

# Advances - Week Of May 19, 2024

State House News Service  
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STATE HOUSE, BOSTON, MAY 17, 2024.....Seventeen months into the two-year session, housing, economic development, and energy and climate bills have yet to hit the floor in either chamber, and the bill that sucks up much of Beacon Hill's oxygen in May, June and July is about to push all others aside as it moves through the Senate. Deliberations have begun privately on the 1,100 amendments to the \$57.9 billion Senate Ways and Means budget proposal for fiscal 2025. Senators have an opportunity Monday to publicly air their thoughts on the total spending plan and the state's fiscal picture. Tuesday marks the first of two or three long budget sessions to process all the amendments and engross the bill, which will then be assigned to a House-Senate conference committee sometime after Memorial Day weekend.

## Health Care and Steward Hospitals

The House this week passed major health care legislation and has approved a separate bill that deals with nursing home care, but it's unclear whether the Senate will "go big" on health care like the House did. The Senate this session has passed legislation addressing prescription drug costs. Health care has been an area where House and Senate Democrats have been unable to find common ground in recent sessions, and bills in that arena are stacking up this year in a way that could complicate efforts to strike a deal. The elephant in the room is Steward Health Care, its unfolding bankruptcy process, and the fates of eight Steward hospitals in Massachusetts. No one on Beacon Hill wants to bail out Steward, but it remains to be seen whether efforts to keep those hospitals operating in an acceptable way, and under new owners, will involve any special public aid or subsidies. There's a limit on the funds Steward has available to run its facilities, but the bankruptcy process in Texas is providing much more transparency about the company's situation, according to state Public Health Commissioner Robbie Goldstein. "This is in some way Steward's problem to solve. They are obligated by ... state law and state regulation to tell us what they would do with these facilities, whether they want to transfer them to a new operator, or if they were to close a particular service or to move forward with any type of closure, they have to let us know that. And the court is bound, is required, to make sure that they follow state law in this process," Goldstein said. "So I think we are actually in a place where we are likely to get more information from Steward than we were previous to the bankruptcy and have more insight into how they're spending their money, and how much money is available to continue the operation of these facilities."

## Conference Committees Still In Play

It's getting to the point in the two-year session when the branches may hold more frequent formal sessions, meaning one or two per week. Those sessions give Democrats an opportunity, especially if both branches are meeting simultaneously, to move bills out of conference committees and to Gov. Maura Healey's desk. The House and Senate have each overwhelmingly approved four major bills that have disappeared into closed conference committees, with no indication of when compromises may emerge. Rep. Danielle Gregoire and Sen. Patrick Jehlen are chairing a panel charged with striking an accord on bills to ensure more wage transparency; Democrats have been hung up on those mostly similar bills for more than six months. The conference committee overhauling gun laws and led by Rep. Michael Day and Sen. Cynthia Creem is approaching its three-month anniversary. The House and Senate voted unanimously to put large amounts of rainy day fund interest revenue to work attracting federal aid, but that idea is idling before a conference helmed by Sen. Michael Rodrigues and Rep. Aaron Michlewitz. Bills granting new protections to victims of revenge porn and coercive control were sent to a conference more recently, in late April, and that conference is also led by Rep. Day, and Sen. John Keenan.

## Other Storylines In Progress

... President Joe Biden is set to visit New Hampshire and Boston on Tuesday ... House Speaker Mariano has promised he's "going big" on housing, bigger than Gov. Healey, but appears to have soured on the prospects of a local-option tax on high-dollar property transactions to raise money for affordable housing. Healey knows the House and Senate are going to pass some version of her more than \$4 billion housing bond bill and is traveling the state to promote the legislation. It's just not clear how long it will hang out at the committee stage ...

## Saturday, May 18, 2024

"EDUCATION JUSTICE" CONVENING: Parents, educators, students and community activists gather for the 2024 "Massachusetts Education Justice Convening." There will be a panel discussion featuring Jitu Brown of Journey for Justice, Moira Kaleida of the Alliance to Reclaim our Schools, and Mo Cunningham, author of "Dark Money and the Politics of School Privatization." Participants will learn how to advance a "racial justice movement," as well as elevate priority K-12 and higher education issues. (Saturday, 8:30 a.m., Worcester Technical High School, 1 Officer Manny Familia Way, Worcester | Register)

CHRISTIE AT ENDICOTT COLLEGE: Former New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie delivers the commencement address at Endicott College. The former presidential candidate will also receive an honorary degree that recognizes "his leadership and life-long commitment to public service," university officials said. "With examples like leading the people of New Jersey through the devastation of Superstorm Sandy, Governor Christie is known for putting people before politics and working in a pragmatic and bipartisan way on issues that benefit the people he has served," Endicott College President Steven R. DiSalvo said in a statement. "His personal story of overcoming adversity, his commitment to public service, and his candor about today's political environment will inspire the Endicott Class of 2024." (Saturday, 10 a.m., Hempstead Stadium, Endicott College, Beverly)

