

# Massachusetts Gov. Baker nominates Attorney Karin Bell as Associate Justice of the Superior Court

Today, Governor Charlie Baker nominated Attorney Karin Bell as Associate Justice of the Superior Court. Attorney Bell has 19 years of legal experience.

“The many years of legal experience that Attorney Bell will bring to the Superior Court make her a well-qualified candidate,” said Governor Charlie Baker. “I look forward to the Governor’s Council’s consideration of her nomination for this appointment.”

“I am pleased with the nomination of this distinguished attorney,” said Lt. Governor Karyn Polito. “If confirmed, I am confident that Attorney Bell’s skills and knowledge will allow her to continue to serve the public effectively in this new position.”

The Superior Court, the trial court of general jurisdiction for Massachusetts, is committed to delivering high quality justice in a timely and fair manner in accordance with the rule of law. The Court’s 82 justices sit in 20 courthouses in all 14 counties of the Commonwealth. The Superior Court has original jurisdiction in civil actions over \$25,000 and in matters where equitable relief is sought.

It also has original jurisdiction in actions including labor disputes where injunctive relief is sought, exclusive authority to convene medical malpractice tribunals, appellate jurisdiction over certain administrative proceedings, and may hold sittings for naturalization in any city or town. The Superior Court also has exclusive original jurisdiction of

first-degree murder cases and original jurisdiction of all other crimes.

Judicial nominations are subject to the advice and consent of the Governor's Council. Applicants for judicial openings are reviewed by the Judicial Nominating Commission (JNC) and recommended to the governor. Governor Baker established the JNC in February 2015 pursuant to Executive Order 558, a non-partisan, non-political Commission composed of volunteers from a cross-section of the Commonwealth's diverse population to screen judicial applications. Twenty-one members were later appointed to the JNC in April 2015.

### **About Attorney Karin Bell**

Attorney Karin Bell began her legal career in 2003 as a law clerk under Judges Nathaniel M. Gorton and F. Dennis Faylor of the District of Massachusetts. In 2003, Attorney Bell joined Goodwin law offices, working as a litigation associate. She then joined the Office of the US Attorney for Massachusetts.

Attorney Bell started as an Assistant US Attorney and was named Chief of the Worcester Branch office in 2013. From 2018 to 2021, Attorney Bell became Deputy Chief of the Criminal Division and worked on several high-profile cases, most notably serving as a co-lead prosecutor for the Operation Varsity Blues trial. She was promoted to Chief of the Criminal Division in 2021. In 2021, Attorney Bell became a partner with Manatt, Phelps, & Phillips, LLP.

She volunteers as a judge in the Harvard Law School Moot Court Competition, teaches at the Discovering Justice program, and volunteers at Grace Chapel. Attorney Bell received her Bachelor's degree from the University of Maryland in 1997, and her Juris Doctorate from Harvard Law School in 2002.



---

## **Massachusetts Gov. Baker's administration files fiscal year 2023 budget and tax relief proposals**

*\$48.5 billion budget filed alongside comprehensive tax relief plan.*

The Baker-Polito Administration today filed its Fiscal Year 2023 (FY23) budget proposal, a \$48.5 billion plan that continues to support economic growth across Massachusetts and sustains efforts to address the COVID-19 pandemic, while fully funds the Student Opportunity Act, and making key investments in other critical areas, including housing and health care.

Alongside this fiscally responsible and balanced budget proposal, submitted as House 2, the Baker-Polito Administration is filing a comprehensive tax proposal to provide relief for housing and childcare costs, eliminate the income tax for hundreds of thousands of low-income taxpayers, and maintain Massachusetts' competitiveness. The proposed changes would allow nearly \$700 million to remain in the hands of taxpayers on an annual basis starting immediately in tax year 2022.

"Our Fiscal Year 2023 budget will help position Massachusetts strongly for the future by making key investments to support economic growth, sustain our nation-leading educational system, and support the health and wellbeing of our residents," said Governor Charlie Baker. "At the same time, we are able to grow our reserves to historic levels and offer a tax relief proposal that will provide substantial relief for low-income seniors and working families. We look forward to working with our legislative colleagues to adopt a spending plan for FY23 that supports a strong and equitable economic recovery across the Commonwealth."

"The FY23 budget recommendation maintains our Administration's strong support for cities and towns with another increase in local aid consistent with tax revenue growth alongside other substantial investments to help the economic growth and development of Massachusetts communities," said Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito. "This plan takes advantage of our strong fiscal position to increase opportunity for individuals and families and continues our work in priority areas including treatment and prevention of substance addiction,

sexual assault and domestic violence, promoting equality and diversity, and increasing access to education, job skills training, and high-value careers.”

“The Baker-Polito Administration is proud to submit an FY23 budget that is fiscally responsible, brings the Rainy Day Fund to record levels, and makes significant investments to support those who need it most, all while affording tax cuts that will help hundreds of thousands of taxpayers across the Commonwealth,” said Administration and Finance Secretary Michael J. Heffernan. “We look forward to collaborating with the Legislature in the coming months to finalize a spending plan that continues to support growth, opportunity, and recovery across the state while limiting future budgetary risk.”

### **Tax Relief Proposal**

The comprehensive tax relief plan filed today alongside the FY23 budget includes proposals that will provide \$700 million in tax relief to low-income families and residents and maintain Massachusetts’ competitiveness. With a strong revenue picture and the budget projecting a significant deposit in to the Stabilization Fund, the Commonwealth can afford to provide this relief for working families and seniors. The plan proposes to:

- Double the maximum Senior Circuit Breaker Credit to lower the overall tax burden for more than 100,000 lower-income homeowners aged 65+
- Increase the rental deduction cap from \$3,000 to \$5,000, allowing approximately 881,000 Massachusetts renters to keep approximately \$77 million more annually
- Double the dependent care credit to \$480 for one qualifying individual and \$960 for two or more, and double the household dependent care credit rate to \$360 for one qualifying individual and \$720 for two or more to benefit more than 700,000 families

- Increase the Massachusetts adjusted gross income (AGI) thresholds for “no tax status” to \$12,400 for single filers, \$24,800 for joint filers, and \$18,650 for head of households, which will provide direct relief to more than 234,000 low-income filers
- Double the estate tax threshold and eliminate the current “cliff effect” that taxes the full amount below the threshold
- Change the short-term capital gains tax rate to 5% to align the Commonwealth with most other states

## **House 2 Fiscal Overview**

The proposed FY23 budget is based on the \$36.915 billion consensus tax revenue estimate, which anticipates a 2.7% growth in total collections over revised FY22 tax estimates. House 2 recommends a total of \$48.5 billion in authorized spending and transfers, excluding the Medical Assistance Trust Fund transfer, which is approximately 0.5% above Fiscal Year 2022 (FY22).

