

CommonWealth

A man with dark skin, wearing a white chef's hat, a blue suit jacket, a white shirt, and an orange tie, is smiling. He is wearing a white apron and holding a yellow wooden spoon, stirring a large silver pot filled with orange liquid. The pot sits on a round wooden table with two small glass jars on it. The background is a solid teal color.

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RECIPE FOR SUCCESS

Can Patrick whip up
a term as governor
that's not just good,
but great?

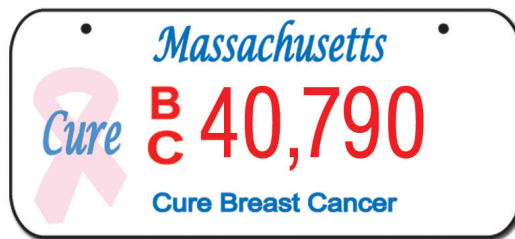
Is Rivera's 7-12
School Solution
Right for Boston?

Western Mass.
Counts on Bradley
for Take Off

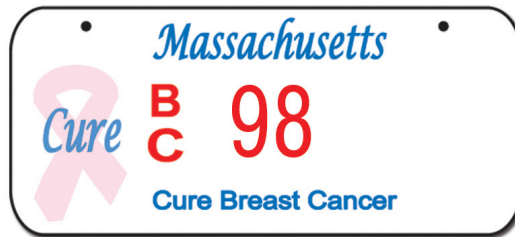
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RealTalk is supported in part by generous contributions from the Boston Redevelopment Authority, The New Community Fund and State Street Corporation.

CommonWealth

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CommonWealth (ISSN pending) is published quarterly by the Massachusetts Institute for a New Commonwealth (MassINC), 18 Tremont St., Suite 1120, Boston, MA 02108. Telephone: 617-742-6800 ext. 109, fax: 617-589-0929. Volume 12, Number 1, Winter 2007. Third Class postage paid at Holliston, MA. To subscribe to *CommonWealth*, become a Friend of MassINC for \$50 per year and receive discounts on MassINC research reports and invitations to MassINC forums and events. Postmaster: Send address changes to Circulation Director, MassINC, 18 Tremont St., Suite 1120, Boston, MA 02108. Letters to the editor accepted by e-mail at editor@massinc.org. The views expressed in this publication are those of the authors and not necessarily those of MassINC's directors, advisors, or staff.

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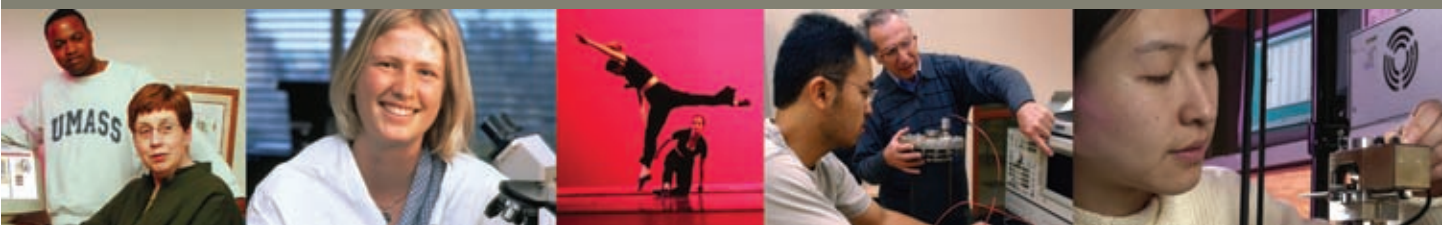
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Craig C. Mello, PhD (left, with UMass President Jack Wilson), of University of Massachusetts Medical School is the co-recipient of the 2006 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine for discoveries related to RNA interference. Dr. Mello's research is part of the University system's \$377 million in annual research.



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ACTIVISTS, NOT MAYOR, CHANGE NEW BEDFORD

Your article on the mayors of New Bedford and Fall River ("Bright Lights, Little Cities," *CW*, Fall '06) is well-written, but there is a message that is lost, and those of us who are considered activists see it as a glaring omission. The biggest hurdle through all these decades has been that "our leaders" have always had very rosy views of the future in their speeches and then delivered nothing.

Take the Whaling Museum. It inhales a great amount of grant money and pays a few top officers well. However, most whaling museum staffers work as volunteers. The money the museum takes in stays there. Overall, the museum is an economic zero to the average working citizen. If city officials put as much effort into revitalizing our economy as they do to fund the Whaling Museum, we would be in a better place.

Or take the Corson building, which just received a \$6 million grant for rehabilitation. In the end, though, because it will be just an extension of the federal visitors' center, it will pay no taxes and employ just a few lucky federal employees. Granted, it will remove blight from downtown, but again, it will be an economic zero to most residents.

When Mayor Scott Lang took office, he asked me and everyone one else he met, "How'm I doin'?" I told him that if he doesn't do something that the most regular person will notice, then he will have accomplished nothing. Unfortunate to say, this is where we stand one year later. Granted, Mayor Lang is putting forth a good effort, but his ties to the old political machine prevent him from firing the deadwood and making the toe-stomping changes that are necessary.

