
The Rosenberg Report

Vol. XLIV
October 5, 2006

Hello!

Election Day is almost upon us and I have just one thing to say.

Since September 12th, 2001, fear and discord have been used as brutally effective political weapons.

I say enough.

As the various campaigns start to heat up, you'll see candidates that inspire you to work for the good of the greater community, and candidates that ask you only to think of yourself. You'll hear speeches and see advertisements that will give you a sense of hope for the future, and those that will make you suspicious.

It's time to give hope a chance.

See you at the polls!

Yours,



October Focus

Massachusetts Water Resources Authority

About 50 people attended a meeting I hosted September 26th with the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority to talk about the MWRA's plan to sell water from the Quabbin Reservoir to more communities in eastern Mass. I was pleased to have as my co-hosts State Representatives Chris Donelan (D-Orange), Peter Kocot (D-Northampton), Steve Kulik (D-Worthington), John Scibak (D-South Hadley) and Ellen Story (D-Amherst), as well as State Senator Steve Brewer (D-Barre).

I learned about this plan back in April and decided that people in western Mass., people who would suffer any environmental consequences such a plan might produce, needed to know more about it and to have a say in the decision-making process. The meeting of September 26th was the latest in what I hope will be an open and on-going discussion about the MWRA's selection process and possible impacts to the water supply and quality.

Some of the main issues discussed included:

Is there a real public health need in these new communities, or is there a financial incentive for the MWRA driving the proposed expansion?

Would the new communities use the water to meet a public health need, or to water lawns and fill swimming pools?

Is selling Quabbin excess the only use of that water, or should it also be used to improve the downstream releases of the Swift and Nashua Rivers?

We had what I believed was a productive discussion and MWRA Commissioner Frederick Laskey agreed to have at least one more MWRA meeting in western Mass. in the coming year. He also stated that diverting the Connecticut River, or any other river, is not part of the MWRA's plans for the future of the Quabbin water supply.

I left the meeting believing that we had accomplished some important goals. Namely, that the MWRA understands that western Mass. residents are concerned about the Quabbin Reservoir and how it is used, and that the burden is squarely on the MWRA to prove that selling Quabbin excess is the best and safest use of that water.

[Noteworthy](#)

Hampshire County Lock-up

Great news! The full-court press by the western Mass. delegation during the last few weeks has resulted in a \$460,000 appropriation to keep the lockup open for the remainder of this fiscal year. That appropriation, which is part of an \$87 million supplemental budget (see below), is currently on the governor's desk and has the full support of the Executive Office of Public Safety (EOPS).

Everybody had a hand in making this happen. State Representative Peter Kocot (D-Northampton) arranged for Hampshire County Sheriff Robert Garvey to meet with House

Ways and Means Chairman Robert DeLeo. In the meantime, State Senator Stephen Brewer (D-Barre) and I met with Senate Ways and Means Chairwoman Therese Murray. And just his past Monday, September 25th, EOPS Secretary Robert Haas held a meeting in his office with myself and State Representatives John Scibak (D-South Hadley) and Steve Kulik (D-Worthington), along with aides to Senator Brewer and State Representative Ellen Story (D-Amherst), to try to find a solution to this problem.

Basically the problem is this: When the lockup was built, the state agreed to pay the construction costs and users would proportionately share the cost of running it. When the facility was complete, the users didn't have the money, so for a period of time there was a combination of state funds from the sheriff's budget and federal grants that financed the day-to-day operation of the lockup. That money has dried up.

Everything came together Thursday, September 28th, when the House and Senate Ways and Means Committees, with the EOPS' pledge to encourage the governor not to veto it, included this appropriation in the supplemental budget. Assuming the governor signs the bill we will have about 10 months to work out a long-term solution. That's a much better scenario than trying to work with an axe hanging over your head.

I think it's important to note that during this process EOPS officials consistently expressed their belief that the Hampshire facility is a model program, that it is excellently run, and that they would like to see it replicated in four other counties. In an effort to develop a funding policy that could be applied consistently across the board, EOPS officials have pledged to meet with the police chiefs in our area, and with the security chiefs from each of the five colleges, to discuss the operation and financing of the Hampshire facility.

Sometimes good results come from a spirit of cooperation.

Supplemental Budget -- Higher Education

On September 28th, the Legislature approved an \$87 million supplemental budget that included a couple of items important for higher education.

- \$5 million for the UMass-Amherst campus for a new nanotechnology research center. This appropriation will enable the UMass-Amherst to obtain a \$16 million from the National Science Foundation.
- \$4.4 million to pay for a new law that exempts members of the National Guard from paying fees at UMass and 4-year state and community colleges. Guard members had been exempt from tuition costs, but fees are generally higher. The supplemental budget is currently on the governor's desk.

