays have come and gone, the action here on Beacon Hill has picked up again.

Governor Patrick recently filed his Fiscal Year 2013 budget proposal, officially kicking off the budget cycle at the State House. This year's budget, similar to years past, will be extremely challenging as Massachusetts continues to feel the effects of a struggling local and national economy.

As always, if you have something on your mind you would like to share, please contact me at my State House office or send me an e-mail. I look forward to hearing from you.

All the best,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Brad".

Poll Question

Do you think the New England Patriots will win Super Bowl XLVI?

[YES](#)

[NO](#)

[UNSURE](#)

Results will be available in the next issue.

Results from last month's poll question

In the wake of "Melissa's Bill" passing both the House and Senate, do you believe in harsher penalties for dangerous, repeat offenders?

YES 100%

NO 0%

UNSURE 0%

Unemployment Insurance Rate Freeze

In early January, the entire House and Senate Republican caucus filed legislation to freeze the anticipated unemployment insurance tax rate.

Filed jointly by Senate Minority Leader Bruce Tarr and me, An Act Relative to Mitigating the Increasing Costs for Small Businesses by Freezing the Unemployment Insurance Rate aimed to prevent an anticipated tax increase of \$220 per employee, or 31%, on Bay State businesses. With the proposed tax freeze, the Republican Caucus continues its noteworthy initiatives to make the Bay State's economic climate more attractive to businesses working to emerge from the recession.

Recently, the House and Senate voted overwhelmingly in support of this proposed freeze on UI tax rates, with both Republicans and Democrats voicing their support for the legislation. For the past four years, similar legislation has been passed by the Legislature to shield Massachusetts' businesses from this detrimental tax increase.

The bill now awaits final passage.

Perfect Voting Record

One aspect of my job that I take very seriously is my voting record. I was elected by the residents of the 20th Middlesex district in order to be their voice on Beacon Hill.

My ability to vote in the House represents my constituents' voices being heard within the Legislature. With that in mind, I am happy to inform you that my perfect voting record - 5,297 roll call votes - continues to this day. So far this legislative session I have been able to participate in over 181 consecutive roll call votes.

I hope my voting record reflects just how thankful I am for the opportunity to serve you, and how serious I take the honor of representing the people of the district.

Response to Governor Patrick's Fiscal Year 2013 Budget Proposal

The residents of Massachusetts are ready for fiscal responsibility. Yet as proposed, the Governor's budget fails to deliver.

The Patrick Administration has indicated their plans for \$260 million in tax and fee increases as well as taking \$400 million from our Rainy Day Fund. These recommendations come at a severe cost to the taxpayer. In these dire economic times, we must explore and exhaust all other potential avenues before we consider raising taxes and fees as the Governor plans to do.

While I commend the Governor for realizing the importance of fostering job growth in Massachusetts, I fail to see how his various proposals will meet that expectation. What he hasn't addressed is how his Administration will provide more opportunities for small businesses, which make up 98% of our businesses statewide and employ two-thirds of our state's workforce. We need job creation, not elimination.

While one can appreciate his retention of a Republican-led initiative to restore monies to cities and towns, there are serious questions whether this budget meets their needs.

I applaud the Governor for delivering a timely budget. But it will be some time before we know whether or not his numbers and proposals add up.

Legislator of the Year

On January 21st, I was honored with the distinction of "Legislator of the Year" by the Massachusetts Municipal Association (MMA) at its Annual Meeting and Trade Show.

I would like to extend my sincerest gratitude to the MMA for this tremendous honor, awarded as a result of my budget amendment sending \$65 million in unrestricted general government aid back to the cities and towns of the Commonwealth.

As a former local official in North Reading, I understand that municipalities face some of the most difficult budgetary challenges during tough economic times.

Again, thanks to the MMA for this prestigious award.



Better Government Competition

As a way for constituents to become involved with improving state and local government, I welcome individuals to consider participating in the Better Government Competition, an annual contest seeking ideas from citizens about how to make government more efficient and effective. Sponsored by the Pioneer Institute, the BGC and its innovative proposals have saved taxpayers more than \$500 million over the years. In this year's competition, ideas should focus on federal programs that can be adapted to individual states with cost-savings and greater efficiency.