Through fiscally responsible policies and in close collaboration with the Legislature, the Baker-Polito Administration has brought the budget into structural balance and built up financial reserves to historic high levels. With a current balance of \$4.64 billion, the Stabilization Fund is already more than four times greater than its balance at the start of the Administration.

The House 2 budget includes a \$749 million increase to the Stabilization Fund, which, in combination with projected FY22 transfers, will grow the fund to an all-time high of \$6.64 billion by the end of FY23.

## **Providing Record Investments in Massachusetts Students**

In the House 2 budget, an increase of \$591.4 million is recommended to fully fund the Student Opportunity Act, including \$485 million in Chapter 70 funding, with a focus on school districts serving low-income students, for a total of

\$5.989 billion. The FY23 proposal also includes a \$41 million increase over FY22 for special education circuit breaker reimbursement for cities and towns, and a \$64.8 million increase in charter school reimbursement funding.

House 2 recommends \$31.1 million to scale up college and career pathway programs for high school students with a focus on equity and recruitment of high-need student populations. This funding will allow over 17,100 students, representing 6% of all Massachusetts high schoolers, to enroll in these programs.

The FY23 budget proposal also includes a \$1.45 billion investment for college readiness, affordability, and degree completion. This funding includes more than \$155 million in financial aid grants, including \$18 million to support an expansion of the MASSGrant Plus program that will enable all low-income, in-state undergraduate students to attend public higher education without incurring debt for mandatory tuition and mandatory fees – the largest increase in financial aid in over two decades.

## **Investing in Housing Stability**

The COVID-19 pandemic has intensified the state's existing housing challenges and brought further economic instability for many across the Commonwealth. In House 2, the Administration proposes historic reforms and investments in rental assistance, re-housing benefits, and housing vouchers to expedite recovery and create long-lasting improvements in housing stability and access to homeownership. Building on the Eviction Diversion Initiative (EDI), which has distributed more than \$500 million in state and federally funded rental assistance to individuals, families, and landlords in crisis, House 2 significantly expands state funding and eligibility for the Residential Assistance for Families in Transition (RAFT) and HomeBASE programs, with the goal of reducing evictions and homelessness.

The budget recommends \$80 million for RAFT, an increase of \$58 million (264%) above FY22, which will support a permanent benefit limit increase to \$7,000 over 12 months, versus \$4,000 pre-pandemic, and serve an estimated 15,000 households, up from 5,000-6,000 previously. \$56.9 million is recommended for HomeBASE, a \$30.9 million (119%) increase above FY22, to serve more than 4,100 families in FY23, versus a projected 1,885 in FY22. It will also support an increase to the maximum benefit from \$10,000 over one year to \$20,000 over two years, which will allow for more extensive and flexible support to households.

House 2 also proposes reforms to the Massachusetts Rental Voucher Program (MRVP) to maximize utilization of mobile vouchers and align benefits with federal rental assistance programs operated by the same local housing authorities. \$145.6 million is projected to be available for MRVP in FY23, an increase of 223% since FY15, which will support a reduction in tenant rent share from 40% to 30%, projected to benefit more than 9,000 households across the Commonwealth, and a shift to a new payment model to give families more housing choice and flexibility.

### **Expanding Affordable Childcare Options**

House 2 provides \$802 million in funding for the Department of Early Education and Care (EEC), an increase of \$273.9 million (52%) since 2015. This funding includes \$693.7 million in funding for income-eligible and DCF- and DTA-related childcare, which incorporates \$53.9 million to annualize the implementation of a more equitable parent fee scale that improves childcare affordability. The updated fee scale will result in virtually all subsidized families paying a fee that is 7% of their income or less in FY23.

### **Expanding Health Care Services for the Most Vulnerable**

The House 2 budget proposal protects core programs and builds



on investments made over the last seven years with meaningful health care reforms that will expand services for and reduce the burden on the most vulnerable, while improving the accessibility of equitable, world class care for all Massachusetts residents.

The budget recommends \$17.811 billion gross / \$7.169 billion net for MassHealth, which includes \$115 million to expand outpatient and urgent behavioral health services informed by the Roadmap for Behavioral Health Reform, a multi-year blueprint that incorporates feedback from hundreds of individuals, families, providers, and other behavioral health stakeholders. The MassHealth budget recommendation also incorporates an increase of \$21 million to expand the Medicare Savings Program, which will reduce out-of-pocket health care spending and prescription drug costs for approximately 34,000 low-income seniors and disabled individuals.

The Administration is also proposing new investments to support families that are fostering children in the care of the Department of Children and Families and encourage recruitment of additional foster parents, including \$13.4 million that will support approximately 4,500 families who provide care for 6,700 children.

### **Promoting Diversity and Opportunity**

The FY23 budget proposal builds on the Administration's longstanding commitment to promoting equality and opportunity for communities of color with more than \$20 million invested in targeted DESE college and career pathway programs, including Early College, Innovation Pathways, and Dual Enrollment programs. It also maintains over \$30 million for other initiatives aligned with the recommendations of the Governor's Black Advisory Commission (BAC) and Latino Advisory Commission (LAC). This funding includes support for YouthWorks Summer Jobs, small business development, financial literacy, and workforce training.

House 2 provides \$3.9 million to the Supplier Diversity Office (SDO) to continue its work to ensure accountability and compliance with diversity goals, oversee agency diversity spending, and audit and review spending data.

### **Encouraging Economic Growth and Development**

House 2 continues the Baker-Polito Administration's focus on promoting economic growth, opportunity, and equity for communities across the Commonwealth. The proposal includes \$4 million for the Small Business Technical Assistance Grant Program to support an estimated 1,500-2,000 entrepreneurs and small businesses, especially those owned by women, immigrants, veterans, and people of color. House 2 proposes \$7.5 million for the Community Empowerment and Reinvestment Grant program.

This budget maintains support for the Career Technical Initiative, providing \$17.9 million in total funding across the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development (EOLWD) and DESE. The initiative is designed to address the worker shortage and skills gap in the trades and technical fields, including plumbing, HVAC, manufacturing, and robotics, and it offers industry-recognized credentialing and career pathways with training aligned to apprenticeships and post-secondary degrees.

These investments build on the Administration's work through the COVID-19 pandemic to support more than 15,400 businesses across the Commonwealth with over \$700 million in relief. This program – the largest per capita state-sponsored business relief program in the nation – prioritized aid for specific economic sectors and demographics known to be the most impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and worked with a wide range of partners to ensure businesses that needed it most applied to the program.

