

Commonwealth Report

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A Newsletter for the Citizens of the First Plymouth and Bristol District

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Greetings From Senator Pacheco!

Welcome to the April/May edition of the **Commonwealth Report!**

I hope you are enjoying the summer. As always, we are busy here on Beacon Hill!

This month the Senate approved key legislation, including the Oceans Bill, which will help protect one of the Commonwealth's greatest natural resources.

As summer heats

up, solutions to the global warming crisis also took center stage during the "Carbon Cookie" challenge here at the State House.

Also, I am happy to report that local communities received essential funding for fire and safety awareness programs for students in our region.

I hope you enjoy this month's edition of The Commonwealth Re-

port and please tune in to hear the latest updates from Beacon Hill aired on the radio version of the Commonwealth Report broadcast on WBVF 1530 AM at 10:30 a.m. on Monday and Friday.

I look forward to hearing from you.

All the best!



Fire Education Grants Awarded to Local Communities

Senator Pacheco is pleased to announce that numerous local communities throughout Southeastern Massachusetts were awarded grants from the FY08 Student Awareness of Fire Education (S.A.F.E.) program. The S.A.F.E. program increases student awareness of the fire and health hazards of smoking-related materials and provides students with the knowledge base to recognize the dangers of fire, in-

cluding the fire hazards that smoking-related materials pose.

"The S.A.F.E program is essential for providing fire safety and awareness for students across the region," said Senator Pacheco. "I am very happy to report that the Executive Office of Public Safety and Security has awarded many local cities and towns throughout our community with funding from the S.A.F.E program. The grant

funding will go a long way in protecting the safety and well being of citizens throughout the region."

Grants from the FY08 Student Awareness of Fire Education (S.A.F.E.) program were awarded to numerous communities throughout Southeastern Massachusetts.

Local communities, including Bridgewater, Carver, Dighton, Middleboro and Raynham received more than \$20,000 in S.A.F.E. grant funding.

Landmark Oceans Management Bill Approved by Senate and Signed Into Law

This month the Senate took final action on its landmark “oceans bill” to allow Massachusetts to establish a management plan for its territorial waters and ensure a public voice in future ocean development projects. The House of Representatives concurred on the Senate’s action, and by the end of May the bill was signed into law.

“This legislation sets forth a carefully considered strategy to protect our oceans and establishes the necessary framework for future development proposals,” said Senator Pacheco, co-sponsor of the legislation. “Such action will ensure that citizens across Massachusetts will have the opportunity to enjoy this beautiful natural resource in the future.”

The House version of the bill differed slightly from the Senate’s, but compromise legislation was hammered out

and emerged from conference committee earlier in May.

The compromise bill is a balanced, comprehensive piece of legislation that represents the best interests of both the Senate and the House. The highlights of the compromise bill include:

- The use of an ocean management plan incorporating the best available scientific understandings of marine and ocean resources, mapping, monitoring, and other data.
- Under the authority of the Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs, the management plan would be developed by a 16-member commission, which will include state agency representatives, legislators, municipal officials, and environmental, fishing and industry stakeholders.
- The final plan will guide how state environmental agencies interpret, monitor and enforce the environmental laws of the Commonwealth and set a standard framework to judge future ocean development proposals for state-owned waters which encompass approximately three nautical miles from the coastline.
- The legislation permits the development of appropriately-scaled renewable energy sources in areas identified in, and in a manner consistent with, the ocean management plan.

The legislation also provides safeguards for the treatment of fisheries, recognizing the central role that commercial and recreational fishing plays in our economy.

Senator Pacheco Forms New International Trade and Global Competitiveness Legislative Caucus

Senator Pacheco and State Representative Daniel E. Bosley (D-North Adams) in April established a new legislative caucus on International Trade and Global Competitiveness to provide a forum for Massachusetts legislators to exchange and promote ideas on enhancing the Commonwealth's position in the global economy.

The creation of this new legislative caucus followed the recent release of the Senate Post Audit and Oversight Committee's report titled "Getting in the Game: Increasing Massachusetts's Presence in a Globalized World," which offers recommendations for Massachusetts to increase its

global competitiveness.

"The International Trade and Global Competitiveness Legislative Caucus will enhance the Legislature's dialogue on securing the numerous economic advantages provided by an increasingly globalized world," said Senator Pacheco, chairman of the Senate Committee on Post Audit and Oversight. "The Senate Post Audit and Oversight Committee's report indicated that Massachusetts has begun to fall behind other states in the race to be a competitive player in the global economy. We must act now to ramp up international trade and boost various economic sectors in the international marketplace, all of which offer invaluable benefits to the Commonwealth."

"Massachusetts has so much to offer. Whether it's our preeminent position in knowledge based industries like life sciences, our commitment and continued growth in renewable energy development, or our thriving creative economy sector, the Commonwealth is in a great position to collaborate with the rest of the world to help grow our state's economy and create jobs," said Representative Bosley, chairman of the Joint Committee on Economic Development and Emerging Technologies. "This caucus will facilitate the necessary conversation among state leaders on how we move forward with that collaboration."

Senate Votes for Sweeping Transportation Reform

The Senate approved legislation authorizing \$150 million in local transportation aid and \$2.4 billion in federal funds for road-and-bridge projects while also installing unprecedented cost-containment reforms to help close the \$15-billion to \$19-billion transpor-

tation funding gap.