HOUSE-TO-HOUSE FOR HEROES: Norfolk County sheriff's office, city of Quincy, and Quincy's veteran service office host a House-to-House for Heroes event to provide local veterans with essential information and resources. More than 100 volunteers -- including 100-year-old WWII veteran Mildred "Millie" Cox -- will go door-to-door to the homes of 2,300 veterans to thank them and let them know about resources available to them. Cox joins Sheriff Patrick McDermott and Mayor Tom Koch to kick the event off. (Saturday, 10 a.m., Quincy Recreation Department, 1 Merrymount Dr., Quincy)

NORTHERN ESSEX COMMUNITY COLLEGE: U.S. Congresswoman Trahan delivers the commencement address at Northern Essex Community College's graduation ceremony. More than 700 students are slated to graduate. (Saturday, 11 a.m., 100 Elliot St., Haverhill)

FREDERICK DOUGLASS: Senate President Spilka gives remarks and participates in a reading of "What, To The Slave, Is The Fourth of July," a famous speech by 19th century abolitionist Frederick Douglass. It's part of a "Reading Frederick Douglass Together" event hosted by the Hopkinton Historical Society and Mass Humanities. (Saturday, 1 p.m., Hopkinton Common)

MASSBIKE GRADUATION: Massachusetts Bike Coalition hosts a graduation for nearly 100 participants of the two-year Worcester E-Bike Program, who supporters say have collectively biked 60,320 miles and saved more than 33,000 pounds of CO2 emissions. Organizers say they also plan to celebrate new grant funding to grow the program and add 105 e-bikes. Attendees include MassBike Executive Director Galen Mook, Worcester City Councilor Etel Haxhijaj, and Worcester Commissioner of Transportation & Mobility Steve Rolle. There will also be a five-mile community bike ride along new bike lanes on Mill Street in Worcester. (Saturday, 2 p.m., Stearns Tavern at Coes Park, 140 Mill St., Worcester)

MAYOR WU IN ITALY: Boston Mayor Wu visits Sulmona, Italy. The town "has local ties to Boston's North End," her office said. Closed to press. (Saturday)

TOUCH-A-TRUCK: MassDOT holds family-friendly "Touch-A-Truck" events at six highway district depots. "As we kick off National Public Works Week, this event is a great opportunity for families to see and hear about some of the work our MassDOT crews are out doing every day," Highway Administrator Jonathan Gulliver said in a statement. Attendees can interact with heavy equipment vehicles including a dump truck, bucket truck and plows. The depots are located in Lenox (270 Main St.), Northampton (811 N. King St.), Worcester (499 Plantation Parkway), Arlington (519 Appleton St.), Taunton (1000 County St.), and Milton (73 Granite Ave.). The events run through 2 p.m. (Saturday)

## Sunday, May 19, 2024

DRISCOLL ON 4: Lt. Gov. Driscoll talks with Jon Keller about backlash to the MBTA Communities zoning law, barriers to more affordable housing, and the economics of housing development. (Sunday, 8:30 a.m., WBZ-TV Ch. 4)

SUFFOLK COMMENCEMENT: Suffolk University holds its commencement ceremonies, featuring speeches from presidential advisor Robert Wolf, Supreme Judicial Court Chief Justice Kimberly Budd, and Connecticut-based attorney Josh Koskoff. Wolf speaks to Sawyer Business School graduates at 9 a.m. Chief Justice Budd talks to College of Arts and Sciences graduates at 1:30 p.m. And Koskoff, who successfully sued the Remington firearm company and conspiracy theorist Alex Jones on behalf of families of Sandy Hook school shooting victims, addresses the Suffolk Law School graduating class at 5:30 p.m. Koskoff graduated Suffolk Law in 1994. (Sunday, 9 a.m., Leader Bank Pavilion, Boston)

SPILKA ON 5: Senate President Spilka is the guest on "On The Record." (Sunday, 11 a.m., WCVB-TV Ch. 5)

BIKE PAGEANT: Somerville Bike Kitchen hosts its annual Somerville Bike Pageant, described as "a celebration of unique, fun, creative, colorful and/or otherwise one-of-a-kind bikes." Prize categories range from the "self-explanatory to entirely unserious." Forecast calls for a cloudy day with a high of 57, but the bad weather location is The Dojo at Somernova (15 Properzi Way). Register in advance or day-of. (Sunday, 1 p.m., Aeronaut Brewing Courtyard at Somernova, 14 Tyler St., Somerville)

MAYOR WU IN ITALY: Boston Mayor Wu continues a tour of Italy following her participation in the Vatican Summit. On Sunday, she visits Coreno Ausonio, a location with "ties to her family," her office said. At 10 a.m., the mayor plans to meet with the municipality's mayor, Simone Costanzo. At 11 a.m., she attends a town commemoration at the Marinanne Monument marking the 80th anniversary of Coreno Ausonio's liberation from Nazi occupation during World War II. (Sunday)