### **Addressing Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence**

The impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic have created additional

challenges for survivors of sexual assault and domestic violence. The Governor's Council to Address Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence, chaired by Lieutenant Governor Polito, has continued to work closely with community partners and stakeholders to ensure that survivors and their families have access to necessary services and supports.

House 2 furthers these efforts by recommending \$123.4 million in total funding for services dedicated to the prevention and treatment of sexual assault and domestic violence, a 91% increase in funding since FY15.

### **Substance Addiction Treatment and Prevention**

The Administration, working closely with the Legislature, has nearly quadrupled funding for substance addiction treatment and prevention since taking office. These efforts have helped the Commonwealth add more than 1,200 patient treatment beds, including more than 800 beds for adults at varying treatment levels. House 2 proposes \$543.8 million in total funding across multiple agencies for a wide range of harm reduction, treatment, and recovery programs that support individuals struggling with substance addiction and programs that work to prevent substance addiction through education, prescription monitoring, and more.

## **THE BAKER-POLITO ADMINISTRATION'S FY23 BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS BY NUMBERS**

### **Supporting Local Government**

- Increases the Unrestricted General Government Aid (UGGA) investment by \$31.5 million compared to the FY22 budget, consistent with the expected 2.7% growth in tax revenue and keeping a promise made by Governor Baker and Lt. Governor Polito at the outset of their administration
- Total UGGA investment of \$1.2 billion to local cities and towns across the Commonwealth
- Under the Baker-Polito Administration, total annual UGGA has

increased by \$253.9 million

- \$6 million in funding for Community Compact related programs including best practices and regionalization and efficiency grants, an increase of \$2.4 million (66%) above FY22
- \$4.8 million for the Public Safety Staffing Grant Program managed by the Executive Office of Public Safety and Security
- \$3 million for district local technical assistance

## **K-12 Education**

Fully funds the landmark Student Opportunity Act, adding a total of \$591.4 million in new spending.

- \$485 million in Chapter 70 funding, for a total Chapter 70 investment of \$5.989 billion
- \$41 million increase for special education circuit breaker reimbursement for local cities and towns
- \$64.8 million in additional funding for charter school reimbursement

In addition to Chapter 70, provides \$952.8 million for the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, including \$31.1 million to scale up proven programs that will develop and expand college and career pathways for more than 17,100 high school students, a \$12 million increase above FY22 funding

## **Early Education and Childcare**

- \$802 million for Early Education and Care (EEC), an increase of \$273.9 million (52%) since FY15. The recommendation includes:
  - \$53.9 million to annualize the implementation of a more equitable parent fee scale that improves childcare affordability across the Commonwealth
  - \$9.2 million across the Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA) and EEC that would provide childcare subsidy access for individuals participating in Supplemental Nutrition

Assistance Program (SNAP) Employment and Training programming

- \$5.5 million across the Department of Children and Families (DCF) and EEC to increase enrollment of DCF-involved children in childcare and expand a temporary childcare program to reach more children and provide additional wraparound services

## **Higher Education**

- \$1.45 billion for the Department of Higher Education, University of Massachusetts, and state universities and community colleges, which includes:
  - More than \$155 million in financial aid grants, including \$18 million to support an expansion of the MASSGrant Plus program that will enable all low-income, in-state undergraduate students to attend public higher education without incurring debt for mandatory tuition and mandatory fees
  - \$22 million in financial aid for Massachusetts students attending private institutions
  - \$8.8 million for foster care financial aid and fee waiver programs to maintain support for over 1,400 students attending private and public campuses who are currently or were previously in DCF custody and care, or who have been adopted through DCF

## **Housing and Homelessness**

- \$716.5 million for the Department of Housing and Community Development, a \$132.4 million (23%) increase above FY22, including:
  - \$213.2 million for the Emergency Assistance family shelter system
  - \$145.6 million for MRVP to support more than 9,000 vouchers in FY23, an increase of 223% since FY15
  - \$85 million in funding for Local Housing Authorities
  - \$83.3 million, a \$25.4 million (44%) increase above the FY22 GAA, for Homeless Individual Shelters

- \$80 million for Residential Assistance for Families in Transition (RAFT), an increase of \$58 million (264%) above FY22
- \$56.9 million for HomeBASE Household Assistance, a \$30.9 million (119%) increase above FY22
- \$12.5 million for the DMH Rental Subsidy Program, a collaborative program through which DMH provides mental health services and DHCD provides rental assistance
- \$8.2 million for Housing Consumer Education Centers to help renters and homeowners secure and maintain stable housing
- \$5 million to continue an innovative model to create new housing opportunities with wraparound services for chronically homeless individuals

### **Economic Development**

- \$10 million for a new direct appropriation supporting the Massachusetts Life Sciences Center, a quasi-public agency tasked with building the life sciences community in Massachusetts
- \$7.5 million for the Community Empowerment and Reinvestment Grant program to support development in socially and economically disadvantaged communities
- \$4 million for the Small Business Technical Assistance Grant Program for entrepreneurs and small businesses, especially those owned by women, immigrants, veterans, and people of color
- \$2.5 million for Advanced Manufacturing Training

### **Labor and Workforce Development**

- \$440.1 million for workforce development programs and initiatives across a wide range of state agencies, a \$191.3 million (77%) increase since the Administration took office
- \$16.9 million in total funding to continue transforming vocational high schools into Career Technical Institutes running three shifts per day to provides pathways to high-

demand vocational trade careers, including plumbing, HVAC, manufacturing, and robotics

- \$16.2 million for the YouthWorks Summer Jobs Program to subsidize summer job opportunities and provide soft job skills education for youths
- \$600,000 for a new appropriation to expand research and analytics capabilities to enhance data-driven workforce development strategies

## **Health and Human Services**

- \$230 million for Chapter 257 human service provider funding under the new rate methodology that better reflects the cost of benchmarking direct care and clinical staff wages
- \$115 million to expand outpatient and urgent behavioral health services
- \$21 million to expand the Medicare Savings Program, reducing out-of-pocket health care spending and drug costs for approximately 34,000 low-income older adults and disabled individuals
- \$10 million in grants to local health departments to support municipalities' capacity to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic
- \$671.9 million for the Executive Office of Elder Affairs, a \$400.1 million (147%) increase since FY15
- \$84.1 million to fully fund the Turning 22 program at DDS
- \$1.191 billion for the Department of Children and Families, an increase of \$363.6 million (44%) since 2015, including \$13.4 million to support families that are fostering children in DCF care and to encourage recruitment of new foster families
- \$49.3 million for the Chelsea Soldiers' Home, a \$13.2 million (37%) increase above FY22, which supports the Fall 2022 opening of a new 154-bed state-of-the-art Community Living Center.