This is where we (activists) come in. Our little group has driven several issues down here. You mentioned that Lang held public "Great Idea Forums." That idea came from our Grinnell St. Group, which held neighborhood Great Idea Forums in front of our house. We then shared these ideas on our cable access show. Our lasting success was the rapid removal of the biggest drug dealer in our neighborhood. Also, the park nearby is now mostly always clean, and the loud neighbors have quieted down.

We also started the "clean the city" initiative. This was a direct extension of Citizens in Action for Progress (CAP). Eventually, Mayor Lang started his own group, called Operation Clean Sweep, which is modeled after a Los Angeles initiative of the same name. We started our group knowing that the necessary legislation was not in place for the city to enforce non-littering behavior, but we were looking to encourage a kind of "me too" cleaning initiative. Success was mixed. Clean Sweep is, of course, having the same mixed success. Without legislative teeth, people are allowed to be slobs.

Our group also began the trend of photographing crime violations, from drug dealing to abandoned houses to trash. Now, just a short 18 months later, everyone is running around photographing various parts of "Dysfunction Junction" (New Bedford). This habit of photographing led us to record the City Council in action, to make them more accountable. However, its members passed and then rapidly repealed council rule 12A, which prohibited the use of recording devices in City Council meetings without the council president's permission—a blatant violation of the Open Meeting Law.

CAP was painfully vocal about ab-



andoned property and tax title property. At our insistence, Mayor Lang assigned a full-time lawyer to the tax title issue, and the city is making a dent in it. Lang also added an abandoned housing task force, run from the Office of Community Development. This, too, is a good effort, but it is making headway at a snail's pace. The point is, we also drive that issue.

I hope I can encourage your magazine to come back to New Bedford and view the city from a perspective other than some corner office. You need to meet the people and the groups that will change and have already changed New Bedford. We like Scott as a mayor simply because he will listen, and he will respond. Perfection is still a ways off.

*Dave Gould
New Bedford*

SOUTH COAST NEEDS HELP TO HELP ITSELF

I was born in Fall River and went to school there, and grew up just over the town line in Westport. (Of course, things being as they are, I now live in Greater Boston.) Thank you for reminding people that Fall River and New Bedford exist.

I hope Michael Jonas's excellent article will spur some people in Boston to reexamine the senseless waste of two major cities and a region that desper-

ately needs some help from its capital to help itself. Thankfully, the first step has already been taken on the road back for the South Coast—electing Deval Patrick as governor.

*Robert Lamontagne
Cambridge*

NOW CW IS PART OF THE BIG DIG PROBLEM

First, I have always had the utmost respect and admiration for Phil Primack, going back to his days at the *Boston Herald*. But the cast of characters highlighted and quoted (“Learning from the Big Dig”) is absolutely incorrect. They are either the enablers or should be labeled as the guilty.

I would credit the following persons who attempted to bring accountability and oversight to the project since day one. They include Joe Barresi, Steve Cotton, Marie Parente, Peter

Howe, Joe Bergantino, Larry Overlan, William Nagle, William Keating, Tim Sandler, Ron Golobin, Walt Sanders, Steven Troiano, Bill Coughlin, John Strahinich, Warren Tolman, Tom Hammond, and the Washington-based watchdog group Project on Government Oversight, to name a few profiles in courage who dared to stand up and demand accountability and oversight of this project. They were dismissed or demeaned by the special interest groups of contractors, consultants, businesses, labor bosses, media allies, and political entities.

Michael Dukakis and Fred Salvucci (“Second-Guesswork”) are the architects of no accountability, which became an art form under James Carlin/James Kerasiotis, Steve Karol/Robert Havern, and Weld/Cellucci/Swift/Romney.

Your magazine should have done better for our state’s citizens and your

readers instead of now being formally part of the problem that will further hinder needed reforms.

*John Gatti Jr.
Southbridge*

ATTENTION FROM STATE WOULD HELP HOLYOKE

“A Tale of Two Valleys” is very interesting and well written. I think mention should also be made of the huge Holyoke Mall at Ingleside, which helped to kill downtown retail in Springfield and Holyoke, but which is a big economic plus for the city. Another thing that would help Holyoke and the Lower Pioneer Valley would be some attention from Massachusetts state government, which still seems to think that New York begins just west of I-495.

*Eric S. Einhorn
Amherst*

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Climate change

BY NOW, IT is old news that MassINC president and CEO Ian Bowles has left to become Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs in the administration of Gov. Deval Patrick. But it is by no means too late to give the publisher of this magazine a proper send-off.

Ian Bowles's arrival on the MassINC scene in August 2003 was received with some trepidation. First of all, Ian at the helm was a product of the dreaded Founder Transition, the most momentous, and perilous, transfer of control in the life of any young organization, for-profit or non. Could MassINC survive a shift to second-generation leadership? Second, and of particular concern in these quarters, was the fact that MassINC's head was also publisher of *CommonWealth*. Would he understand—even more, could he tolerate—the editorial independence that *CommonWealth* had enjoyed throughout its young life, and which had been the source of its hard-won credibility in the world of politics and civic life in Massachusetts?

It was not long before he put both sorts of fear to rest. In nearly three and a half years at the top of the MassINC organizational chart and the *CW* masthead (this issue for the last time), Ian distinguished himself as an institutional leader and as a supportive, enthusiastic publisher.