"These comprehensive reforms will hold transportation agencies to the highest standards and allow efficient and transparent use of taxpayer dollars," said Senator Pacheco. "Swift Senate approval on

these measures will strengthen transparency for future construction projects, ensure federal funding to boost infrastructure projects throughout the Commonwealth, and provide transportation aid to our cities and towns."

Senator Pacheco Selected for International Conference

Senator Pacheco was selected to play a leadership role at The 6th International Conference on Communication Practice: The ICCO Southeast European Summit sponsored by The International Communication Consultancy Organization (ICCO) and the Chamber of Public Relations.

The conference, which focuses on communications and new media in public relations, was held on May 19 and 20 in Ljubljana, the capital of Slovenia.

“I am honored to have been asked to play a role in this international conference,” said Senator Pacheco. “For me, the invitation to participate in this conference brought great honor to our district.”

Senator Pacheco was chosen to be a lecturer on the “New Media in Public Campaigning” panel. At the conference he joined leaders from across the world in exchanging ideas related to the importance of new media and communication practices.

“Communication

practices and new media play a complex and important role in our government and politics and as a result they have significant impacts on our public policy,” said Senator Pacheco. “Soon I will be announcing a range of new media to enhance communication within my district. I thank the International Communication Consultancy Organization for reaching out to me for this important role.”

Grant Awarded to Town of Wareham

Senator Pacheco is pleased to announce that the Town of Wareham was awarded more than \$560,000 from the FY 2008 Housing Development Support Program, a component of the Community Development Block Grant Program.

The program supports revitalization efforts in communities throughout the

Commonwealth by addressing the needs of low and moderate income residents by supporting housing, community, and economic development activities.

The federal funds are provided by the Commonwealth and allocated by the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development to assist with the five-unit

mixed use project at 361 Main Street.

“I am pleased that the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development awarded the town of Wareham such a generous grant,” said Senator Pacheco. “This funding will go a long way in providing safe, affordable housing for our region’s most vulnerable citizens.”

Top Leaders Support The Global Warming Solutions Act

On April, 14, 2008, Senator Pacheco joined top legislators, student activists and environmental leaders from throughout the Commonwealth to show support for timely passage of The Global Warming Solutions Act.

The Global Warming Solutions Act gained Senate approval in March and is now in the House Ways and Means Committee for further action.

“This time of year the Legislature has many distractions and competing priorities, but we must continue our efforts to secure far-reaching carbon caps and make Massachusetts a leader in the most pressing issue of our time,” said Senator Pacheco, chairman of the Senate Committee

on Global Warming and Climate Change.

“Passage of the Global Warming Solutions Act would spur job creation, protect the millions of existing jobs in industries, such as tourism and agriculture that rely on the preservation of our environment, and make Massachusetts a thriving part of the green economy. Now is the time to secure these economic opportunities, while at the same time helping to do our part in helping to save the planet.”

The bill would require a cap on greenhouse gas emissions from all sources and implements a framework that would re-

duce greenhouse gas emissions 20 percent by 2020 and 80 percent by 2050, based on 1990 levels.

In order to meet these standards, the bill authorizes state agencies to adopt regulations that reduce energy use, increase efficiency and encourage renewable energy sources in the sectors of energy generation, buildings and transportation.

The legislation would also allow the Department of Environmental Protection to establish a statewide registry of facilities that emit greenhouse gases.

Cranberry Heritage Bill Signed Into Law

Senator Pacheco is pleased to announce that legislation establishing a special commission to conduct a study and investigate the cranberry heritage area in southeastern Massachusetts has been signed into law. Senator Pacheco was recently appointed to the Special Commission Relative to the Es-

tablishment of a Cranberry Heritage Area.

Senate Bill 2496 will authorize the Commission to study the historic, cultural and natural resources of the cranberry industry to provide education of and inspiration for the cranberry industry for present and fu-

ture generations.

“The cranberry industry is a vital part of the Commonwealth’s economy,” said Senator Pacheco. “This bill will allow for a thorough and comprehensive study of the industry to ensure it is protected now and for future generations.”

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Currently, Senator Pacheco is the Chairman of the Senate Committee on Post Audit and Oversight and Chairman of the newly created Senate Committee on Global Warming and Climate Change. He is also the Vice Chair of the Joint Committee on the Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture and Vice Chair of the Joint Committee on Health Care Financing.. In addition, he is a member of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means and the Joint Committee on Telecommunications, Utilities and Energy. During his tenure in the Senate, Senator Pacheco has chaired the Joint Committees on Commerce and Labor, State Administration, Health Care and Natural Resources and Agriculture.

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Cost-Containment Health Care Reform Advances

The Senate on Thursday passed the next phase of the Commonwealth's two-year-old landmark health care reform with a package of new initiatives aimed at bringing down escalating health care costs and creating greater access to primary care.

"This legislation will continue to make Massachusetts a leader in providing quality, affordable health care to citizens throughout the Commonwealth," said Senator Pacheco, vice-chair of the

Joint Committee on Health Care Financing. "I hope this legislation receives timely passage in the House and that the protection and safety of the Commonwealth's individuals and families remains a top priority."

The legislation promotes the modernization of the health care system to reduce waste and inefficiencies and improve quality care, setting Massachusetts as a national leader in the statewide adoption of electronic medical records and uniform billing among

health care providers and insurance companies, which together could save hundreds of millions of dollars.

Health care costs are straining state finances and cutting into resources for education, public safety and transportation, making it increasingly difficult for young people, families and businesses to make ends meet. This growth in health care costs is out-pacing the increase in workers' wages and the overall inflation rate.