

Nick Collins

STATE SENATE

2021 Legislative Update

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Dear Friends & Neighbors,

I am proud to represent you in the State Senate, and I wanted to take a moment to reflect on what we have accomplished together this year.

My office was focused on delivering for every community in the First Suffolk District, prioritizing economic recovery, local non-profits and small business support, education, healthcare, environmental justice, and public health & safety.

FY22 State Budget

Earlier this year I voted in support of a \$48.07 billion budget for the Fiscal Year 2022 (FY22). I was proud to work together with my colleagues and successfully compromise the House and the Senate respective budgets, and I look forward to continuing to work together to recover and rebuild our neighborhoods, our city, and the Commonwealth. Specifically, within the First Suffolk District, I **championed amendments directly supporting over 35 organizations and securing over \$17 million.**

Community Development and Small Business

This year I was named **Chair of the Senate Committee of Community Development and Small Business for the 192nd General Court of Massachusetts**. The Committee is tasked with all matters concerning small business operations, local economies, neighborhood and economic development, and community-based job creation. I am honored to be appointed to this important leadership role at such a critical time. As we seek to build back a vibrant, equitable, and accessible economy, our small businesses need our support.

Economic Recovery

As we continue to recover from the pandemic I supported an important Unemployment Insurance bill, **which will aid Commonwealth employers and**

employees. The bill authorizes \$7 billion to stabilize the unemployment insurance system, establishes a paid sick leave program for COVID-19 emergencies, and reduces the size of premium increases employers contribute to fund the jobless benefits system.

[Vaccine Access](#)

During the height of the pandemic, I called on the Baker Administration to mobilize the Massachusetts National Guard to assist in facilitating vaccine access for at-risk populations, especially those living in senior and affordable housing developments.

[American Rescue Plan Act](#)

This fall I was proud to vote in favor of a \$3.82 billion bill that directs federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding to assist the Commonwealth's ongoing recovery. Using this framework, the bill delivers targeted, transformational supports to critical sectors such as **health care, mental and behavioral health, housing security, environment, and workforce development.**

[Mental Health](#)

I voted in favor of the Mental Health ABC Act 2.0: Addressing Barriers to Care (ABC), comprehensive legislation to continue the process of reforming the way mental health care is delivered in Massachusetts, with **the goal of ensuring that people get the mental health care they need when they need it.** The bill proposes a wide variety of reforms to ensure equitable access to mental health care and remove barriers to care by supporting the behavioral health workforce.

[Veteran Benefits](#)

Veterans' benefits are a priority for me and why I voted to pass An Act Relative to Military Spouse-licensure Portability, Education and Enrollment of Dependents, or SPEED Act, to **support military families who relocate to the Commonwealth** by providing career stability for the spouses of service members and quality education for their children. I also secured funding through the budget for the **expansion of the Women Veterans' Outreach Center**, and the **reconstruction of a new Holyoke Soldiers' Home.**

[Affordable Housing](#)

I along with State Representative David Biele, and the Baker-Polito Administration announced more than \$30 million in direct funding as well as the allocation of state and federal tax credits that will yield an additional **\$200 million to support the rehabilitation and production of 678 units of affordable housing**. Locally, these investments will result in 104 new rental units at the Anne Lynch Homes at Old Colony in South Boston, all of which will be affordable to households.

Transportation Improvements

I was proud to vote in favor of the transportation infrastructure bill that will **invest \$350 million in municipal transportation** and selected statewide transportation infrastructure projects. The bill, An Act Financing Improvements to Municipal Roads and Bridges, authorizes **\$200 million for municipal roads and bridges** through the Chapter 90 program. The Chapter 90 program will allocate **\$15 million directly to the City of Boston** for road and bridge maintenance and repairs.

Voter Access

I voted to pass S.2545, An Act Fostering Voter Opportunities, Trust, Equity and Security (the VOTES Act). This comprehensive voting reform bill permanently codifies the popular mail-in and early voting options used in Massachusetts in 2020. The bill would also enact same-day voter registration, increase ballot access for service members serving overseas, and make a series of other **improvements to the Commonwealth's election administration process**.

Education

I voted in support of S.2845 An Act Concerning Genocide Education to **provide education to middle and high school students** on the history of genocide and to promote the teaching of human rights issues. This bill would establish a Genocide Education Trust Fund to promote and educate middle and high school students on the history of genocide.

Thank you for your continued support and partnership. As we look forward into the new year and are continuing to develop our legislative priorities, please feel free to contact my office by email, or at 617-722-1150. Wishing you and your loved ones safe and happy holidays from my family to yours.

Yours in service,

Nick Collins

State Senator