The organizational accomplishments are easy to enumerate: On Ian's watch, MassINC released eight major research reports that received press and public attention from the Berkshires to Cape Cod; doubled its base of organizational sponsors and tripled the number of individual donors; and observed its 10th anniversary with substance and style, through ambitious election-year activities (including co-sponsoring two early debates among gubernatorial candidates) and a Faneuil Hall forum of former governors discussing the state of the American Dream in Massachusetts. There were noteworthy achievements in *CommonWealth* as well, including two extra issues—on health care in 2004 and on growth and development in 2006—and an upgrade to full-color printing, with complete redesign of the magazine, last spring.

Harder to quantify is the spirit of fun Ian brought to the business side of *CommonWealth*. To be publisher of our magazine of politics, ideas, and civic life takes a certain tempera-

ment, a willingness to take risks—even more, a willingness to let *others* take risks for which you may pay the price. Ian captured it best, in his Publisher's Note (itself an innovation of his) for the 10th anniversary issue of the magazine: "Being publisher, I've found, is like being the owner of a brand-new car, but riding in the back seat as it barrels down the highway. You don't quite know where your drivers are taking you, but you have faith—and hope for the best."

For Ian, running MassINC was simply public service of a different sort.

As the guy behind the wheel, I might have missed a few grimaces, but any time I looked back there, Ian seemed to be having a great time. And if he indulged in backseat driving at all, it was only to tell me to floor it.

IN 1996, IAN was a candidate in the Democratic primary for the 10th Congressional District, and during his time at MassINC he was occasionally asked whether he planned to run for office again. He became pretty adept at deflecting the question—he was enough of a politician to never say never—but there was not the least indication that he was contemplating candidacy for anything.

At the same time, there was never any doubt that public service was in Ian's blood. Indeed, for him, running MassINC was simply public service of a different sort. So it surprised no one here that, when an opportunity presented itself to serve in the new Patrick administration, with a portfolio so dear to his heart, he would take it. It would have been more of a shock if he had not.

Though we wish him well in his new post, he will be sorely missed in his old one. In his absence, his former colleagues at MassINC and *CommonWealth* look forward to a third generation of leadership.



ROBERT KEOUGH, EDITOR





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Not all contractors are so independent

Employers may be keen to offload workers from their payrolls and contract for services instead (“Lone Rangers,” *CW*, Summer ’05). But recent cases suggest that companies can go only so far in treating workers as if they’re not employees.

In December, the Supreme Judicial Court upheld rulings by a lower court and the Division of Unemployment Assistance that a woman working at an Arlington nursing home as a franchisee of a Florida-based janitorial services company was entitled to collect unemployment benefits, and that the firm, Coverall North America, was required to contribute toward unemployment insurance. Coverall argued that the cleaner was an independent contractor, but the SJC ruled that Coverall failed to meet a three-part legal test to show that she was truly working for herself.

Meanwhile, the National Labor Relations Board has supported claims by FedEx Ground drivers in Wilmington and Northborough that they also should be classified as employees, not independent contractors. FedEx is appealing the decisions, but in November, drivers at two Wilmington facilities became the first FedEx Ground drivers in the country to unionize, voting to join Boston-based Teamsters Local 25.

Shannon Liss-Riordan, a Boston attorney representing FedEx Ground drivers in a multistate suit in federal court, says the cases show that “employers are going to be subject to real limits in their attempts to get out from paying employees what they’re owed.”

► MICHAEL JONAS

Another day of reckoning approaches for Renaissance

► BY MICHAEL JONAS

HAS THE BOSTON Renaissance Charter School gotten its act together, or will the curtain come down? That’s the question facing the state Board of Education, which renewed the school’s charter in 2005 for another five-year term, but under strict conditions that come due in February of this year.

It’s been a shaky 12 years for Renaissance, which was one of the first charter schools to open in Massachusetts, in 1995. The school’s charter was renewed after its initial five years, despite lackluster academic performance. When the charter came up for renewal again in 2005, however, state education officials expressed serious reservations. “It’s clearly not a success story,” state education commissioner David Driscoll told *CommonWealth* in the summer of 2005, following the board’s vote to renew the charter on a conditional basis (see “In Need of a Renaissance,” *CW*, Fall ’05).

That renewal came on the heels of a tumultuous year at Renaissance. Mounting concerns about academic performance prompted a vote by the school’s board of trustees in December 2004 to fire headmaster Roger Harris, a move the trustees reversed a month later under heavy lobbying from black political leaders. Talk of yet another vote by trustees against Harris in the spring

of 2005 was cut short when Driscoll stepped in and pushed for the school to move ahead under its existing leadership.

But the state made it clear that it expected to see substantial academic improvement. The inspection report that the Department of Education relied on in its renewal decision was blunt in its assessment of the school’s first 10 years: “There has not been any significant increase in overall student performance [at the Renaissance School] during the course of its charter.”

In giving Renaissance another chance, the Board of Education attached three conditions to be met by the school, which at that time served 1,400 students, primarily African-American, from kindergarten through eighth grade. Among them was a mandate to phase out the school’s seventh and eighth grades, where performance was deemed especially poor. In addition, Renaissance was required to show by February 2007 that it is making “substantial progress” on its internal five-year accountability plan and also demonstrate that it is on track toward meeting the federal No Child Left Behind goal of all students reaching proficiency in math and English by 2014. The NCLB determination is based on a measure of “adequate yearly progress” (AYP) that relies most heavily on MCAS scores to gauge academic performance.

