

July 21, 2011

Letter: Budget 'a step toward more fiscally conservative governance'

Editor, Townsman:

On Monday, July 11, Gov. Deval Patrick signed a \$30.59 billion budget bill for FY2012, which had been approved by the House of Representatives by a vote of 150-2. This budget, for which I voted, includes initiatives designed to improve our state's climate for businesses, which are essential to spur private-sector job creation and economic growth. While far from perfect, this budget represents a step toward more fiscally conservative governance and a departure from significant structural deficits of the past.

Importantly, the doubling of the Republican presence in the legislature brought meaningful improvements to the legislative process this year which benefit taxpayers, encourage business growth, and support our communities. Budget highlights include: no new taxes or fees, cuts and reforms to existing programs worth \$1.9 billion, and reform of municipal healthcare, which will save jobs and \$100 million for cities and towns. Another Republican-led initiative will send "reversions," or unused state funds from the prior fiscal year, back to cities and towns as additional local aid before Oct. 31, a first for the state.

Going forward, we must continue to make fundamental changes to the way our state does business in order to achieve sustainable long-term economic growth. This must include eliminating the state's structural deficit, continued reform of entitlements, and reducing our state's debt load — important changes that I believe will result from lower taxes across the board, changes to our corporate and individual tax codes, and streamlining of regulations imposed on all of Massachusetts' 599,000 businesses.

Paul Adams
State Representative,
17th Essex District

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