Round-up

Re-election Endorsements

I have been fortunate enough to pick up the following re-election endorsements, and I thank them one and all:

The Massachusetts Teachers Association said: "The residents of this district are fortunate to have a candidate with your qualifications and experience running for this seat. Your commitment to strengthening public education is apparent in your voting record and in your support of public education."

The Planned Parenthood Advocacy Fund said: "You have demonstrated a strong support for a woman's right to control her own medical decisions, which is more important now than ever as this and other rights come under attack from all directions. Under these circumstances, it is vital that Massachusetts elect legislators who will be leaders on this and other critical reproductive health issues."

MassEquality said: "You have earned this endorsement because of your demonstrated support for marriage equality and your strong opposition to amending the Constitution to take away the existing right of same-sex couples to marry."

The Boston Carmen's Union Local 589 said: "The Carmen's Union feels very fortunate to have a friend of your stature and integrity running for re-election to the Massachusetts State Senate . . . You also have been and continue to be a great asset to the working men and women in your district."

1199SEIU United Health Care Workers said: "We look forward to continuing to work with you to improve the quality of care for all the Commonwealth's residents, and to create better jobs and better lives for all health care workers."

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered Political Alliance of Western Mass. said: "We appreciate your support and commitment to the issues of civil rights affecting our community."

Democratic Coordinated Campaign Office Grand Opening

The Grand Opening of the Democratic Coordinated Campaign Office in Amherst will be Thursday, October 5 at 5 p.m.

The office will serve campaigns of all local Democrats including Congressman John Olver, Representatives Ellen Story, John Scibak, Steve Kulik and Peter Kocot, and Governor's Council candidate Tom Merrigan.

There will be locally-produced light refreshments provided. The event will end at 6 p.m. when we will have a meeting for people interested in volunteering at the office and a "demonstration" phone bank.

The Democratic Coordinated Campaign Office in Amherst is at 7 Pomeroy Lane in South Amherst, Just off Route 116 across from the Hess Station.

State Grants

In late September, the Massachusetts Cultural Council approved \$270,300 in competitive grants to cultural organizations and schools in my district, plus an additional \$129,310 in funding for my district's local cultural councils, for a total of \$399,610. The complete listing of grant recipients can be found [here](#).

<http://www.massculturalcouncil.org/programs/funding.html>

New Law -- Statute of Limitations for Sexual Crimes Against Children

Chapter 303

An Act increasing the statute of limitations for sexual crimes against children (see [House, No. 5234, amended](#)). Approved by the Governor, September 21, 2006.

Full text

<http://www.mass.gov/legis/laws/seslaw06/sl060303.htm>

Home rule petitions

The following home rule petition was approved late last month.

Chapter 281

An Act protecting certain real property in the city of Northampton (see [House, No. 5127](#)). Approved by the Governor, August 30, 2006.

Full text

<http://www.mass.gov/legis/laws/seslaw06/sl060281.htm>

Trivia

Now for the answer to our previous question:

Who was the first person killed in the American Revolution?

The answer is: Crispus Attucks, who was killed during the Boston Massacre.

And our winner is Lori T. from somewhere in cyberspace. We'll send Lori information on who to contact in my Boston office and we'll look forward to seeing her at the State House. Congratulations! And thanks to everybody who played along!

Now to this month's question and another chance to win lunch and a State House tour:

The signs along the Massachusetts Turnpike reading "x miles to Boston" refer to the distance from that point to where?

Submit your answer to tumitch@sprynet.com and watch this space for the correct answer and the prize winner.

Links

Here are a few links. Until next time . . .

Join TeamRosenberg! <http://www.stanrosenberg.com/teamrosenberg.php>

Click here tumitch@sprynet.com if you want to be removed from our list.

Click here for our on-line feedback form www.stanrosenberg.com/form.html

Forward this link to a friend www.stanrosenberg.com/issues/rosenreportreg.html

Guide to Lawmaking -- <http://www.state.ma.us/legis/lawmkng.htm>

Massachusetts State Government Home Page – <http://mass.gov/>

The Legislature's web page – <http://www.state.ma.us/legis/>

Senate's Bill Text System – <http://www.state.ma.us/legis/billsrch.htm>

Legislative Tracking System – <http://www.state.ma.us/legis/ltsform.htm>

My personal website – <http://www.stanrosenberg.com/>

The Rosenberg Report (August, 2006, edition) --
<http://www.stanrosenberg.com/issues/aug2006.html>