So far, scant progress appears to have been made toward the school’s in-

MCAS SCORES ARE LARGELY UNCHANGED FROM 2003.



Renaissance is the largest charter school in the state. Has its size protected it from scrutiny?

ternal accountability goals of 50 percent of students reaching proficiency in English and 25 percent in math by 2010. The school's most recent MCAS proficiency scores were 34 percent and 20 percent, respectively, largely unchanged from 2003. What's more, the school failed the crucial test of annual progress toward federal proficiency goals. In AYP assessments released in October, Renaissance was "identified for improvement" in English, a designation that comes after two consecutive years of failing to meet improvement goals, and in math deemed in need of "corrective action," a label applied after four straight years of inadequate progress in a subject area.

The state warned Renaissance that such performance could result in the school being put on formal probation or having its charter revoked. But what the state will now do is unclear. The director of the state's charter school office, Mary Street, says that, as of late December, she is still preparing a report based on a November site visit, and the department declined to make Driscoll available for an interview.

Harris, the school's headmaster, did not return a phone message, but the chairman of the Renaissance board of

trustees, Monroe "Bud" Moseley, says the school is making "demonstrable progress," and that new systems have been put in place to raise achievement levels in the future.

Although Driscoll will make a recommendation about the school's future, the decision ultimately rests with the state Board of Education. Christopher Anderson, who was appointed board chairman in November, says he has little patience for mediocrity in charter schools, which are supposed to be innovative, high-achieving alternatives to district public schools.

"In the case of charter schools, if they've been given a warning once, I don't see what the options are other than nonrenewal," says Anderson.

Renaissance is the largest charter school in the state, and some have speculated that its size and popularity with families have insulated it from the level of scrutiny and accountability to which other charter schools have been held. Two years ago, at the time Renaissance received its second five-year charter renewal, two other Boston schools were closed following their initial five-year charter.

In December, Driscoll recommended that another Boston charter school, the Uphams Corner Charter School, be shut down at the end of its first five-year charter because of low test scores. Anderson asked Driscoll to consider giving Uphams Corner the Renaissance treatment, renewing the charter with conditions, in order to give the school a chance at a turnaround.

But Renaissance seems to keep getting more chances. Board chairman Moseley says that Driscoll indicated to him in recent conversations that his school's charter will not be revoked, and Renaissance leaders appear to be counting on that. In late November, they announced plans to sell the 13-story building in Boston's Park Square that Renaissance has occupied since its inception and build a new facility, possibly in Mattapan.

Performance pacts offer energy upgrades for (almost) nothing

► BY ANDREAE DOWNS

IT SOUNDED ALMOST too good to be true, the way the young man speaking before Newton's board of aldermen described how improvements to crumbling firehouses and neglected school buildings could basically pay for themselves. The source of the fiscal magic? Performance contracting.

Under a performance contract, clients use savings on utility bills to finance efficiency improvements made through lighting, HVAC, or low-flow water fixtures. The contract is made with an energy service company, or ESCO, which specializes in finding efficiency measures, procures the equipment, makes the upgrades, and supervises maintenance. By law, ESCOs in Massachusetts must guarantee savings on bills, and compensate clients if these savings do not materialize.

Performance contracting is something that universities and the Department of Defense have been using since 2001. But until recently, utility company rebates made it easier and

SAVINGS ARE GUARANTEED BY STATE LAW.

cheaper for many towns and cities to make energy improvements with existing resources. Now that these rebates are being phased out, performance contracts are more attractive, and ESCOs are scouting cash-starved municipalities as clients.

"Cities and schools are our number one target," notes Tyler Gill, the sales representative for Ameresco who wowed Newton's aldermen last summer. "They have the smallest [amount of] capital available for energy and water effi-

ciency projects."

As of November, the Barnstable School Department and the cities of Quincy, Somerville, and Springfield had signed or were close to signing contracts with ESCOs. Peabody and Salem are also investigating performance contracting. But the town of Belmont was the first to explore the idea, for both environmental and capital improvement benefits.

Last April, the town completed the construction phase of a \$1.7 million, 10-year performance contract with Noresco, a Westborough-based firm. In seven school buildings and five other town structures, Noresco replaced 21,000 light bulbs and 8,000 fluorescent-light ballasts; upgraded 475 plumbing fixtures; and installed three energy management systems, three boiler controllers, a pool cover, and other equipment. The town is projected to save \$202,000 annually from the upgrades, with most of the savings funding the improvements themselves.

Performance contracting looks like a particularly good deal when electricity or water prices rise. When negotiating their contract, Belmont's project committee estimated that the cost of electricity would rise about 3 percent. But the town-owned Belmont Municipal Light Co. is now projecting electricity costs to rise 50 percent to 80 percent over the next

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two years. Electricity use in the energy-upgraded schools is headed down by 18 percent, based on early estimates, so rising rates make those savings worth more. “It makes us look great,” says Jenny Fallon, the project committee chair.