## Monday, May 20, 2024

APPLIED BEHAVIORAL ANALYSIS: Executive Office of Health and Human Services holds a public hearing on maintaining current rates for applied behavioral analysis services. The services, offered at home and community-based settings, are for MassHealth members who are on the autism spectrum and below age 21. (Monday, 9 a.m. | More Info and Zoom)

**TENANT LOBBY DAY:** Mass Union of Public Housing Tenants holds a lobby day to show support for Gov. Healey's \$4 billion housing bond bill, which organizers say is crucial for starting to address backlogged maintenance needs across 43,000 public housing units. Lt. Gov. Driscoll and Housing and Livable Communities Secretary Augustus are expected to participate. "This is about more than just money and policy; it's about people," Sarah Byrne, the union's executive director, said in a statement. "For too long, public housing residents have been overlooked and underserved. It's time for lawmakers to listen to our voices and take meaningful action to improve tenants living conditions." The controversial local-option transfer tax policy may be holding up the House from tackling the legislation; House Speaker Mariano previously voiced a willingness to consider the proposal in Healey's bill but told reporters Thursday the transfer tax is "not as popular as I thought it might be." (Monday, 10 a.m., Great Hall)

**EPA IN MALDEN:** The federal Environmental Protection Agency, Congresswoman Clark, Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Tepper, Director of Federal Funds and Infrastructure Palfrey, MassDEP Commissioner Heiple, and Malden Mayor Gary Christenson gather to discuss how the city's \$1.4 million grant from the federal Bipartisan Infrastructure Law will help replace lead pipes to deliver safe drinking water to Malden. (Monday, 10 a.m., Wesrum Rd., Malden, On the corner of Brentwood St. and Wesrum Rd.)

**SENATE DEMS CAUCUS:** Senate Democrats start their budget debate week with a private caucus. (Monday, 11 a.m., Senate President's Office)

**SENATE - BUDGET WEEK BEGINS:** Senate gavel into a full formal session with plans to kick off debate on its fiscal 2025 general budget bill. The bill itself is not on the Senate Calendar until Tuesday, when the branch will wade into debate on individual amendments. Monday's session is largely reserved for introductory speeches, such as from Ways and Means Chairman Rodrigues and Minority Leader Tarr, and overall discussion of the underlying bill. (Monday, 11 a.m., Senate Chamber | Livestream | Ways and Means Budget Documents)

**HOUSE:** House holds an informal session. (Monday, 11 a.m., House Chamber | Livestream)

**HOSPICE SERVICE RATES:** Executive Office of Health and Human Services holds a hearing to set rates for hospice services provided by MassHealth. EOHHS uses base rates from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, which are set annually and take effect Oct. 1 each year. "The percentage change in individual rates between the previous rate period ending September 30, 2023, and this year range from 1.84% to 5.03% for both compliant and noncompliant rates," the hearing notice states. "The estimated aggregate annual fiscal impact for MassHealth is an increase of \$183,597 (2.84%), assuming all providers are compliant, and \$182,853 (2.88%), assuming all providers are noncompliant." (Monday, 11 a.m. | More Info and Zoom)

**CORE PLAN GROWTH:** Treasurer Goldberg celebrates the growth of the CORE Plan, a 401(k) retirement plan run by the treasurer's office for eligible small nonprofits, as over 200 organizations have adopted the program. (Monday, 11 a.m., Nurse's Hall)

**PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES:** Disability Employment Subcommittee of the Status of Persons with Disabilities meets virtually. Agenda includes a discussion about fiscal 2024 goals, including identifying and facilitating at least one opportunity to educate at least 100 small- and medium-sized businesses about the "value of including people with disabilities in the workplace, available community resources, and recognition of effective employer practices." (Monday, 12 p.m. | More Info and Livestream)

**HOUSING TOUR - GLOUCESTER:** As the Healey administration continues to promote its housing agenda with events throughout the state, the next step is Gloucester. Lt. Gov. Driscoll, Housing and Livable Communities Secretary Augustus, and Mayor Greg Verga hold a press conference with the theme, "housing is supporting our most vulnerable residents." Officials will announce funding for permanent supportive housing projects to help seniors and vulnerable residents. They'll spotlight the Pattillo Building, an adaptive reuse project in which nearly all units are for individuals earning less than 30 percent of the area median income, with some transitioning from homelessness. The rain location is Gloucester City Hall. (Monday 12 p.m., 67 Middle St., Gloucester)

**COMMUNITY GROUP RALLY:** Community groups, including the Reentry Coalition, La Colaborativa, MA Action for Justice, Community Work Services, Justice for Housing and the Greater Boston Interfaith Organization rally in support of budget amendments to add funds not included in Senate Ways and Means budget. They support a Sen. Miranda amendment to raise the Community Empowerment Reinvestment Grant for reentry programs from \$7.5 million to \$10 million. The Ways and Means budget would cut this program from \$15 million in half. The groups also favor a Sen. Gomez amendment to raise funding for rental assistance for people in reentry from \$3 million to \$9 million, and a Sen. Creem amendment to increase funding for the Neighborhood Based Gun Violence Prevention Program from \$10 million to \$13 million. They suggest paying for the increases through using so-called excess capital gains tax revenue, surtax revenue, and money from the Cannabis Social Equity Trust Fund. (Monday, 1 p.m., Third floor, Outside Senate president's office)