## **Substance Addiction Prevention and Treatment**

- \$543.8 million provided in FY23 across a variety of state

agencies, an increase of \$424.5 million (356%) since FY15. Funding includes:

- \$184.1 million for a variety of treatment and prevention services at the Department of Public Health
- \$260 million through a Section 1115 Substance Use Disorder (SUD) waiver from the federal government
- \$31 million for inpatient treatment beds operated by the Department of Mental Health
- \$65.9 million across public safety and law enforcement agencies, primarily for the provision of medication-assisted treatment

### **Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence**

• \$123.4 million across the budget, a 91% increase since FY15, which includes:

- \$56.1 million in funding for the Department of Public Health to carry out domestic violence and sexual assault prevention and survivor services, as well as emergency and transitional residential services for victims and their children
- \$42.9 million for providing shelter, services, and housing assistance for individuals and families who are victims or at risk of domestic abuse in their current living situations
- \$7.9 million for statewide sexual assault nurse examiner (SANE) programs for adults and adolescents in hospital settings and pediatric SANE programs in child advocacy centers
- \$2 million to expand services for survivors of human trafficking, including \$1 million through the Safe and Successful Youth program and \$1 million in a new appropriation in the Executive Office of Public Safety and Security

### **Promoting Equality and Opportunity**

- More than \$50 million supporting the recommendations of the Black Advisory Commission (BAC) and the Latino Advisory Commission (LAC), including:



- \$23.1 million to support higher education and career pathways for high school students in underserved communities through the Early College, Innovation Pathways, and Dual Enrollment programs
- \$4.8 million for the STEM Starter program across 15 community colleges
- \$4.5 million to support the YouthWorks Summer Jobs program
- \$5.9mMillion for Adult Basic Education (ABE)
- \$2.5 million for the Urban Agenda program
- \$1.9 million for the Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund
- \$3.9 million for the Supplier Diversity Office (SDO)

## **Transportation**

- \$1.512 billion in total budget transfers for the MBTA
- \$456 million for the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT), including \$95 million for snow and ice operations and \$3.4 million to support implementation of new funds provided through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act
- \$94 million for Regional Transit Authorities
- \$11.6 million for the Merit Rating Board

## **Energy and the Environment**

- \$4 million for the Summer Nights program, an increase of \$2.7 million (208%) versus FY22 funding
- \$30.5 million for the Massachusetts Emergency Food Assistance Program, which will provide more than 27.4 million nutritious meals for individuals and families
- \$3.7 million for climate change and adaptation preparedness
- \$1.3 million to expand the Swim Safe Massachusetts program to enhance and promote water safety

## **Criminal Justice and Public Safety**

- \$14.3 million to support for the 87th and 88th Massachusetts State Police Recruit Training Troops, which are expected to bring on 175 new troopers each

- \$78.3 million in total funding for re-entry and diversion programming across the Commonwealth, a \$42.6 million (120%) increase since 2015
- \$12.3 million in funding for the Shannon Grant program to fund anti-gang and youth violence prevention efforts
- \$10.4 million to fully fund tuition and fee waivers for National Guard members
- \$8 million for the Municipal Police Training Commission to implement bridge academies, expand training capacity, and annualize training requirements such as de-escalation and school resource officer trainings

\$5.8 million is also provided for new appropriations supporting the Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) Commission and four other commissions created in the Police Reform bill.

### **Securing and Modernizing Government IT**

- \$164.1 million for the Executive Office of Technology Services and Security to support:
  - Management of Cyber Security Operations Center (SOC)
  - Continued migration of applications and infrastructure to cloud, third-party on-premise, and Software as a Service (SaaS)
  - Continuation of EOTSS customer engagement initiative to enhance IT and security service offerings across Commonwealth agencies
  - IT strategy consulting services in support of priority state agency and cross-secretariat initiatives
  - Business intelligence (BI) and data analytics support for state agencies

Centralized software and IT contract compliance program

To access the Governor's filing letter, budget message, and specific account information [click here](#).

---

# **DA Quinn testifies in support of commutation for man convicted in murder of 24-year old New Bedford man**

Bristol County District Attorney Thomas M. Quinn III today testified before the Governor's Council in support of Gov. Baker's decision to commute the sentence of Thomas Koonce, who was convicted in 1992 of the first degree murder of 24-year-old Mark Santos in New Bedford.

The potential commutation would reduce Mr. Koonce's conviction from first degree murder to second degree murder, making him parole eligible.

District Attorney Quinn's testimony was as follows:

On July 20, 1987, Thomas Koonce, age 20, unlawfully took the life of Mark Santos, while on leave from the Marine Corp.

The victim, Mark Santos was 24 years old and had his whole life ahead of him. He was loved by his family and friends and had great potential.

Today, almost 35 years later they are still grieving the loss of their loved one. That grief will go on for the rest of their lives. There is no consolation for their loss other than their memories of Mark. As Councilor Kennedy stated, we should not lose sight of this great loss for the family. My heartfelt sympathy and prayers continue to be with the Santos family. They are a remarkable family with extraordinary perseverance.

Understandably, they are opposed to the commutation. The

opportunity for Mr. Koonce to be paroled is very painful for them. My sympathy and prayers continue to be with the Santos family.

As you know from the record, Mr. Koonce's first trial ended in a hung jury. He was convicted of 1st degree murder after a second trial in June 1992.

The prosecutor in that case was John Moses, a former colleague of mine when I was a young prosecutor.

In 2010 Mr. Koonce filed his first commutation petition.

Mr. Moses testified at the 2010 hearing in support of the petition. He said that he was troubled by the 1st degree conviction. In his closing argument in 1992 he only argued that the jury should convict Mr. Koonce of 2nd degree murder. He expressed concern over the 1st degree conviction based on the facts and circumstances of the case. Mr. Moses was both a public defender and a prosecutor during his career and a respected attorney. He passed away in May 2015.

Despite the denial of his 2010 petition, Mr. Koonce continued to engage in very meaningful rehabilitative efforts. He obtained his degree from Boston University.

He became a leader in restorative justice in the institution.

He also has been a mentor for many inmates during his incarceration.

Of significance, is that his rehabilitative efforts were done while he believed he was going to spend the rest of his life in prison.

In 2014 he filed a second petition for commutation.

Based on the record, he has made a very compelling case for commutation.

As part of his rehabilitative efforts he wrote a letter of apology to the family taking responsibility for the killing of Mark Santos.

He appears to understand more clearly than he did in 2010 the gravity of his actions and the irreparable harm he has caused the family of Mark Santos.

