

Massachusetts Gov. Baker announces \$520 Million investment in college infrastructure, STEM studies

Additional \$400 Million Will Be Invested Over the Next Five Years for Critical Building Infrastructure.

The Baker-Polito Administration today announced investments totaling more than \$120 million to four public colleges and universities to renovate and expand campus facilities that further students' skills in STEM fields. Salem State University, Massasoit Community College, Springfield Technical Community College, and the University of Massachusetts Lowell will each receive \$30 million for major capital projects that will modernize campus facilities to support STEM instruction and expand the number of skilled workers in key STEM occupations in the Commonwealth. The improvements will increase enrollment capacity in these programs by about 2,000 students. Governor Charlie Baker and Lt. Governor Karyn Polito announced the funding today at an event at Salem State University.

The Administration today also announced a new \$165 million program to make critical infrastructure upgrades at higher education campuses over the next five years. The first four awards of the new Critical Building Infrastructure Program, totaling over \$60 million, will support projects at the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth, Northern Essex Community College, Berkshire Community College, and Massachusetts Maritime Academy. This funding is in addition to \$250 million the Administration has committed to address smaller critical repairs at college campuses over the next five years.

“The investments we are announcing today will help our public colleges and universities better educate and train the workforce of tomorrow,” said Governor Charlie Baker. “The overarching goal of these investments is to modernize campus facilities to support STEM instruction, ensuring students graduate from college with skills to be ready to compete in high-demand fields.”

“These capital projects at our state colleges and universities will help to further expand capacity in the STEM workforce and grow enrollment at these institutions,” said Lt. Governor Karyn Polito. “We are glad to support these projects and invest in our public institutions of higher education.”

The state’s investment will leverage local contributions, bringing the total investments to \$242 million for the four major projects. The state funds are available through An Act Providing for Capital Facility Repairs and Improvements for the Commonwealth, a \$3.9 billion capital bond bill passed by the Legislature and signed by the Governor in 2018.

The projects will help the colleges and universities boost enrollment in high-demand STEM programs, and three projects will expand enrollment capacity in nursing and health sciences programs, which will assist the Commonwealth in supporting a pipeline of new talent for an essential workforce impacted by the pandemic.

“All four of these major projects address critical workforce and economic development priorities in their regions for high growth STEM majors and occupations,” said Education Secretary James Peyser. “And the UMass Dartmouth project will be the first project undertaken as part of our strategy to address critical building infrastructure needs at all of our public higher education campuses over the next five years.”

“These investments will enhance campus facilities and open opportunities for more students across the Commonwealth to

access education in critical, high-demand fields,” said Administration and Finance Secretary Michael J. Heffernan. “We are pleased to fund this important capital work at colleges and universities that will deliver long-lasting benefits to our students, workforce, and economy.”

Each project was evaluated on how it will respond to workforce needs, potential impact on students, collaboration with industry organizations and education partners, as well as criteria established as part of the administration’s strategic framework for long-term capital investments at public higher education campuses, which prioritizes projects to address the deferred maintenance backlog and support workforce needs.

Major Capital Project Awards – \$120 Million:

Massasoit Community College, Science, Nursing and Allied Health Renovations: The project will include comprehensive renovations to the college’s science and liberal arts buildings, which will benefit nearly every student enrolled at the college. Science labs will be modernized, specialized instructional space increased, and classrooms expanded. The total project will cost approximately \$41 million, with \$30 million in state funds.

Salem State University, SSU BOLD: This project will alter the campus footprint through the sale of the South Campus and provide updated healthcare and STEM spaces that will positively impact students’ experiences. The total project cost is estimated at \$84 million, with \$30 million in state investment, \$54 million investment from Salem State and private donations.

Springfield Technical Community College, Relocation of the School of Health and Patient Simulation: This project will relocate the School of Health and Patient Simulation programs out of Building 20 into more suitable locations on the STCC campus and in the Springfield Technology Park. The total

projected cost is \$41 million, with \$30 million state funds, \$11 investment from STCC and private resources.

University of Massachusetts Lowell, Olney Hall: This project will modernize and improve capacity in lab spaces and address size constraints and enrollment needs in STEM fields such as biomedical engineering, chemical engineering, chemistry, physics, and civil and environmental engineering. The total project cost is \$75 million, with \$30 million in state funds and \$45 million committed by UMass Lowell.

New Critical Building Infrastructure Program:

This new program launched by the Administration today will address critical building infrastructure renovations at higher education campuses. Approximately \$165 million will be invested over the next five years to renovate or repair critical building infrastructure like updating HVAC systems, repairing elevators, and improving energy efficiency in buildings. The Administration has also committed \$250 million over five years for smaller critical repairs, like replacing roofs, windows, floors, and bathrooms, \$50 million of which will be invested in FY23.

University of Massachusetts Dartmouth: UMass Dartmouth's \$30 million building infrastructure project will modernize the Liberal Arts and Sciences Building that was constructed in 1966 by providing a sustainable, energy efficient HVAC system that includes air conditioning and individual space temperature control. A new ventilation system will improve comfort and offer energy monitoring and control capabilities. Electrical systems will be upgraded and expanded to support the new HVAC equipment, and the project will also involve window replacement and building envelope improvements.

Northern Essex Community College: This \$10 million investment will support the renovation of the General Services (B) and Science (E) Buildings: Infrastructure renovation of the "B"

General Services and “E” Science Buildings on the Haverhill campus, which houses classrooms, labs and offices. The focus of the renovation is on energy efficiency including systems upgrades and replacement of windows and doors, critical ADA compliance needs, and enhanced life safety. The total project cost is estimated at approximately \$12 million.

Berkshire Community College: This \$10 million investment will support window replacement at Koussevitzky and Edwards Library buildings, including the removal of caulking and replacement of windows to comply with EPA requirements.

Massachusetts Maritime Academy: This \$10.5 million investment will support upgrades to the infrastructure of the Massachusetts Maritime Academy pier to support the Academy’s training operations.

Since 2018, the Baker-Polito Administration has provided significant investments for deferred maintenance projects at all the Commonwealth’s public colleges and universities. During the past six years, the Administration has committed funds or invested approximately \$1.1 billion to address deferred maintenance and critical repairs at higher education campuses.