**GIG DRIVER EARNINGS:** Researchers host a virtual press briefing to discuss a new study examining pay and working conditions for app-based drivers in five metropolitan areas, including Boston. The University of California Berkeley Labor Center and the Center for Wage and Employment Dynamics, which produced what they dubbed a "first-of-its-kind study," said the report will show that drivers typically earn "well below the local minimum wage." Organizers say the study will be released one day before the California Supreme Court takes up a challenge to Proposition 22, an industry-backed ballot question that allowed drivers in that state to be defined as independent contractors instead of employees. Massachusetts is in a pivotal stretch of its own debate about the treatment of for-hire ride and delivery drivers, with Uber and Lyft facing a state lawsuit, several companies funding a ballot question and labor groups pushing another ballot question to let drivers unionize. Researchers at UC Berkeley have waded into the Bay State fight before, publishing a report in 2021 that estimated an earlier version of the industry-backed ballot question would guarantee drivers less than minimum wage, which drew sharp criticism from the companies. (Monday, 2 p.m. EST, Zoom | Report)

**HOUSING TOUR - HAVERHILL:** The Healey administration promotes its housing agenda with another stop in Haverhill, for an event called, "housing is home ownership." Lt. Gov. Driscoll, Housing and Livable Communities Secretary Augustus, MassHousing CEO Chrystal Kornegay, Mayor Melinda Barrett and representatives from the Massachusetts Housing Partnership participate. A roundtable discussion will include partners and recipients of the MassDreams and Common Wealth Builder program, which help with the development of affordable single-family homes and condos. (Monday, 2:30 p.m., UMass Lowell Innovation Hub, 2 Merrimack St., Haverhill)

**BOSTON VS. SULMONA:** A group of North End restaurant employees plan to use Boston Mayor Wu's recent visit to Sulmona, Italy in their fight against the mayor's outdoor dining policies. Wu's office described Sulmona as a town with "strong ties" to the North End. According to an advisory from Regan Communications, "outdoor dining is prevalent" there. "North End employees will highlight the differences between Sulmona and the North End," the advisory said. (Monday, 3 p.m., Hanover Street at Cross Street, Boston)

**YOUTH GROUP RALLY:** Youth groups led by I Have a Future, La Colaborativa, and Teen Empowerment rally for senators to increase funding for the YouthWorks Youth Jobs program. They support a Sen. Jehlen amendment to increase the funding from \$15.7 million to \$20.7 million. (Monday, 4:30 p.m., Third floor, Between the Senate president's office and House chamber)

**APPLYING FOR A JUDGESHIP:** Governor's Councilor Marilyn Petitto Devaney sponsors a forum on "How To Be A Judge," with top court officials and the head of Gov. Healey's nominating panel outlining the steps of the judicial selection process. Panelists are Superior Court Chief Justice Michael Ricciuti, District Court Judge Michael Pomarole (who is also a former chair of the Parole Board), Clerk Magistrate Daniel Hogan of the Boston Municipal Court, and Judicial Nominating Commission Chair Abim Thomas. "I am hosting this forum so more people can learn about the judicial nominating process and put their name forward," Devaney said in an advisory. "I am dedicated to an open and fair process for selecting qualified and experienced judges, not political insiders and friends. I am proud to be part of the new process with Governor Healey and her administration." Email aleblanc@mcle.org to register. (Monday, 6 p.m., MCLE Conference Center, 10 Winter Pl., Boston)

## Tuesday, May 21, 2024

**EMPOWERMENT BREAKFAST:** Urban League of Eastern Massachusetts hosts its inaugural Women's Empowerment Breakfast, co-chaired by former Rep. Marie St. Fleur. (Tuesday, 7:30 a.m., Fenway Park, 4 Jersey St., Boston | Register)

**WALSH IN WORCESTER:** Health and Human Services Secretary Kate Walsh speaks at a legislative breakfast hosted by the nonprofit Providers of Central Massachusetts. The theme of the breakfast is "Disability Myth Busters," and speakers will discuss common misconceptions surrounding people with disabilities. More than 200 participants -- including 45 federal, state and local officials -- are expected to attend. (Tuesday, 8:30 a.m., AC Marriott Hotel, 125 Front St., Worcester)

**BOARD OF ED:** Board of Elementary and Secondary Education meets. Agenda items include comments from acting Commissioner Russell Johnston on school receiverships in Lawrence, Southbridge and Holyoke, chronic absenteeism data, Brockton Public Schools, and school nutrition, among other topics. Boston Public Schools Superintendent Mary Skipper will provide an update on the district's Systemic Improvement Plan. The board will also discuss the contract it has with Cognia of Alpharetta, Georgia to design and score the state's standardized MCAS exam. The state's contract with Cognia expires on June 30. The board will also vote on several charter school recommendations. (Tuesday, 9 a.m., 135 Santilli Highway, Everett | Stream and Agenda)