Based on all the facts and circumstances of this case, the defendant's petition to commute the sentence to 2nd degree murder is a just result.

Commuting his sentence does not minimize his actions, but acknowledges the extraordinary efforts he made to reform his life.

For him to serve the rest of his life in prison without any opportunity for parole would not be fair or just under all of the circumstances of this case.

The commutation before you appropriately preserves the murder conviction. It only reduces the murder conviction from 1st degree to 2nd degree murder. Mr. Koonce has served approximately 30 years in prison. Commutation would make his sentence 30 years to life with the possibility of parole.

The Governor did the right thing in commuting the sentence to 2nd degree murder. It is a just and appropriate result. I would ask you to vote in support of the commutation.

---

**Legislature approves New**

# **Bedford golf course development; paves way for new job creation, economic development**

Today, the Massachusetts state legislature gave final approval to legislation filed by Senator Mark Montigny (D-New Bedford) that will redevelop the New Bedford municipal golf course into a 21st century advanced manufacturing campus.

Redeveloping nearly 100 acres of the 275-acre property while retaining modern golfing facilities is expected to generate up to 1,000 new jobs and approximately \$2.7 million in new revenue for the city. Today's action by the legislature represents a significant milestone for the project and victory for the longtime New Bedford Senator who has championed the project since 2017.

In order to construct the new advanced manufacturing campus, Massachusetts law requires the city to place conservation protections on open land of similar acreage or value to the current golf course space slated for development. The requirement is mandatory per Article 97 of the Massachusetts state constitution. This procedure requires local approval and a formal two-thirds vote in the Massachusetts legislature. In 2021, the New Bedford City Council voted to approve the Article 97 land swap, which will place conservation restrictions on 156 acres of city-owned land located along Woodcock Road in Dartmouth.

In March 2021, Montigny filed S29, An Act authorizing the city of New Bedford to convey certain land acquired for open space and playground purposes. The bill authorizes the envisioned land swap necessary to permit the project to move forward.

Montigny worked with legislative committee chairs and Senate leadership to propel the bill forward. The Senate engrossed the bill in October 2021 and the House finally followed, approving the bill during an informal session earlier this month.

“We will continue to work expeditiously so that shovels are in the ground in time to help boost our local economic recovery,” said Senator Montigny, who has advocated and strongly supported the project since 2017. “I want to thank our House sponsor, Representative Chris Markey, as well as Representatives Schmid and Cabral, Mayor Mitchell, our City Council, and all the interested stakeholders for their efforts to date. I look forward to this project’s continued progress.”

---

## **Southcoast Health Urgent Care Recognized for High Standard of Excellence**

**Southcoast Health** announced today its Urgent Care Center locations in

Dartmouth, Fairhaven, Fall River, Lakeville, Seekonk, Wareham and Middletown, Rhode Island have

been reaccruited by the Urgent Care Association and received the Accredited Urgent Care designation.

“This accomplishment represents Southcoast’s commitment to providing high-quality care to patients in our community,” says Tonya Johnson, DNP RN NEA-BC, Senior Vice President and Chief Operations

Officer for Southcoast Hospitals Group. “Being recognized as an Accredited Urgent Care Center

demonstrates that our urgent care locations meet and exceed an exceptional standard of care. We are so grateful for the amazing frontline staff who continuously put our community first.”

Accreditation is the highest level of distinction that can be earned from the Urgent Care Association. The re-accreditation process is very thorough and must be completed every 36 months. It includes site visits, patient visit observations and policy reviews.

“It was a true team effort to achieve this re-accreditation,” says Kelly Houde, Practice Administrator for Urgent Care Centers at Southcoast Health. “Especially as our staff continues to step up in unbelievable ways during these very difficult and trying times with COVID.” Adding significance to this achievement, The Southcoast Health Urgent Care Centers continue to play an instrumental role in Southcoast’s COVID response, providing essential support to hospitals and the community. “From testing to treating patients that are experiencing COVID symptoms, the urgent care team continuously steps up to care for patients who do not need to go to the emergency room,” says Johnson.

Urgent Care Centers provide the community with immediate, non-emergency care, including treatment for illnesses and minor injuries such as burns, fractures and sprains. These locations are open to all patients in the community, including those who do not have a Southcoast Health primary care provider, with walk-in availability close to home.

Further emphasizing the exceptional standard of care, Southcoast Health Urgent Care Centers are backed by the specialty services and resources of Southcoast Health. Equipped with advanced diagnostic tools



and resources, all seven urgent care centers offer comprehensive care with the ability to refer patients to a specialist if needed.

For added convenience, patients seeking services at Southcoast Health Urgent Care centers can wait in the comfort of their own home until it's their turn to be seen through the online check-in system. Visitors can find the closest center, its current wait time and even save a spot in line before arriving.

To learn more about Southcoast Health's Urgent Care Centers, please visit: <https://www.southcoast.org/services/urgent-care/>

### **About Southcoast Health**

Celebrating the system's 25th anniversary in 2021, Southcoast Health is a not-for-profit, charitable organization and the largest

provider of primary and specialty care in the region, serving communities in Rhode Island and across Southeastern

Massachusetts. Southcoast Health is a Newsweek's World's Best Hospital in 2019, 2020, and 2021. Out of the 2,743 considered hospitals in the United States, only 250 earned this recognition. In 2020 and 2021, St. Luke's is a Newsweek and Leapfrog's Best

Maternity Hospitals. US News ranks Southcoast 9th among hospitals in Massachusetts, and 2nd among those in the Providence

Metro area. In 2019 and 2020, the Southcoast Health system also received seven awards, including Best Hospitals and Best Place

to Work, in SouthCoast Media Group's Best of the Best Awards voted on by residents and readers.

---

# **City's Director of Special Projects & Programs speaks about resettling Afghanistan families in New Bedford**

"Janet Barbosa, the city's Director of Special Projects & Programs and the daughter of Portuguese immigrants, spoke from the heart Sunday at First Unitarian Church about the work to resettle Afghanistan families in New Bedford, how to help, and how the families are doing:

People who want to help – gift cards and people willing to drive the families on errands, including to Boston, are especially needed – can call 508-979-1410."

---

# **Massachusetts Governor Baker delivers 2022 State of the Commonwealth address**

"Tonight, Governor Charlie Baker delivered his State of the Commonwealth address from the Hynes Convention Center. Remarks as prepared for delivery:

Madame President. Mr. Speaker. Leaders Tarr & Jones. Members of the House and Senate. Members of Congress. Fellow Constitutional Officers. Members of the Governor's Council.