Belmont is financing its energy-improvement contract through a tax-exempt lease arrangement, as roughly 90 percent of Framingham-based Ameresco’s municipal clients do, according to Gill. Springfield, on the other hand, will pay for its improvements with municipal bonds. Here’s how the numbers look: Springfield will get \$15 million worth of work done by Siemens Technologies. The city will realize \$1.15 million in savings the first year, according to Stephen Lisauskas, deputy executive director of the Finance Control Board overseeing the troubled city’s books for the state. With no rate hikes, the city will save \$23 million over the course of the contract, enough to pay off the \$15 million in principal plus roughly \$7 million in interest, for an overall gain of at least \$1 million—\$2.3 million if prices rise 1 percent per year over the period.

Performance contracting also allows municipal officials to tap the expertise of energy efficiency experts. “If energy conservation was your main function, you wouldn’t need ESCOs at all,” says Eileen McHugh, program coordinator at the state’s Division of Energy Resources, who advises municipalities on energy services companies. But cities and towns looking to make their buildings more energy-efficient need help figuring out what to do, she says.

“This can be a very complicated process,” says McHugh. “Which energy improvements make sense is very individual to each town and city.”

Still, Newton is not yet ready to take the performance contracting plunge. “This is not for everyone,” says Jeremy Solomon, spokesman for Mayor David Cohen. “The end goal of energy efficiency for our buildings is unquestioned. How we get there is undecided.”

Andreae Downs is a freelance writer in Newton.

Accreditation agency raises questions about school finance

► GABRIELLE GURLEY

AT FIRST, THE news looked good for Georgetown Middle High School, the sole secondary school in a northern Essex County town of 7,377 residents, with students in grades six through 12. The New England Association of Schools and

Colleges’ Commission on Public Secondary Schools reviews the accreditation of its roughly 630 dues-paying members every 10 years, and last year was Georgetown’s turn. After a school visit in March, NEASC evaluators crowed with praise for student work samples, staff, and administrators.

Then came the bad news. The nonprofit association reaccredited GMHS, but with a warning: Georgetown had failed to meet its “community resources for learning” standard, which assesses, in part, whether facilities and funding are sufficient. The people of Georgetown are in a state of shock, says Philip Trapani, a member of Georgetown Concerned Residents.

Georgetown is not alone. In 2006, 51 Massachusetts schools were on warning—with 13 cited for “community resource” issues—and 10 were on probation, the most in New England. Facilities and finances, which NEASC sees as directly affecting student learning, are the most common problems leading to warnings or probation.

In Georgetown’s case, part of the problem is a growing student population, translating into bigger class sizes and too few desks and computers. GMHS houses 820 students today, up from 710 in 2001-02; the 12th grade has 90 students, the sixth grade 140. GMHS principal Peter Lucia admits that the school’s

GEORGETOWN WAS CITED FOR LOW SPENDING.

budget hasn’t kept pace with enrollment. But NEASC also faulted the town for the lack of an “adequate and dependable” revenue stream for its schools. Evaluators pointed to Georgetown’s median family income—\$79,649 in 2003—as well above the state average. Yet in 2005 the town’s expenditures-per-pupil were the lowest of any district in the state, at \$6,273, according to Department of Education figures. In the past five years, the town considered three Proposition 2½ overrides that would have bolstered school funding, but voted them all down.

Communities drag their feet on finances, argues Pamela Gray-Bennett, director of NEASC’s secondary schools commission, who sees the accreditation agency’s role as forcing the issue. “Sometimes people don’t want to spend money on a car until the old car really breaks down,” she says.

But given the Bay State’s elaborate school funding system, put in place by the Education Reform Act of 1993, it is hard to see how a community could so badly shortchange its schools even if it wanted to. The state sets a minimum spending level for each community, or “foundation budget,” that is thought to be enough to provide an adequate education for all students. The state also sets a minimum level for local funding, based on each community’s income and property wealth, though many localities provide more. Then the state makes up any difference between required local contribution and foundation budget through Chapter 70 aid.

As far as the state is concerned, Georgetown is holding up its end of the bargain, says Roger Hatch, administrator of school finance programs for the state Department of Education. In fiscal 2006, the town exceeded its nearly \$9.9 million foundation budget by 9 percent; the local contribution was almost \$6.5 million.

But if NEASC claims Georgetown isn't spending enough, what does that say about foundation budget? Nothing at all, says Hatch, who argues that foundation budget represents some consensus on adequate spending. As for Georgetown's bottom dwelling in per-pupil expenditures, that doesn't mean much about the quality of education there, as long as the district meets or exceeds foundation budget, he says. Nor does Hatch take the rejection of overrides as a sign of community neglect. He notes that overrides simply represent the desires of residents who are willing to pay more for schools, but they have to convince a majority of voters to go along with them.

To Hatch, the accreditation agency's stance on funding hearkens back to the days when local school boards could dictate budgets to municipal officials. "It almost sounds as if [NEASC] wants to return to the point where school committees can decide, 'Whatever we want to spend, that's what we're going to spend,'" he says.

If NEASC is all wet, why worry about getting its seal of approval? Accreditation is a valuable process, says Mike Gilbert, a Massachusetts Association of School Committees field director, but he admits that the proliferation of accountability systems makes for conflicts between what state, federal, and professional organizations are asking for.

