

TOP
PRIORITIES

***An Act Relative to Substance Addiction Treatment, SD474
(Sen. Marian Walsh)***

Alcohol purchased for off-site consumption is currently exempt from the 5% MA sales tax, along with necessities such as food and clothing. This bill would remove the exemption of this product and would dedicate the revenue to a Substance Abuse Health Protection Fund to provide substance abuse treatment, prevention, and recovery support services.

***And Act to Promote Conflict Resolution Curricula, HD1308
(Rep. Byron Rushing)***

Research shows that conflict resolution education is effective at promoting positive behavior, including reducing school suspensions and aggressive behaviors and increasing social competence and pro-social behavior. This legislation enables the Department of Education, in consultation with the Department of Public Health, to develop a model curriculum and implementation guidelines related to conflict resolution education.

OTHER
PRIORITIES

An Act to Promote Diversion to Substance Abuse Treatment for Non-violent Drug Offenders, HD2942 (Rep. Marty Walsh)

Of the nearly 25,000 individuals in the MA state and county correctional system, 20% committed offenses related to drug use, and an additional 20% committed offenses to obtain money for drug use. This proposal would build the state's infrastructure and capacity to offer treatment as an alternative to incarceration for non-violent drug offenders, creating greater access to treatment for addicted individuals and reducing the cost burden to taxpayers associated with incarceration and addiction-related recidivism.

An Act to Establish the MA Food Policy Council, HD2055 (Rep. Linda Dorcena Forry)

This bill would establish an advisory council jointly chaired by the department of agricultural resources and the department of public health. The council will be charged with making an action plan for the state to improve the distribution, availability, promotion, and affordability of Massachusetts agriculture and other fresh, healthy food for all residents.

An Act to Ease the Transition of Ex-Offenders, HD2788 (Rep. Gloria Fox)

This bill continues the progress made last session on a number of items designed to help transition ex-offenders back into society upon their release, such as: financial incentives for employers who hire former inmates, additional funding for GED and other educational opportunities, provisions requiring clarity and transparency in CORI reports, and better coordination of discharge planning. The bill also prohibits the use of check boxes to determine criminal records on employment applications.

***An Act for Coordination of Children's Mental Health Care Services, HD1439
(Rep. Ruth Balser)***

This bill establishes reimbursement to mental health clinicians for collateral consultations. Coordination of care with other providers when treating young people with mental health needs is vital to determining effective treatment and achieving success. Collateral contacts are not expensive and are already covered by public insurance.

***An Act Concerning Nutrition Labeling of Food by Certain Restaurants, SD1223
(Sen. Richard Moore)***

This bill establishes requirements for certain restaurants to provide nutritional information for all standard menu items; requires said restaurants to obtain nutrient analysis in a manner consistent with the Uniform Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act; establishes menu and signage regulations; directs the department of health to issue regulations within twelve months of enactment; establishes inspection requirements.