Chief Justice Budd and Members of the Judiciary. Members of

the Cabinet and our Administration.

Mayor Wu. Secretary Walsh. Sheriffs. District Attorneys. Mayors. Local Officials. Reverend Clergy. Distinguished Guests.

Thanks so much for being with us as I deliver my eighth and final State of the Commonwealth Address.

To Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito – you are one of the finest public servants and finest people I have ever had the opportunity to work with.

Your work with local governments has forever changed the way people in public life think about the responsibilities of the Lieutenant Governor.

There's a reason a lot of people are running to serve as the next Lieutenant Governor. They've seen the way she's done the job, and they believe that they can follow in her very large footsteps. They can try, but they'll be wrong. She broke the mold and the new one belongs to her.

To Lauren Baker, my wife of 34 years, and the vision behind the now spectacular Wonderfund. You are simply my everything.

You gave me a chance to run and serve these past seven years. And you and your team of 4 made the Wonderfund the one place foster families, social workers and kids can go where the answer is always YES.

To prepare for this, I did something I'm sure no one else has done. I went back and read all seven of my previous State of the Commonwealth speeches. They were...brilliant.

They were all different, given the times and the work to be done.

But they were positive and optimistic. They touted the special qualities of our people, our communities, and our

institutions. They marveled at our success as a Commonwealth. They spoke about our challenges and our setbacks.

But mostly, they focused on our opportunities to be better, to do better, together.

Each one asked us to find the courage to compromise. To engage. To seek what John F. Kennedy once called, "The Right Answer – Not the Republican answer or the Democratic answer."

And for the most part, we've done just that.

Led by the Lt. Governor, we brought last mile broadband service to the people of 53 Western Mass communities.

We brought care and compassion to Bridgewater State Hospital after decades of national embarrassment.

We created the first Section 35 treatment beds for women in state history and became a national leader in the fight against opioid addiction.

We eliminated the widespread use of hotels and motels to shelter homeless families.

We fixed a very broken Health Connector and made it a national model.

We made deep water offshore wind a booming, affordable reality in America.

We created the first municipal vulnerability planning program in the country and over 95 percent of our communities have participated.

We modernized local government by updating 50 years' worth of mostly useless statutory busywork. There were so many happy local officials with us when we signed that bill into law.

We enacted long overdue changes to our exclusionary zoning laws to unleash much needed housing production.

We rescued a bankrupt, unaccountable public transportation system. Created an oversight board and invested over \$6 billion to modernize its operations and infrastructure.

We delivered the Green Line Extension into Somerville, and finally, after 30 years of broken promises, we funded and began building commuter rail service between Fall River and New Bedford, and Boston, which will begin operations in 2023.

We increased public school spending by \$1.6 billion, and fully funded the game changing Student Opportunity Act.

We invested over \$100 million in modernizing equipment at our vocational and technical programs, bringing opportunities to thousands of students and young adults.

We dramatically expanded STEM programming, and we helped thousands of high school students from Gateway Cities earn college credits free through our Early College programs.

We enacted criminal justice reform legislation that emphasized rehabilitation, treatment and reintegration and we enacted a forward looking, comprehensive and balanced police reform law.

In 2015, we inherited a billion-dollar budget deficit and a depleted Rainy Day Fund.

Over the next seven years, we never spent more than we took in. Increased local aid to schools and communities. Cut taxes for working families. Invested hundreds of millions of dollars alongside billions of dollars of private sector investments in housing, downtown development, waterfront and port operations, and job-creating business expansions.

And that Rainy Day Fund grew from \$1 billion to \$5 billion among the largest fiscal safety nets in the country.

As we rolled into calendar year 2020, we had the highest number of people working in state history, wage gains at every level of the economy, and hundreds of thousands of new jobs.

It felt like the world belonged to us.

And then came COVID.

We all know the past 22 months have been tough. We've all suffered some degree of loss, disruption, confusion, anger and isolation.

But the people of Massachusetts did what they always do. They collaborated, created, reimagined, and made the unbearable bearable.

On so many issues, Massachusetts led the way.

We had the largest small business grant program in the country.

Constructed with the state legislature, this program funneled \$700 million to over 15,000 small businesses. The vast majority were owner-operated. Half were owned by women and almost half were owned by people of color.

Our eviction diversion program, which began before the feds stepped in, has pumped almost \$500 million into rental and mortgage assistance programs, making it one of the largest in the country. Eviction hearings are down dramatically and so is demand for emergency shelter and temporary housing.

Our food insecurity programs served millions of residents across the Commonwealth and brought together partners and providers, ranging from foundations to farmers' markets to food banks. The knowledge gained has created new, permanent investments and better approaches to supplying and distributing food to those who need it.

To stop the spread of COVID, we worked with local labs and dozens of community partners to create one of the most expansive free COVID testing programs in the country.

To keep kids and adults safe and in school, we partnered with

colleges and universities, K-12 schools and child-care providers to create a first in the nation COVID testing program.

We invented Shared Streets to help cities and towns transform their downtowns into beehives of outdoor activities. Dining. Shopping. Street theater. Farmer's markets. Walking. Biking. Pop Up Stores. You name it.

And the people of Massachusetts got vaccinated.

Over 80% of our eligible population is fully vaccinated, and those over the age of 65 approach 100 percent. 5.2 million people are fully vaccinated, and about half of them have already received a booster shot. We are a national leader.

Throughout this pandemic, there's been no shortage of things we just don't know, and it's easy to get lost in that.

But we should also remember what we do know. Vaccines and all the other resources we have now work. The chance of suffering serious illness if someone is vaccinated is very, very small.

Special shout out to the vaccinators from across the Commonwealth who stepped up to support their fellow residents.

Thousands of people got this done and made it possible for Massachusetts to be a national leader in this critical effort. It's the most reliable and fastest path toward normal.

I asked former East Boston Neighborhood Health Center CEO Manny Lopes and Gladys Vega, Executive Director of La Collaborativa in Chelsea, to join us tonight.

Their partnership, and the trust they've earned over many years in Chelsea, Revere and Everett, made a major difference there. Vaccination rates in all three communities, despite some early challenges, now come close to or exceed our statewide averages.

We're so grateful for all the work your teams have done to keep people safe. Thank you.

There's an old expression about what you learn about people when they are truly tested.

Well – for the past two years, the people, institutions and communities of this Commonwealth have most definitely been tested. Time and time again you have adjusted, and you have responded.

Together, we set the course for a comeback– and it's working.

Our unemployment rate is below 4% for the first time since March of 2020, and we've gained back over half a million jobs.

And because of all you've done, and all we've done together, I can stand here tonight and say the State of our Commonwealth remains strong.

