



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
House of Representatives
State House, Boston, MA 02133-1054

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**REPRESENTATIVE O'DAY AND COLLEAGUES PASS \$4 BILLION
CORONAVIRUS RELIEF SPENDING BILL**

Bill includes money from the American Rescue Plan Act and FY21 surplus funding

(Boston, MA- 12/02/2021) After a thorough public hearing process, chamber votes, and conference committee deliberations, the Massachusetts House of Representatives passed its spending proposal utilizing American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) and Fiscal Year 2021 (FY21) surplus funds. The bill successfully passed during Thursday's informal session.

Earlier this year, the Massachusetts Legislature voted to transfer the Commonwealth's allocation from ARPA into a separate fund to ensure stakeholder and resident engagement in a public process. After six public hearings and more than a thousand pieces of testimony received, the House unanimously approved their proposal in October and the Senate passed their version in November.

The spending package is aimed at facilitating recovery from the pandemic through one-time investments in housing, climate mitigation, economic development, workforce, health and human services, and education.

"The American Rescue Plan Act and surplus funding from FY21 presented Massachusetts with a unique, once in a lifetime opportunity to make substantial, equitable investments in essential programs across the state", said Representative James O'Day. "It was essential for the Massachusetts Legislature to get this spending bill right, and we did that."

Highlights of the spending bill include:

- \$75 million for small business grants
- \$200 million for environmental infrastructure grants and water and sewer projects
- \$260 million for financially strained hospitals
- \$400 million to expand access to mental and behavioral health supports
- \$500 million towards providing premium pay bonuses for lower income essential workers
- \$500 million to replenish the Unemployment Trust Fund, which will offset Commonwealth businesses' contributions for unemployment programs
- \$530 million for housing initiatives

Representative O'Day successfully secured funding for important initiatives in Worcester and West Boylston:

- \$100,000 for Teen Torch Program at Yes We Care
- \$130,000 for the construction and planning of the Town of West Boylston's new cemetery site
- \$150,000 for the cleaning of debris and sediment and the inspection and repair of all gates at Indian Lake
- \$250,000 for the City of Worcester's Regional Environmental Council Headquarters
- \$450,000 for the Child Protection Program at UMass Memorial Medical Center, which provides 24/7 pediatric abusive injury care and health care evaluations and examinations

The spending bill is now with the Massachusetts Senate, which plans to vote on the package Friday. It will then go to Governor Charlie Baker for further action.

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