

Massachusetts Gov. Baker's administration files \$5 Billion general government bond bill

Proposal seeks critical authorization for investments in cybersecurity, public safety, workforce skills.

The Baker-Polito Administration today filed legislation seeking \$4.991 billion in capital funds to support core improvements that will enable the Commonwealth to continue delivering critical state services to the people of Massachusetts.

The proposal, titled An Act Financing the General Governmental Infrastructure of the Commonwealth, includes \$4.15 billion to maintain, repair, and modernize assets that serve those most in need across the Commonwealth, help educate the future workforce, deliver on key environmental objectives, and keep the Commonwealth's communities and workers safe. It also includes \$841 million to continue existing, successful grant programs that support Massachusetts communities, to improve cybersecurity and other technology infrastructure, and to acquire critical public safety equipment.

"This bill supports essential capital investments that will deliver long-lasting benefits to Massachusetts residents for years to come, with a focus on safety, resiliency and opportunity," said Governor Charlie Baker. "We look forward to working with our colleagues in the Legislature to make these important investments, which will pave the way for the continued efficient delivery of government services and economic growth."

"The proposed investments in this bill continue our

Administration's work to improve a wide range of critical infrastructure and foster growth and development across Massachusetts," said Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito. "These funds will ensure the continuity of proven programs and enable impactful future economic, health and safety initiatives that will benefit the Commonwealth's communities, businesses and residents."

The bill filed today makes authorization available through Fiscal Year 2028 that would support \$2.4 billion in existing maintenance and resiliency projects through the Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance (DCAMM). DCAMM maintains nearly 1,700 major buildings covering 60.8 million gross square feet of property across the Commonwealth, including higher education buildings, health and human services facilities, public safety facilities, and trial courts. It also leads decarbonization and resiliency efforts in accordance with Executive Order 594, Leading by Example: Decarbonizing and Minimizing Environmental Impacts of State Government, which was issued by Governor Baker in April of 2021 and directs efforts to reduce gas emissions in Massachusetts facilities. The bond bill proposes \$400 million in energy efficiency initiatives at facilities statewide.

An additional \$1.8 million in DCAMM authorization is proposed to meet new facilities' needs and mitigate future risks. This includes an increased focus on incorporating lessons from the COVID-19 pandemic related to the physical space and layout of facilities.

The bill also proposes \$185 million in authorization for the Executive Office of Technology Services and Services (EOTSS) to support a variety of cybersecurity, IT infrastructure, and application modernizations initiatives. This includes projects that would modernize the Unemployment Insurance (UI) Online system and build out an integrated eligibility and enrollment system to streamline the benefits application process across multiple state agencies. \$50 million is proposed to improve

virtual and physical security infrastructure at the Trial Courts facilities, including intrusion detection and video monitoring. Further public safety investments include \$60 million for equipment for fire services, corrections, and communications towers, and \$100 million for the replacement of approximately 300 Massachusetts State Police vehicles per year, half of which will be hybrid vehicles.

“This \$5 billion bond bill reflects the Baker-Polito Administration’s dual commitment to supporting the Commonwealth’s assets and making sustainable, fiscally responsible capital investments,” said Secretary of Administration and Finance Michael J. Heffernan. “The projects proposed are key to maintaining core government operations and will keep the state moving forward, and we are looking forward to working with the Legislature to pass this bill into law.”

The bill seeks to support Massachusetts’ communities by authorizing \$496 million for established and successful grant and community programs that have a track record of providing valuable resources for workforce development, economic development, housing, and more to communities across the state. This includes the Workforce Skills Capital Grants Program, the Community Compact IT Grants Program, the Cultural Facilities Fund, the Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Fund, the Housing Stabilization Fund and the Housing Choice Capital Grants Program.

In June 2021, the Baker-Polito Administration finalized its Capital Investment Plan for Fiscal Years 2022-2026, and the authorizations in this bond bill would support investments and initiatives in the upcoming annual update to the Capital Investment Plan, which will include capital spending for Fiscal Years 2023-2027.

Highlights of the bond bill include:

\$185 million for various cybersecurity and IT infrastructure initiatives, including:

- *\$100 million for cybersecurity investments and to support existing large business applications modernization projects*
- *\$50 million for virtual and physical security infrastructure at the Trial Courts facilities, such as intrusion detection, duress, physical screening, access control, video monitoring, and communications*
- *\$35 million to upgrade Lottery gaming systems, decommission end-of-life equipment, and address cybersecurity vulnerabilities*

\$160 million for public safety investments, including:

- \$100 million for the replacement of approximately 300+ vehicles per year, half of which will be hybrid
- \$60 million for public safety equipment for fire services, corrections, state police & parole vehicles, and communications towers
- \$100 million to continue support for the Workforce Skills capital grants program, which provides grants to high schools, community colleges, training programs, and non-profit organizations to purchase equipment that will help expand access to career technical education programs
- \$100 million for municipal grants to support a broad range of local infrastructure improvements and projects
- \$64 million to support the Massachusetts State Revolving Fund (SRF) – specifically, for the Commonwealth's matching

funds required to secure federal dollars for the Fund, which helps cities and towns improve water supply infrastructure and drinking water safety

- \$60 million for the Housing Stabilization Fund, which provides funding for municipalities, non-profit, for-profit developers and local housing authorities in support of affordable rental housing production and rehabilitation
- \$51 million for the continuation of the Food Security program, which improves food security for the people of the Commonwealth through grants aimed at enhancing access to and production of local food for the next two years at current funding level
- \$50 million for the Cultural Facilities Fund to continue providing grants for planning, acquisition, rehabilitation and construction of cultural facilities administered through Massachusetts Cultural Council and MassDevelopment
- \$30 million for the Community Compact IT competitive grant program aimed at driving innovation at the local level and available to any municipality that is part of Community Compact Cabinet Initiative
- \$25 million for Housing Choice grants to municipalities that receive a Housing Choice designation through high housing production and/or demonstration of best practices
- \$16 million for MassVentures START grants, which help businesses commercialize ideas that have been backed with federal Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) funding