As we enter the new year, there are many important opportunities to build on the collaborative work we've done over the past seven.

Two of those opportunities are closing loopholes that threaten public safety.

The first loophole allows those charged with violent crimes, who may also have lengthy criminal records, to walk free before trial.

And the second leaves residents, many of them women, with little recourse when an ex-partner attempts to violate them and destroy their lives.

We've filed bills to deal with these issues three times, to no avail. The time to do something about this is long past.

The Lieutenant Governor and I recently listened to several women tell us their survival stories. It was one of the most



difficult conversations we've ever been part of.

One after another, these women described, in graphic detail, how they survived multiple physical and psychological assaults, and how these loopholes actually protected the men who were terrorizing them.

It was awful.

Current law is clearly not working. These women were bothered, battered, bruised and beaten time and time again by their abusers, and nothing changed. We felt their desperation.

It would be impossible to listen to their stories and walk away believing the Commonwealth is serious about protecting these women.

Another woman came forward to detail how an ex-partner, unbeknownst to her, had taken dozens of lewd pictures of her and posted them on the internet.

And if it couldn't get any more awful, she then saw the note from him on the website: "video coming soon."

A lifetime of relationships, a small business she owned, a basic sense of privacy we all take for granted, were shattered by one man's despicable actions.

Massachusetts is one of only two states that doesn't treat this as a crime. 48 other states treat this as a crime. Because it is a crime.

These women had the courage to come forward and publicly tell their stories. They deserve to be heard. And they and the women they speak for deserve a vote on these two pieces of legislation.

As we come out of the pandemic, we know we have a mental health crisis.

Like many things, it was there before Covid arrived. But the anxiety, disruption and the isolation that came with Covid has made it worse and more visible.

Before the pandemic, we filed a health care reform bill that would improve access to mental health services.

Some pieces of it, like telehealth, became important parts of our effort to expand access to care during the pandemic. Since that time, the legislature has written telehealth into state law. But many other parts of that 2019 proposal have not been addressed.

The message remains the same: the healthcare system doesn't value behavioral health services, primary care and geriatric services. As a result, there are enormous staff and clinician shortages in exactly the areas of care that we need most.

We know the legislature cares deeply about this issue, and we look forward to working with you to finish this work during this legislative session.

We also appreciated the chance to testify recently before the Joint Committee on Telecommunications, Utilities & Energy on our fourth climate proposal. This one builds on our very successful offshore wind agenda and includes the creation of a \$750 million Clean Energy Innovation Fund.

There are big ideas looking for a chance to test themselves in our academic institutions and our cutting-edge research organizations. This fund can create the ground-breaking solutions we need to get to net zero.

We're also working to put the ARPA funds appropriated by the legislature and signed into law about 6 weeks ago to work across the Commonwealth.

Housing. Health care. Skills training. Cultural investments. Small business support. Water and sewer improvements. Port

development and a host of other investments, all to help us adjust to the changing nature of life and work in a post-pandemic Commonwealth. We know there is much to do, and we need to move quickly.

In addition, we'll soon file a transportation bond bill to ensure we get the full benefit of the federal Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

As you know, accessing these federal dollars requires state government to authorize the funds that will pay for our share of federally approved projects.

Smart, disciplined fiscal management has made it possible for us to maximize federal participation in dozens of projects. There's a long list of opportunities here, but a big piece of these funds will be awarded through a competitive process.

We need to move quickly to secure these dollars.

Fiscal discipline also makes it possible for us to make strategic decisions about tax fairness and our competitive position.

The pandemic has proven that we now live in a new world where people have more flexibility about where they live and work.

To encourage our citizens to continue to call Massachusetts home and to help those struggling to make ends meet because of rising inflation, we'll file several tax breaks in our budget proposal later this week.

First, let's support parents.

The past two years have been very difficult ones for families. Our budget doubles the tax break for children and dependents, because every Massachusetts family deserves a break.

We'll also ask lawmakers to eliminate income taxes for the lowest paid 230,000 taxpayers here in the Commonwealth.

Instead of paying income taxes, these people should be able to use their earnings to pay for necessities, like food, housing and transportation.

Rents are also rising while wages remain relatively flat. It's time to give renters a bigger tax break on their monthly payments.

It's also been a tough two years for seniors. We'll ask the legislature to give them a break on their property taxes and make our estate tax more competitive with the rest of the country.

We've asked the people of Massachusetts to do a lot these past few years.

It's time for us to invest in Massachusetts families. To give them back some of the tax revenue they created through their hard work.

Before I close out my remarks tonight, I want to thank a few more people.

It's been a very long two years for everyone, but it's been an especially difficult period for anyone who has to "go to work."

Many people have been able to work from home and continue to get the job done.

But our friends and neighbors in health care, senior care, education, retail, hospitality, emergency response, public works, public safety, restaurant, food service, grocery, transportation, and a huge number of other fields had to show up. And they did every single day.

Their work and commitment, their patience and their grace, throughout all this has been extraordinary. Can we give all those folks the round of applause they so richly deserve?

Thank you.

As most people know, we've been calling on the National Guard since our first month in office. Whether it was Snowmagedon, bomb cyclones, tornadoes, hurricanes, ice storms, natural gas explosions or forest fires, the Guard has been an amazing partner.

But they became a godsend during the COVID pandemic. They did it all.

Transporting medical gear. Testing residents and staff at long term care and other congregate care facilities. Vaccinating people at locations big and small, including here at the Hynes, where I got vaccinated. Driving school buses so kids could return to in person learning. Filling in for absent workers across almost every kind of health care institution. Helping us right the ship at the Holyoke Soldiers' Home. And protecting our nation's capital in the aftermath of January 6th.

All that, and they continue to deploy to hot spots all over the globe.

General Gary Keefe, on behalf of the people of Massachusetts, I want to thank you, your team, and all members of the Guard for your service. You make us so much better than we would be without you.

Earlier tonight, several members of our Gold Star Family community led us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

We've gotten to know these families quite well over the past seven years. You represent yourselves and the cause you stand for with grace and dignity and you honor us with your presence here tonight.

Five months ago, we were horrified when we heard the news that a suicide bomber had attacked a checkpoint outside the airport

in Kabul, Afghanistan. Over 200 Afghan civilians were killed in the explosions, along with 13 members of the U.S. military.

One of those lost that day was Massachusetts' own Marine Corps Sergeant Johanny Rosario Pichardo.

She volunteered for that mission. She was there because she wanted to be there to evacuate women and children from the increasingly dangerous streets of Kabul. And she paid for it with her life.