The NEASC credential is also considered important for college admissions. "Loss of accreditation would be a very serious blow to the student caught in the middle," says Barmak Nassirian, associate executive director of the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers. Gilbert, however, is not so sure. "Do colleges look at accreditation? Yes. Will it cause them to say, 'I'm not going to take your child.' I don't think so."

In Georgetown, the outside warning does provide validation for those who have been warning about deteriorating school quality, "because schools say it all the time, and, after a while, it falls on deaf ears," says Margaret Messelaar, a parent and former school committee member. Georgetown Middle High School has until July to come up with a plan and until October 2008 to outline specific actions to address the problems, or risk further sanctions from the accrediting agency.

"One thing about the community is that in the end when they need to rally, they do. I don't see the majority of the population supporting a course of action that leads to [GMHS] not being accredited," says school committee chairman George Moker.

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ROMNEY'S SCORECARD

WHEN MITT ROMNEY announced in December 2005 that he would not seek a second term as Massachusetts governor, his reason was simple: “We got a lot more done than I expected we would.... I’ve got the job done I set out to do.” As he takes the first steps toward running for president, *CommonWealth* decided to look at some of his publicly stated goals as governor—and, in each case, whether he achieved all, some, or none of what he “set out to do.” **CW**

CHALLENGE	ROMNEY'S PROPOSAL	LEGISLATURE'S ACTION	OUTCOME
BUDGET & TAXES			
Upon taking office, Romney estimates a budget deficit of \$3 billion in fiscal year 2004.	Raise \$500 million by closing corporate tax “loopholes” and increasing hundreds of user fees (including those for driver’s and marriage licenses); cut state spending by \$1.6 billion.	Passes a budget with some changes (both up and down) from Romney’s proposed spending for specific programs but without a tax increase; Romney signs it.	By the end of the fiscal year, a windfall of \$1.3 billion from capital gains taxes helps to close the budget gap.
Unexpected revenue from capital gains taxes helps the state end 2004 and 2005 with surpluses of more than \$500 million.	Immediately cut the flat-rate state income tax from 5.3 percent to 5.0 percent, as mandated by voters in a 2000 referendum.	Never seriously considers cutting the income tax below 5.3 percent, where the Legislature froze it in 2002.	Any immediate rollback of the income tax is unlikely in the near future, given Gov. Patrick’s opposition.
JOBS & ECONOMY			
Businesses spend an average of two years obtaining local and state permits in order to expand facilities or relocate to Massachusetts, according to the Executive Office of Economic Development, hurting efforts to stimulate job growth.	Develop a “fast track” permitting plan under which cities and towns agree to complete all permitting for commercial projects within 180 days. In distributing state development grants, give preference to communities that participate in the expedited system.	Passes its own “fast track” law; one allowing communities to adopt streamlined permitting only in certain areas (rather than the entire city or town) and still be eligible for state grants.	Romney signs the law in August 2006.
Because of inflation, the purchasing power of the state’s minimum wage has been steadily decreasing—down 9 percent from 2001 to 2005, according to the Massachusetts Budget and Policy Center.	Increase the state’s minimum wage from \$6.75 to \$6.96 per hour and index it to inflation.	Passes a bill that does not include indexing but increases the hourly minimum wage to \$7.50 in 2007 and \$8.00 in 2008, despite Romney’s warnings that an “excessive” raise could cause a loss of jobs.	In July 2006, the Legislature votes unanimously to override Romney’s veto of the bill.
Taxes to pay for unemployment insurance (UI), levied on employers, are the highest in the nation.	Cut a scheduled UI tax increase from \$600 million to \$200 million and reduce from 30 to 26 weeks the maximum time that claimants can receive benefits.	Passes a smaller tax increase on employers of \$455 million but refuses to cut benefits.	Romney allows the UI tax increase to become law without his signature.
HOUSING			
In 2002, Massachusetts has the third-highest housing costs in the US, and a median-income family can afford a median-price home in only nine communities in Greater Boston.	Create a new Office for Commonwealth Development to oversee agencies that deal with different aspects of housing development; set a goal of doubling housing starts by the end of his term.	Does not establish the new “super secretary” in statute, though Romney creates the office administratively.	Housing prices have leveled off but are still high; housing starts increased by almost 50 percent between 2002 and 2005 but are low compared with other states; Patrick abolishes the OCD.
Between 1970 and 2000, the amount of land developed in Massachusetts increases by 180 percent while the population increases by less than 30 percent.	Provide financial incentives for towns to approve “smart growth” housing.	Writes its own legislation, providing grants (Chap. 40R) to communities that approve high-density housing near town centers or transit stops, as well as subsidies (Chap. 40S) to help cover the costs of educating students in the new districts.	Romney signs legislation in 2004. As of the end of 2006 fewer than 10 communities have chosen to create “smart growth” districts under 40R.
TRANSPORTATION			
In July 2006, a section of the roof in a Big Dig tunnel collapses and kills a car passenger, revealing design and construction flaws in the \$15 billion project.	Transfer oversight of the Big Dig from the Mass. Turnpike Authority, an independent entity, to the executive branch.	After three years of rebuffing Romney’s attempts to merge the Turnpike Authority and the state Highway Department, the Legislature overwhelmingly passes Romney’s new proposal.	Romney conducts a “stem to stern” review of the entire Big Dig system, finding it mostly sound.
Motorists say that tolls on the Mass. Turnpike are unfair because other routes to Boston are free and the tolls have helped to fund the Big Dig, which benefits the immediate Boston area.	Have appointees to the Turnpike board of directors eliminate all tolls west of Route 128 on the Mass. Turnpike as of 2007, the remaining tolls (other than on tunnels to Logan Airport) later.	Has no role in the decision, though a Transportation Finance Commission created by the Legislature stands poised to recommend additional revenue for highway and transit projects, rather than giving up toll collection.	Patrick says the tolls bring in \$114 million annually in revenue and that it would be “impractical” to eliminate them.
GAY RIGHTS			
The state Supreme Judicial Court legalizes gay marriage in 2004, based on its reading of the state Constitution.	Amend the state Constitution to ban gay marriage.	Gives initial approval to an amendment banning gay marriage but creating civil unions (which Romney reluctantly supports), but kills the amendment one year later.	Opponents of gay marriage attempt to amend the state Constitution through a voter referendum, an effort that Romney supports.