**SENATE FORMAL:** Senate starts digging into the 1,100 amendments senators have filed to the fiscal 2025 general appropriations act. President Spilka's office expects formal sessions to run until Thursday. (Tuesday, 10 a.m., Senate Chamber | Budget Amendments | Ways and Means Budget Documents)

**PAROLE BOARD - LIFER HEARINGS:** Parole Board holds two Life Sentence Unit hearings Tuesday for parole-eligible individuals currently serving life sentences: Veronica Jefferson (10 a.m.) and Wendell Greenman (1 p.m.). Both are review hearings, meaning the board denied parole at an earlier initial hearing. (Tuesday, 10 a.m., 12 Mercer Rd., Natick)

**EATING DISORDERS PREVENTION:** The Strategic Training Initiative for the Prevention of Eating Disorders, Rep. Khan and Sen. Rush host a hybrid legislative briefing on a bill to protect children from harmful diet pills and muscle-building supplements. Speakers will discuss "the immense public health risk that these over-the-counter diet pills and muscle-building supplements pose to children in a time of unattainable body image culture fueled by social media." Similar legislation was recently passed in New York. (Tuesday, 10 a.m., Room A-2 | Virtual Access)

**NATIONAL GUARD CEREMONY:** Massachusetts National Guard holds its annual ceremony to present the Massachusetts Medal of Liberty and Medal of Fidelity, hosted by Maj. Gen. Gary Keefe, the Adjutant General. The state's Medal of Liberty, akin to the national Purple Heart, is presented to the next of kin of "any Massachusetts serviceman or woman killed in action or who died as a result of wounds received in action." The Medal of Fidelity is presented to the next of kin of servicemembers or veterans from Massachusetts who died as a result of combat-related post-traumatic stress disorder, a condition stemming from a service-related traumatic brain injury, or a "combatconnected disease, condition or injury" including exposure to toxins like Agent Orange. (Tuesday, 10 a.m., Memorial Hall)

**DAM REMOVAL:** Congressman Keating, Assistant Secretary Shannon Estenez of the U.S. Department of the Interior, and Manikka Bowman of The Nature Conservancy in Massachusetts are among those scheduled to celebrate the completion of the High Street Dam removal and bridge reconstruction project in Bridgewater. The event is timed to fall the same week as World Fish Migration Day on May 25. Organizers described the Bridgewater project as "a national model demonstrating the environmental benefits of dam removals for restoring critical fish migration as well as a significant restoration of a natural habitat for the plants and animals living in the region." Sunny Snider Centrella of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Ellen Bolen of the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, and Bridgewater Town Manager Michael Dutton are also slated to take part. Media can contact Diana McCloy at (978) 697-9414 or [diana@teakmedia.com](mailto:diana@teakmedia.com). (Tuesday, 11 a.m., Stanley Ironworks Park, 93 High St., Bridgewater)

**SPORTS BETTING LIMITATIONS:** Mass. Gaming Commission holds a roundtable with sports betting companies, responsible gambling groups and others to talk about how and why wagers can be limited for individual bettors, what the responsible gambling implication of heavier regulation of player limits might be, and what would happen if allowing limits on individual bettors was prohibited or limited by law or regulation. (Tuesday, 11 a.m., Agenda and Access Info)

**HOUSING TOUR - WORCESTER:** Lt. Gov. Driscoll and Housing and Livable Communities Secretary Augustus are in Worcester as part of the Healey administration's housing tour. The theme of the event is "housing is public housing." There will be a ground-breaking for Curtis Apartments, a redevelopment project that's expected to create 529 new apartments, including 53 units that are fully accessible. (Tuesday, 1 p.m., 34 Great Brook Valley Ave., Worcester)

**HOUSING & HOMELESSNESS:** Committee for Supportive Housing Production and Services of the Interagency Council on Housing and Homelessness meets virtually. The meeting will address the campaign to end veteran homelessness, a \$20 million initiative launched by the Healey administration in March. For access, contact Pearl Chan at [pchan@cedac.org](mailto:pchan@cedac.org) or 617-727-5944 ext. 100. (Tuesday, 1 p.m. | Agenda)

**OUTMIGRATION WEBINAR:** Pioneer Institute hosts a webinar during which Executive Director Jim Stergios will interview Boston University's Mark Williams, who led a nine-month research project into Massachusetts' outmigration trends. "The latest insights from Boston University reveal a startling reality: since 2013, annual net outmigration from Massachusetts has skyrocketed by an astounding 1,100 percent, tallying up to 39,000 individuals. Should this trend persist, projections hint at a staggering outmigration figure of 96,000 by 2030," Pioneer Institute said. "Today, Massachusetts finds itself at a crossroads. A surge in net outmigration threatens to dampen economic growth, tax revenues, and the overall fiscal health of our state." (Tuesday, 2 p.m., Register)