I truly believe this competition provides the residents of the 20th Middlesex District with the chance to make government work better for them. Additionally, the individual who submits the winning idea will receive a prize of \$10,000, with runners-up each receiving \$1,000. Ideas should be submitted to the Pioneer Institute no later than April 9, 2012.

For more information on the BGC, please contact Shawni Littlehale at slittlehale@pioneerinstitute.org or visit www.pioneerinstitute.org.

Fall Intern

Following the conclusion of the fall semester, I would like to extend my thanks to Patrick Wicker for volunteering his time as an intern in my State House office. A resident of the Town of North Reading and currently studying at Harvard University, Patrick spent the semester assisting with constituent affairs and outreach, along with various other legislative issues.



Spring Semester Internships Available

I am pleased to announce that my office is now accepting resumes for spring semester internships, and I encourage college students to send in their resumes to apply.

Interning is a great way to determine if the field a student is interested in pursuing is the right fit. Interns in my office will get a good feel for what it means to work in a legislator's office. In addition to possibly receiving college credit for their time and effort, they will have the opportunity to work on constituent services, policy analysis and a number of other areas as well.

If you or someone you know is interested in interning in my office, please send a resume and cover letter to Brittany Carisella, legislative aide and intern coordinator. Please send your documents in a Word attachment to Brittany.Carisella@MAHouse.gov.

Internships are unpaid but college credits can be earned.

District and State House Events

While December may have been slower month than others for events at the State House, January proved to be anything but slow.

January 3rd marked the swearing-in of Michael Murphy as the new Police Chief for North Reading. I was pleased to attend this event and I wish Chief Murphy continued success.

The North Shore Superintendents' Roundtable met in early January and I was glad to have had the opportunity to meet Superintendents to discuss the challenges that they will face at both the local and state level regarding education and local and state services. I look forward to further dialogue with the Superintendents from the North Shore.

On January 18th, I was pleased to serve on the panel for an informal informational forum on the proposed North Reading High School/Middle School construction project. The meeting, hosted by the Secondary Schools Building Committee, was an excellent opportunity for members of the North Reading community to stop by and observe proposed plans, as well as ask any project or finance related questions they may have had.

More recently, the Massachusetts School Building Authority approved the project scope and budget for the High School/Middle School construction project. With that in mind, I would like to remind North Reading residents that a special Town Meeting will convene on Monday March 19th to approve the financial parameters of the project, with the residents of North Reading weighing in during a Special Ballot Election on March 24th.

The Reading–North Reading Chamber of Commerce held its Annual Meeting at the end of January. This meeting was an opportunity for individuals to meet with the Chamber President and Board of Directors and to enjoy a presentation from Amy Villeneuve, President and COO of Kiva Systems based out of North Reading.

Lastly, I had the honor of welcoming Reading Fire Chief Gregory Burns, Lynnfield Fire Chief Thomas Bogart, and retired North Reading Fire Chief Richard Harris to the State House. The fire chiefs from the 20th Middlesex district were on Beacon Hill in conjunction with the 5th Annual Fire Chiefs' Association of Massachusetts Statewide Legislative Luncheon. Fire chiefs from across the Commonwealth descended upon the State House to speak with Representatives about the firefighters' proposed legislative agenda.



Looking Ahead...

The upcoming month looks just as busy as January. I will hold office hours in the towns of Reading, North Reading, and Lynnfield on Friday, February 17th. Office hours are a great opportunity for my constituents to meet with me or a member of my staff, and to ask any questions they may have or to voice any of their concerns. Constituents are encouraged to visit at their convenience during office hours and will be seen on a first-come, first-served basis. No appointment is necessary.

In the middle of February I will be speaking with the Advanced Placement U.S. Government and Politics and Environmental Science classes from North Reading High School. The students have invited me to speak with them about Legislative committees and their interactions and relationships with special interests groups.

On your mark, get set, go! On February 10th I have the privilege of being the Honorary Starter for the Pinewood Derby. This annual event, held by North Reading Cub Scout Pack 731, promises to be an exciting time for all!

February 1st I will be sporting as much red as possible in my wardrobe to support the American Heart/American Stroke Associations' "Go Red for Women" event. This event, held at the State House, raises awareness about heart disease for women. I am always proud to partake in such a great event, and advocate for such a noble cause.