

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 August/September edition of the **Commonwealth Report!**

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

This month the Senate Committee on Post Audit and Oversight held two important hearings to investigate 40B housing practices and the funding for snow and ice

removal this winter.

In August, I was very fortunate to take part in a historic moment when I joined Governor Deval Patrick and President Cesar at the 23rd annual Great Feast of the Holy Ghost in New England for the signing of the Sister State Agreement between Massachusetts and the Azores.

I hope you enjoy this month's edition of

The Commonwealth Report 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.



Environmental Bond Bill Provides Local Funding

This month Senator Pacheco announced that the Fiscal Year 2009 Environmental Bond Bill will provide funding to improve Memorial Park and Watson's Pond in the city of Taunton.

The bill allots \$500,000 for the revitalization of Memorial Park in the city of Taunton for landscaping, pond dredging, park benches and play-

ground equipment. In order to preserve Watson's Pond, \$150,000 will be provided for the construction and maintenance of walking trails, bike paths and sanitary facilities along the greenway surrounding Watson's Pond in the city of Taunton.

"I am thrilled that the city of Taunton is eligible to receive

such generous funding for the maintenance and preservation of the city's beautiful parks," said Senator Pacheco, vice-chair of the Joint Committee on the Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture. "The funding will ensure that Taunton residents can continue to enjoy the benefits of these environmental treasures."

Senator Pacheco Hosts Energy Summit at Bridgewater State College

National, state leaders laud new environmental laws in Massachusetts

During an energy summit hosted by State Senator Marc R. Pacheco (D-Taunton) at Bridgewater State College, national and state leaders commended the Massachusetts Legislature for enacting into law five bills that would make the Commonwealth a leader in renewable energy and energy efficiency.

Senator Pacheco and Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs Ian Bowles, hailed the energy summit as a first-of-its-kind event providing communities with information about the Commonwealth's most recent environmental laws. The new environmental laws enacted during the 2008 legislative session include the Global Warming Solutions Act, Biofuels Act, Oceans Act, Green Jobs Bill, and the Energy Bill.

"The Commonwealth is set to reduce its carbon emissions, preserve its natural resources and secure a competitive edge in the green economy," said Senator Pacheco, chief sponsor of the Global Warming Solutions Act. "As we look toward the future, it's impor-

tant that communities have access to understanding the benefits and challenges during the implementation process of these new initiatives."

Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs Ian Bowles highlighted the issue of soaring energy costs throughout the nation and the need for Massachusetts to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions. He mentioned that California and other states have passed similar carbon cap legislation, but stated that the standards in the Global Warming Solutions Act are "the most stringent and the most flexible" in the country and that "means Massachusetts is leaping over all the other scores of states that want to be a leader in that regard."

During his speech, Secretary Bowles also said that energy efficiency gives the Commonwealth a larger economic opportunity and referred to the overwhelming success of EnerNOC, a developer of clean energy solutions. "We will see more of that in Massachusetts in the days ahead," said Secretary Bowles.

Nick d'Arbeloff, Executive Director, New England Clean Energy Council, said Massachusetts should focus on other energy sources such as solar and wind--an excellent source in Maine and Cape Cod. He said that 57 percent of all the solar panels worldwide are in Germany and only 7 percent of installed solar panels are in the United States.

The keynote speech was delivered by United States Senator John F. Kerry who said, "We have big energy choices in front of us, and energy efficiency should be the first thing we do."

In the absence of federal climate change legislation, states across the nation have been taking the lead on this issue. Senator Kerry lauded Massachusetts and Senator Pacheco for being "ahead of the curve on this issue," and said he was confident that with a new administration "we will pass global warming and climate change legislation on the national level."

Post Audit and Oversight Committee Holds Hearing on Snow and Ice Removal Funding

On September 22, 2008 Senator Pacheco, chairman of the Senate Committee on Post Audit and Oversight, held a hearing to address the issue of adequate funding in the FY09 budget for snow and ice removal this winter.

The hearing was attended by Senator Brian Joyce (D-Avon), Senator Bruce Tarr (R-Gloucester), Commissioner of Massachusetts Highway Department Luisa Paiewonsky, and members of the Massachusetts Snow and Ice Contractors Association, including the Association's president Matt Frazier.

Senator Pacheco held the hearing in order to investigate the status of snow and ice removal equipment and resources in Massachusetts and how the Commonwealth will meet its needs for snow and ice removal this upcoming winter.