**SOUTHWEST CORRIDOR PARK:** Department of Conservation and Recreation holds another public meeting as it seeks input for the Southwest Corridor Park Action Plan. The 52-acre, 4-mile park stretches from Back Bay Station to Forest Hills Station in Boston. "Opened in 1987-1990, the park is due for renewed attention and investment," DCR said in the meeting notice. "DCR seeks public input to create a vision for both short- and long-term investments that renovate and modernize the park while strengthening and supporting the communities it serves." The plan will be shared during a meeting next month. (Tuesday, 6 p.m. | More Info and Register)

**BIDEN IN BOSTON:** President Biden is expected to visit Boston, following a trip to New Hampshire. (Tuesday)

### **Wednesday, May 22, 2024**

**BOSTON PROPERTY TAX DISCUSSION:** NAIOP Massachusetts, the Commercial Real Estate Development Association, holds a briefing and panel discussion on Mayor Wu's proposal to temporarily raise the commercial property tax rate. The mayor's controversial plan is meant to help Boston overcome budget challenges tied to declining commercial property values and insulate residents from steeper property taxes. "The panelists will address how the proposed tax burden shift would impact businesses of all sizes, especially small businesses that are part of the fabric of Boston's diverse collection of neighborhoods," organizers say. The discussion will also focus on alternative solutions ahead of a Boston City Council hearing on the petition on May 30. Panelists include Meg Mainzer Cohen of the Back Bay Association, Matthew Osborne of Eastern Bank, Jim Rooney of the Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce, Daniel Swift of Ryan, LLC, and Marty Walz of Boston Municipal Research Bureau. House Ways and Means Chairman Aaron Michlewitz this week sidestepped a question about Wu's weeks-old proposal, telling reporters, "It's hard to comment on a proposal that hasn't gotten here yet." (Wednesday, 8 a.m., 100 Federal St., Putnam Auditorium)

**MUNI LAW CONFERENCE:** The annual Municipal Law Conference will address developments from the Legislature, government regulators and the courts, such as updates on open meeting and public records laws. Other discussion topics include cannabis, employment law, and the MBTA Communities Act. The conference is co-sponsored by the Massachusetts Municipal Lawyers Association and the Massachusetts Municipal Association. (Wednesday, 9 a.m., MCLE, 10 Winter Place, Downtown Crossing | Register)

**GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL:** Governor's Council is scheduled to meet, with an agenda that includes potential votes on whether to confirm District Court judicial nominees Edward Krippendorf Jr. and Sarah Kennedy. (Wednesday, 9:30 a.m., Council Chamber | Livestream | May 15 Council Interviews With Krippendorf, Kennedy)

**SENATE FORMAL:** Senate continues its consideration of the 1,100 amendments filed to the fiscal 2025 general budget. President Spilka's office expects formal sessions to run until Thursday. (Wednesday, 10 a.m., Senate Chamber | Budget Amendments | Ways and Means Budget Documents)

**NEWTON CORNER WORKING GROUP:** MassDOT's Newton Corner Long-Term Planning Study Working Group holds the first meeting as it sets out to develop and analyze transportation alternatives to improve the Newton Corner/Mass. Pike interchange, located at Exit 127 (the former Exit 17). Officials will present the study background, and review the study area, draft goals and objectives, and the evaluation criteria for the alternatives to be developed later. Local working group members will offer feedback. (Wednesday, 10:30 a.m., Newton Free Library, 330 Homer St., Newton)

**CARING FORCE RALLY:** Senate President Spilka addresses hundreds of human services workers and advocates expected to attend The Caring Force's 12th annual State House rally and advocacy day. The event is held to advocate for the Providers' Council's pro-human services workforce agenda, call attention to the workforce crisis and honor legislators (Rep. Mindy Domb and Sen. Joan Lovely) with the "Caring Bear Award." Priority legislation deals with sector wages and student loan repayment programs. (Wednesday, 10:30 a.m., Great Hall)

**HOUSE FORMAL:** House meets in a formal session. Roll calls are expected to start at 1 p.m. (Wednesday, 11 a.m., House Chamber)

**BOSTON COLLEGE EXECS CLUB:** Goldman Sachs CEO David Solomon participates in a fireside chat during a Boston College Chief Executives Club luncheon. He's joined by Alfred F. Kelly Jr., former CEO of Visa. The discussion will cover the global economy, Goldman Sachs' strategy and leadership. (Wednesday, 12 p.m., Boston Harbor Hotel, 70 Rowes Wharf, Boston)

**MEMORIAL DAY FLAG GARDEN:** Volunteers start placing more than 37,000 flags around the Soldiers and Sailors Monument on Boston Common, representing each and every servicemember from Massachusetts who has died defending the United States over the past 249 years. Home Base and the Mass. Military Heroes Fund organize the annual flag garden and the ceremony scheduled for Thursday morning. (Wednesday, 1 p.m., Boston Common | More Info | Sign Up To Volunteer)