Lieutenant Governor Polito and I spent time with her family when she returned home. They are kind and decent people. Proud to be from Lawrence, proud of Johanny, and heartbroken that she's gone.

I'd ask for a moment of silence tonight to honor those we've lost and the Gold Star Families they've left behind. They are the very best among us.

Thank you.

Let me close with this.

In the fall of 2018, we were rocked by a natural gas explosion that shut down Lawrence, North Andover and Andover.

18 year-old Leonel Rondon tragically died that day, and many others were severely injured. Everything in most of Andover, Lawrence and North Andover ground to a halt.

Many members of our team practically lived in makeshift command centers alongside hundreds of emergency response and construction personnel for several months as we worked feverishly to repair the damage.

It was an avalanche of issues, problems and decisions that didn't stop for weeks, but we worked through it.

To this day, I think a big part of our success was due to the

relationships we already had with most of the key leaders who were involved.

The Lieutenant Governor and I knew the local officials and the state legislators. We knew the utility companies. We knew the contractors. And they all knew us.

We trusted each other. And that trust made much of what we got done over the next three months possible.

There's no collaboration without trust.

If we've tried to do anything over the past seven years, we've tried to build trust. Others can debate whether we've succeeded or not. I believe we have. And I believe it shows in the work we've done during good times and difficult ones over the past seven years.

Today, it's clearly more difficult to build trust, to collaborate in public life than it once was.

The explosion of social media, the arrival of hundreds of news channels and information distribution platforms. And the ongoing churn of information have made it almost impossible for anyone in public life who wants to collaborate to build trust.

Facts are often fungible and curated. Missteps play out in real time and can go viral in the most bizarre and unusual ways. Context is non-existent. And in many cases, history and current events get twisted to support whatever point of view someone is advocating for.

But the answer to the swirl and chaos of modern life is not more of the same poisonous brew.

The answer is to stand up and accept the responsibility that comes with the work. To understand that trust is earned and collaboration is how difficult things get done.

Many of the projects we've worked on with our colleagues in local government would never have happened without trust. Many of the most important pieces of legislation we've enacted over the past seven years would not have happened without trust.

Trust is where possibility in public life comes from.

If you can't tell someone you work with, partner with, or collaborate with, what you really think it's very hard to do small things. Much less big ones.

Here in Massachusetts, we've done big things and small ones.

At a time when so much of our public dialogue is designed to destroy trust, to manipulate facts, and to pull people apart. We've partnered with one another, and shared success and blame along the way.

We should continue to focus on building and maintaining positive, collaborative relationships. Because they work for the people we serve and it's what most voters expect from us.

They want us to work hard and collaborate the same way they do. To listen to them as if they were our neighbors, because they are. To appreciate their life stories the same way we expect them to appreciate ours.

They want us to knock off the noise and focus on building better, stronger communities from one end of the Bay State to the other.

Me too.

And honestly, when I think about what I'll miss most come this time next year, it will be that opportunity to continue to partner with so many of the great people in this room. And with the great people across this amazing state. Who want nothing more than to leave it better than they found it for those who come after them.



But before that time comes, we have a responsibility do just that for the next twelve months.

Let's get to work.

God Bless the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

And God Bless the United States of America."

---

## Potential Snowstorm This Weekend Could Drop a Foot of Snow in the Greater New Bedford Area

Prediction models are all over the map (pun intended) as a swath of winter weather will descend on the Southcoast late Friday through Sunday morning. Early totals show 1 to 3 inches Friday night with the *potential* for up to 14 inches Saturday through Sunday. Obviously the modeling might change, but there is little doubt that our area will be affected in some way, shape or form during the weekend.

There is every indication that a storm will continue to develop and strengthen off the Atlantic coast later this week. Fun Fact: the storm *might* intensify enough from Friday to Saturday to be classified as a bomb cyclone as it moves north into New England. Late January is typically prime time for winter storms; we've dodged a few bullets this season and the last couple of winters have been relatively mild.

We'll continue to update the forecast as the weekend approaches. In the meantime...

we're gonna need  
more bread and milk



---

## **Massachusetts officials encourage residents to develop fire escape plan for senior family members**

"#OlderAdults are at greater risk of dying in a fire, but a home escape plan can help.

Be sure you and everyone at home know two ways out, practice your route and keep it clear, and keep glasses and hearing

aids near your bed at night in case you have to grab them and go.” -Massachusetts Department of Fire Services.

## Escape Planning for Older Adults



Your risk of dying in a home fire is greater as you get older. Knowing what to do if there is a fire can make a big difference.

- ✓ Know two ways out of every room. Practice using both ways.
- ✓ Remove any items that may block your way out of the room or your home.
- ✓ Discuss your fire escape plan with family and neighbors. Contact your building manager or fire department to discuss your plan if you need extra help escaping.
- ✓ Keep eyeglasses, keys, hearing aids and a phone within reach next to your bed.
- ✓ Practice your home fire escape drill twice a year.



Adults 65 and over are  
twice as likely to die in fires

For more information and free resources, visit  
**[www.usfa.fema.gov](http://www.usfa.fema.gov)**

*Massachusetts Department of Fire Services photo.*

# Seoane Landscape Design is Hiring for Multiple Positions

## About Us:

Seoane Landscape Design, Inc – 551 Bedford Street – Abington, MA 02351

Established in 1973, Seoane Landscape Design and Garden Center, Inc. is an award-winning, full-service landscape contractor for high-end residential and commercial properties. They are located 45 minutes North of Fall River and New Bedford.

**\*\*TRANSPORTATION INCLUDED\*\***

## Company Offering to qualified applicants:

- Pay is commensurate with experience
- Benefit package with health insurance
- 401K
- Profit sharing
- Overtime available
- Career and advancement opportunities
- Year- Round work

## Available Positions:

- Machine Operators (Hydraulic License a must)
- CDL Drivers (DOT card a must)
- Landscape Crew Members
- Maintenance Crew Members
- Landscape Masons

## Requirements:

- Experience with Maintenance equipment & construction tools is helpful
- Ability to work 45-55 hours per week (OVERTIME PAY OVER 40

HOURS) (Monday – Saturday)

**Please contact Dennis Baptista @ 781-706-5593 if interested OR**  
Email your resume to: [sstoddard@seoanelandscape.com](mailto:sstoddard@seoanelandscape.com)  
You may also fill out an online application here:  
<https://www.seoanelandscape.com/contact-us/employment-opportunities/>

**\*\*In Person Job Fair\*\* In Fall Rive: OPEN HOUSE 2/26/22 – 10AM  
– 2PM**

**ST. ANTHONY'S BAND CLUB – 1040 PINE ST – FALL RIVER, MA**