ENVIRONMENT

In 2001, an energy company announces plans for Cape Wind, a 130-turbine wind farm on Horseshoe Shoal in Nantucket Sound that would provide up to 75 percent of Cape Cod's electricity needs.	Encourage other wind-power projects but block Cape Wind, which would be situated in an area that Romney calls "a national treasure."	Does not vote directly on Cape Wind, but a critical decision is left to the Massachusetts Energy Facilities Siting Board (MEFSB), a body created by the Legislature.	In December 2006, the Supreme Judicial Court upholds the decision of the MEFSB to allow turbines to connect to the electric grid, but Cape Wind still awaits federal approval.
Scientists say that "greenhouse gases" such as carbon dioxide, released by power plants and vehicles, are trapping heat in the atmosphere and contributing to global warming.	Withdraw from the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative, a nine-state pact to reduce power plant emissions (which Romney helped to negotiate during his first two years in office) because it may lead to higher energy costs.	Fails to take up a measure mandating that Massachusetts join the RGGI, despite the public support of a majority of legislators.	Patrick has indicated that he will sign the pact and rejoin the RGGI.

HEALTH CARE

As of 2004, almost 500,000 Massachusetts residents lack health insurance, representing an increase of 10 percent in just two years.	Require all residents to enroll in health insurance plans, provided that "affordable" plans are available to them, or face penalties. Require insurers to offer stripped-down, low-cost policies to small businesses and uninsured individuals, and provide tax credits for small businesses that insure workers.	Lawmakers pass a version of Romney's plan, but with an annual \$295-per-employee assessment on businesses that fail to offer health insurance to their workers.	Romney signs the health care legislation but vetoes the assessment on businesses; the Legislature overrides his veto.
A 1974 law against experimentation on a "live human fetus" is seen as a potential impediment to stem-cell research, a growing field in the state's biotech industry.	Allow the Department of Public Health to regulate stem-cell research but ban the cloning of human embryos for such research.	Passes a bill allowing stem-cell research; rejects a Romney-backed amendment to ban embryonic cloning and overrides his veto of the bill.	Despite the new law, the Romney-appointed Public Health Council prohibits scientists from creating new stem cells solely for research.

K-12 EDUCATION

The Education Reform Act of 1993 calls for science ultimately to be added to the state's high school graduation requirements, but need for a skilled workforce makes the matter pressing.	Require students to pass an MCAS science test as a condition of high school graduation.	Some lawmakers say the move is premature, given that nearly one-third of the state's eighth-graders failed the science MCAS in 2004, but approval by the Legislature is not needed.	The state Board of Education approves the requirement, effective with the graduating class of 2010.
Continuing concerns over test scores and graduation rates prompt calls for greater accountability from public teachers, as well as incentives for improved performance.	Provide merit raises of up to \$15,000 each to about 25,000 public school teachers a year, based on their students' test scores and other performance measures.	The co-chairmen of the Legislature's Education Committee dismiss Romney's idea in 2005, saying that money would be better spent on teacher training, among other things.	Teachers in Springfield ratify a contract in 2006 that includes a merit-pay program—a condition insisted upon by the near-bankrupt city's Finance Control Board, appointed by Romney.
By 2004, some 19,000 students in Massachusetts attend 49 charter schools—public schools that are exempt from union work rules—and nearly 15,000 more are on waiting lists.	End the limits on charter schools established in state law, including a statewide cap of 120 and a rule that no more than 9 percent of a school district's expenditures can be diverted to such schools.	Declines to end the restrictions and, in 2004, passes a moratorium on new charter schools, including those already approved but not yet opened. Romney's veto of the bill is sustained, a rare occurrence in the Democratic-controlled Legislature.	An August 2006 report by the state Department of Education says that charter schools generally equal or outperform traditional public schools on the MCAS. There are 59 charter schools operating in 2006-07.