**WATER RESOURCES:** Mass. Water Resources Authority Board meets, first as a committee of the whole for a hearing on the draft final FY2025 Capital Improvement Program and current expense budget and then for a regular board meeting starting at 2 p.m. Agenda calls for approval of proposed lead service line replacement grant program, a climate mitigation projects update, and approval of an insurance program renewal. (Wednesday, 1 p.m., MWRA Administration Building, Conference Rooms 2C and 2D, 2 Griffin Way, Chelsea | More Info and Access)

**HEALEY-GOLDBERG MEETING:** Treasurer Goldberg and Gov. Healey have their monthly meeting. (Wednesday, 2 p.m., Governor's Office)

**DOC COMMISSIONER:** Executive Office of Public Safety and Security holds a virtual listening session for the public to weigh in on the "qualities" they want to see in the next Department of Correction commissioner. Former commissioner Carol Mici retired on March 29, capping off more than three decades at the department. Shawn Jenkins, who was previously DOC's chief of staff, is serving as interim commissioner during the search process. (Wednesday, 3 p.m. | More Info and Livestream)

**CHILD CARE FUNDING:** Department of Early Education and Care holds a public hearing on its plan for using money from the Child Care and Development Fund, a program that provides federal child care financial assistance that's meant to help low-income families access child care. The money can also be used for workforce investments and to support programs in achieving "higher standards." EEC, working with stakeholders, must complete a plan every three years. (Wednesday, 6 p.m. | More Info and Zoom)

**WORCESTER STATE OF THE CITY:** Worcester City Manager Eric Batista delivers a "State of the City Address." There will also be a dance performance at the event, which is co-presented by the Worcester Regional Research Bureau. "The City of Worcester is at a pivotal point with a growing population, demand for more housing, and a changing economy," Batista said in a statement. "It is critical that we work together to meet and rise above the complex challenges facing our community today." Doors open at 5:30 p.m. (Wednesday, 6 p.m., Jean McDonough Arts Center, 20 Franklin St., Worcester)

**HEAD OF THE CHARLES:** Department of Conservation and Recreation holds its first public meeting as officials look for ways to "improve the experience of the Head of the Charles Regatta." DCR is accepting public comments through June 5. Officials say they want to advance their goals of protecting, promoting and enhancing the "natural, cultural, and recreational resources along Charles River, as well as enhance the quality of the experience of the Regatta." (Wednesday, 6:30 p.m. | More Info and Register)

### **Thursday, May 23, 2024**

**FEDERAL TAX TALK:** Tax Foundation, University of North Carolina Tax Center and MIT host a discussion about the 2017 federal Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, whose provisions are set to expire in less than two years. Former U.S. Rep. Kevin Brady, whom organizers described as the law's "architect," delivers the keynote address. (Thursday, 8 a.m., Cannon Caucus Room, Cannon House Office Building, 27 Independence Ave. SE, Washington, D.C. | Register)

**DANVERS VETERANS BREAKFAST:** Veterans are honored at a Memorial Day breakfast at the Danversport Event Center. Deputy Secretary Gayle-Bennett of the Executive Office of Veterans' Services plans to attend. Free and open to all veterans and their guests. RSVP to (978) 774-6600. (Thursday, 8:30 a.m., 161 Elliott St., Danvers)

**LATINX ARTS & CULTURE:** Inquilinos Boricuas en Acción breaks ground on La CASA: The Center for Arts, Self-determination, and Activism, Boston's new home for Latinx arts, culture and community empowerment. The facility will be the largest of its kind in New England. The project is supported by a \$1 million earmark from U.S. Sens. Warren and Markey, and U.S. Rep. Pressley. State Rep. John Moran is also pursuing an additional \$75,000 for the project. (Thursday, 9:30 a.m., 85 West Newton St., Boston)

**UMASS BOSTON COMMENCEMENT:** Lt. Gov. Driscoll delivers the keynote address at the University of Massachusetts Boston's 56th commencement ceremony, held overlooking Boston Harbor. Chancellor Marcelo Suárez-Orozco said, "As a graduate of public higher education, she understands the importance of making public higher education more accessible so we can empower the next generation of leaders, innovators, and creators." The university expects to confer degrees to 3,757 undergraduates, graduate, and doctoral students in the Class of 2024. (Thursday, 9:30 a.m., UMass Boston Campus Center Lawn, 100 Morrissey Blvd., Dorchester)

**SENATE FORMAL:** Senate is scheduled to hold a fourth continuous day of formal session as it aims to wrap up floor work on the fiscal 2025 budget bill ahead of the long Memorial Day weekend. (Thursday, 10 a.m., Senate Chamber | Budget Amendments | Ways and Means Budget Documents)

**CANNABIS COMMISSION:** Cannabis Control Commission meets for a virtual business meeting. (Thursday, 10 a.m., Agenda and Access Info)

**OPIOID TASK FORCE:** Opioid Task Force of the Middlesex District Attorney's Office meets, hosted by DA Ryan. For access information, contact Sarah.Lamson@mass.gov. (Thursday, 10 a.m.)

