# New Bedford Senator Montigny leads legislator pay raises with 79%, $65,315 hike

Earlier this year, **Massachusetts legislators voted to increase their pay and judges pay by $18 million**. It was **vetoed by Governor Baker but quickly overturned by the legislators**. The pay raise was mostly on party lines – **no Republicans supported the pay raise bill** and nine House Democrats and three Senate Democrats opposed the measure.

Before the pay raise, Senate President Stanley Rosenberg was the only state senator of 40 to make more than $100,000 a year. In 2016, he earned $102,233 – $60,033 base pay, $35,000 leadership pay and $7,200 for office expenses. He's now earning $162,548 and now at least 28 of the 40 now make over $100,000 per year.

Excluding Joseph Boncore who was only in the senate part time last year, the biggest winner pay raise percentage wise was New Bedford Senator Mark Montigny with a whopping 79% increase. Montigny went from a total income of $82,233 to $147,548. The biggest increases came from his leadership pay increase ($15,000 to $65,000) and office expenses increase ($7,200 to $20,000). Even if you eliminate office expenses his pay went from $75,033 to $127,548.

The biggest winner salary wise was Senate President Stanley Rosenberg who went from earning $102,233 to $162,548 or a 59% pay raise.

The State Senate legislators were the clear winners, but the Massachusetts House also saw sizable pay raises. In 2016, only one of the 160 State representatives, House Speaker Robert DeLeo, made over $100,000 in total income. Now 30 of the 160 State representatives do.

Combine both the Senate and House, and we've gone from 2 of the 200 Massachusetts legislators, 1%, making over $100,000 a year in total income to 58 of the 200, or 34% making $100,000.

Locally, New Bedford Representative Tony Cabral saw his total pay go up by 37% from $82,232 to $112,547. That's an annual increase of $30,315. New Bedford/Acushnet Representative Robert Koczera saw his total pay go from $62,232 to $87,747 or 31%. New Bedford/Dartmouth Representative Christopher Markey saw his pay go from $74,732 to $97,547 or 31%.

**Local legislators voted for the raise and have gone on record to say they deserve the increase.**. Some even say that $62,500 a year isn't enough to live on. That may be true if you live on Boston, but in **New Bedford the income per capita is $21,181**, do New Bedford legislators really need five to six time the income of their constituents?

Almost all of the pay increases come in the form of stipends – extra income for filling leadership positions and increases in office expenses. In reality, this is a way to circumvent the Massachusetts constitutional amendment that restricts the base income of legislators to the state's median household income.

In 1998, **60% of Massachusetts voters that went to the polls** voted to "prohibit state legislators from changing their base pay and instead would adjust that pay according to changes in median household income." Voters changed the constitution to restrict base pay, but not total compensation. In response, legislators gave themselves significant stipend raises.

What is interesting is all 40 Senators received leadership pay from $15,000 to $80,000, up from $7,500 to $35,000. Apparently, in the Massachusetts Senate everyone is a leader and this is clearly where most of the new pay is coming from.

Pay data on Massachusetts legislators wasn't easy to come by, **MassFiscal.org had to do a Freedom of Information Act request to obtain the paycheck records for lawmakers**. So much for

transparency in the Massachusetts government.

These raises in legislator income comes after the lawmakers have **denied Massachusetts residents a tax holiday for two years now**. Sadly, our legislators are looking after their savings account, not yours.

You can see all the Massachusetts State Senators pay raises here.

Senate_Pay_Raise_Totals

You can see all the Massachusetts House of Representatives pay raises here.

House_Pay_Raise_Totals

*At the time of this writing, Senator Montingy's office hasn't responded to e-mail requests for a quote.*