"The snow and ice plowers in Massachusetts are a vital part of keeping individuals and families safe this winter," said Senator Pacheco. "My hope is that this hearing allowed the issues surrounding prompt pay and contractors to come to light. If we do not address

these problems we could find ourselves out in the cold this winter."

Matt Frazier brought a stack of nearly 600 unsigned contracts to the hearing saying that "less and less people are getting into this business and more and more people are getting out of this business."

Many contractors who have yet to receive pay for their work completed last winter refuse to sign contracts that do not contain a prompt pay clause.

Senator Pacheco Awarded for Environmental Leadership

Senator Pacheco was awarded the honor of Outstanding Achievement by the Sierra Club in recognition of his leadership on climate change, energy and environmental issues during the 2007-2008 legislative session. The award was presented to Senator Pacheco on Saturday, September 13, 2008 during the Sierra Club's "Energy Solutions Day" event in the Boston

Commons. Founded in 1892, the Sierra Club is one of the most renowned environmental organizations in the nation.

"Securing sound and effective environmental policies was a core objective of the 2007-2008 legislative session," said Senator Pacheco, chairman of the Senate Committee on Global Warming and Climate Change. "Passage of bills such as The Global Warming Solutions Act,

which I sponsored, The Oceans Act, and The Green Communities Act, will help make Massachusetts a national and international leader in the green economy. I am proud to have sponsored and supported environmentally sound legislation and proud to have been recognized by the Sierra Club for my efforts."

Senator Pacheco Holds Hearing on 40B Housing

On September 18, 2008 Senator Pacheco, chairman of the Senate Committee on Post Audit and Oversight, hosted a Committee hearing to investigate the cost certification process for 40B housing projects throughout the state.

Testimony included topics such as the monitoring of the cost certification process, which developmental costs are allowable, and possible legislative or regulatory changes to the system. Members of the Senate Committee on Post Audit and Oversight at-

tended the hearing along with Senator Susan C. Tucker, chair of the Joint Committee on Housing, and listened to testimony from Massachusetts Inspector General Gregory Sullivan, and Housing and Economic Development Secretary Daniel O'Connell and others.

During the hearing, Inspector General Gregory Sullivan indicated that affordable housing developers may owe \$100 million to cities and towns in the Commonwealth.

Senator Pacheco said the Senate Committee on Post Audit and Oversight will continue their investigation and eventually release a report offering cities and towns recommendations for recouping their money.

“When the inspector general indicates at a public meeting that he estimates that there’s \$100 million that could be recouped, that’s something we have to take seriously,” said Senator Pacheco.

Senator Pacheco Attends Holy Ghost Feast

On August 23, 2008, Senator Pacheco, chair of the Portuguese-American Legislative Caucus, joined Governor Deval Patrick and President Cesar at the 23rd annual Great Feast of the Holy Ghost in New England for the signing of the Sister State Agreement between Massachusetts and the Azores.

“Massachusetts and

the Azores have always had longstanding cultural and economic ties,” said Senator Pacheco.

“Recently I participated in the first biennial ‘Franklin D. Roosevelt Transatlantic Forum’ in the City of Ponta Delgada, where leaders from both countries were able to discuss the future of transatlantic relations and en-

hancing trade, tourism, and educational programs across the Atlantic”

The agreement was signed at the Gates of the City on Ponta Delgada Boulevard. The events festivities also included delicious Portuguese sweetbread, a parade, marching bands and dancing to authentic Portuguese music.

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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.

Senator Pacheco Led and Participated in Missions to Eastern Europe

Senator Pacheco will participate in two Eastern European missions dealing with human services, tourism, and other economic development activities.

Senator Pacheco was invited by the European Union's Energy Commissioner Andris Piebalgs to lead a delegation to Riga, Latvia in order to discuss the issue of global warming and climate change. Following the mission to Latvia, Senator Pacheco participated in a delegation led by Senate

President Therese Murray to Pskov, Russia, a mission named "The Baby Project," which involves a medical training exchange program between Pskov and Massachusetts. The delegation included Senator Pacheco, Senate President Murray, Senate President Pro Tempore Stanley Rosenberg and medical specialists and healthcare professionals from throughout Massachusetts.

"I am honored to have participated in the mission to Pskov and take part in a successful ex-

change program that helps provide medical assistance and supplies to children in need," said Senator Pacheco. "Along with the mission to Russia, I have also had the honor of being invited to Riga, Latvia by the European Union's Energy Commissioner Andris Piebalgs. I look forward to sharing the Commonwealth's climate change accomplishments with international leaders and exchanging ideas about local and global solutions."