**MBTA BOARD:** MBTA Board of Directors meets. (Thursday, 10 a.m., Transportation Building, 2nd Floor, 10 Park Plaza, Boston | More Info and Access)

**PAROLE BOARD - LIFE SENTENCE HEARINGS:** Parole Board holds a pair of review hearings for two individuals serving life sentences: Malcom Carnes (10 a.m.) and Charles Chase (1 p.m.). Both were denied parole by the board at earlier initial hearings. (Thursday, 10 a.m., 12 Mercer Rd., Natick)

**MEMORIAL DAY FLAG GARDEN:** Home Base Veteran and Family Care plants its 2024 Memorial Day flag garden in the Boston Common to honor those fallen in the line of duty. Each of the 37,000 American flags represents a service member from Massachusetts who gave their life in the military since the American Revolution. Flags will remain up all week. During Thursday's name reading ceremony, families of the Massachusetts fallen since 9/11 will read the names of their loved ones in front of the flag display. Treasurer Goldberg and other public officials will also read names. (Thursday, 10:30 a.m., Soldiers and Sailors Monument, Boston Common, Boston)

**MEMORIAL DAY FLAG GARDEN:** Families of fallen Massachusetts servicemembers who have died since Sept. 11, 2001 read the names of their loved ones in a ceremony at the temporary "flag garden" planted on Boston Common by Home Base and the Mass. Military Heroes Fund. There are more than 37,000 flags to represent every fallen servicemember from Massachusetts since the start of the Revolutionary War. (Thursday, 10:30 a.m., Soldiers and Sailors Monument, Flag Staff Hill, Boston Common | More Info)

**DOC COMMISSIONER:** The public has another chance to weigh in on the "qualities" they want to see in the next Department of Correction commissioner. Shawn Jenkins is serving as interim commissioner during the search process, following the retirement of Carol Mici in March. (Thursday, 11 a.m., One Ashburton Place, 21st floor conference room | More Info)

**HOUSE INFORMAL:** House meets in an informal session. (Thursday, 11 a.m., House Chamber)

**DRISCOLL TALKS HOUSING:** Citizens' Housing and Planning Association, or CHAPA, hosts a virtual discussion with Lt. Gov. Driscoll about the housing crisis and how the business community can help. (Thursday, 12 p.m., More Info)

**CIVIC EDUCATION:** Pioneer Institute hosts a webinar to discuss civic education in conjunction with Massachusetts Center for Civic Education. Jamie Gass, director of Pioneer's Center for School Reform and MCCE President Roger Desrosiers participate. Mariam Memarsadeghi of the Cyrus Forum moderates a panel including "We the People" national civics teachers -- Kelley Brown of Massachusetts and Natalie O'Brien of Rhode Island -- as well as Jocelyn Chadwick, guest lecturer at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. (Thursday, 2 p.m., Register)

**ARC OF MASS CELEBRATION:** The Arc of Massachusetts celebrates its seven decades of work through a program focused on the history of disability policy and advocacy. The event, called "70 Years of Progress: Advocacy, Empowerment, and The Arc of Massachusetts," includes a panel discussion with former House speaker Robert DeLeo and former Arc board members Cynthia Haddad and Roger Walsh. The program is followed by The Arc's annual meeting and dinner. (Thursday, 2:30 p.m., Verve Hotel Boston Natick, 1360 Worcester St., Natick | More Info and Register)

**MONOPOLY - CAPE COD EDITION:** Top Trumps USA game company launches a "Cape Cod Edition" of the board game MONOPOLY. Event features an unveiling of the board, which replaces the traditional spaces like Boardwalk and Park Place with Cape Cod locations, businesses, and organizations. "It also features customized Community Chest and Chance playing cards to ensure the board is a historic and enduring tribute to one of the most popular destinations in the central U.S.," organizers said. Refreshments included. RSVP to sage.dobransky@toptrumps.com. (Thursday, 5:30 p.m., Chatham Bars Inn, 297 Shore Rd., Chatham)

**RIDERS' ACCESS GROUP:** Riders' Transportation Access Group holds a virtual advisory meeting. (Thursday, 5:30 p.m., More Info and Access)

**ROUTE 20 SHREWSBURY:** MassDOT holds a virtual public hearing on proposed Route 20 Corridor Improvements project in Shrewsbury. (Thursday, 7 p.m., More Info and Access)

**HOUSING REPORT:** Pioneer Institute releases a new study on Massachusetts' housing shortage. Gov. Maura Healey, whose \$4.1 billion housing policy and bond bill has been pending before the Legislature since the fall, has said Massachusetts is at least 200,000 housing units behind where it ought to be. (Thursday)

## Friday, May 24, 2024

**RIGHT TO COUNSEL PILOT:** Boston city councilors hold a working session to explore a proposed right to counsel pilot program to protect residents at risk of being evicted. The proposal is sponsored by City Council President Ruthzee Louijune and Councilors Ben Weber and Liz Breadon. The session does not include a public comment period. (Friday, 10 a.m., Piemonte Room - fifth floor, One City Hall Square, Boston | More Info)

**PCA WORKFORCE:** PCA Workforce Council and MassHealth meet. (Friday, 2:30 p.m. | More Info)

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