HIGHER EDUCATION

A Bain & Co. review of the public higher education system for the incoming Romney administration reveals overlap, duplication, and uneven performance in academics and management.	Eliminate the presidency of the five-campus University of Massachusetts held by former Senate president William Bulger and restructure the state university, as well as state and community colleges.	The state Senate rejects Romney's reorganization proposal in June 2003.	Amid mounting public pressure over the degree of his cooperation in efforts to find his fugitive brother "Whitey," Bulger resigns in August 2003. University trustees grant him a severance package of close to \$1 million.
Just as a college degree becomes a necessity for individuals seeking to join a skilled workforce, both private and public institutions become less affordable for many Bay State residents.	Provide free tuition to state colleges for students whose MCAS scores are in the top 25 percent of their school district. The scholarships would not cover housing or fees, which are costlier than tuition at state schools.	Rejects the program, with critics arguing that it would benefit students from wealthier families, who typically score well on MCAS.	Romney bypasses the Legislature by getting approval from the state Board of Higher Education for John and Abigail Adams Scholarships.

CRIME & PUBLIC SAFETY

In 1984, the Supreme Judicial Court abolishes the state's death penalty, which had been approved by voters two years earlier.	Enact a "gold standard" death penalty statute, which raises the standard for juries considering a death sentence from "beyond a reasonable doubt" to "no doubt" and requires a "high level of scientific certainty" in determining guilt.	The House of Representatives defeats the bill by a vote of 53-99.	A return of the death penalty is unlikely, given the opposition of both Patrick and a majority of the Legislature.
In 2003, 13-year-old Melanie Powell is struck and killed by a repeat drunk driver. That case, and several other high-profile accidents, increase public demand for tougher laws against repeat offenders.	Enact "Melanie's Law," which extends the mandatory sentence for vehicular homicide to five years; allows prosecutors to introduce evidence of a defendant's prior drunk-driving offenses; and suspends the driver's licenses of people who refuse to take a breathalyzer test for up to a lifetime.	After controversy over attempts to restrict prior-offense evidence, passes most provisions of the bill in 2005, but without the breathalyzer provision.	According to the Registry of Motor Vehicles, arrests of drunk drivers with multiple repeat offenses are down almost 50 percent during the first year of the law.

STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT

BY ROBERT DAVID SULLIVAN

BIG EMPLOYERS STILL HOLD SWAY IN BAY STATE

Politicians in Massachusetts often refer to the economic importance of smaller employers (for instance, in her speech on the night of the September primary, GOP gubernatorial candidate Kerry Healey worried about burdens on “the small businesses that create half the jobs” here), but large workforces are actually more common here than in most states. According to the latest edition of the US Census Bureau’s *County Business Patterns*, based on 2004 data, 22.7 percent of all Bay State workers were employed by firms with more than 500 people, compared with 20.1 percent nationally and 14.8 percent in New Hampshire. Even Michigan and West Virginia, not commonly associated with the New Economy, ranked below us in their dependence on large employers (“dinosaurs”?), while Nevada and New York joined us among states most dependent on them.

“Computer and electronic product manufacturing” was among the sectors most skewed toward large employers: Nearly half of the 63,000 people in this industry were in workforces of more than 500. At the other end of the spectrum, the folks fighting Question 1 (which would have allowed supermarket chains to sell wine) last fall apparently weren’t kidding about representing small businesses. As of 2004, according to the Census Bureau, 73.8 percent of the 8,700 people with jobs at Bay State beer, wine, and liquor stores had fewer than 20 co-workers. But only 12.0 percent of the 77,000 people working at grocery stores could say the same.

TIME TO MAKE FEWER DOUGHNUTS

Also on the job front, the Census Bureau’s *Annual Survey of Manufactures* showed that manufacturing jobs in Massachusetts continued to slide in 2005, going from 302,530 to 295,033. Categories with the biggest drops (a loss of more than 1,000 jobs each) included “bakeries and tortilla manufacturing,” textile mills, foundries, and medical equipment and supplies. There were slight gains in seafood product packaging, leather manufacturing, and communications equipment.



THE RESULTS AREN'T IN

The state’s official Web site got a makeover last fall, but Massachusetts is still arguably the worst in the nation in providing election data online. As of December 15, Maine and Massachusetts were the only two states that still hadn’t posted detailed results from the previous month’s elections. There were county-by-county results for the previous gubernatorial election (in 2002) on the Web pages maintained by Secretary of State Bill Galvin, but even that data was pretty skimpy by comparison with other states. Twenty-five states, including the rest of New England, now provide election results below the county level—by city and town, and even by precinct (5,305 of them in Michigan). Because it has only 14 counties, Massachusetts offers data for fewer voting districts than does any other state Web site in the nation. To cap things off, the presentation of that data is especially difficult to read. Vote tallies for each candidate for governor in 2002 are not side-by-side; in order to see who won where, it’s necessary to print out separate pages and line them up by hand.

LIVING ON THE EDGE

According to Foreclosures Mass.com, foreclosure filings against Massachusetts homeowners were up 54 percent during the first nine months of 2006, compared with the same period in 2005. The increase was sharpest in the western and central regions of the state, with Athol, Fitchburg, and Springfield logging more than 40 foreclosures per 10,000 people. In contrast, high-income suburbs of Boston, such as Belmont, Lincoln, and Wellesley, showed no change, with six or fewer foreclosures per 10,000 people.

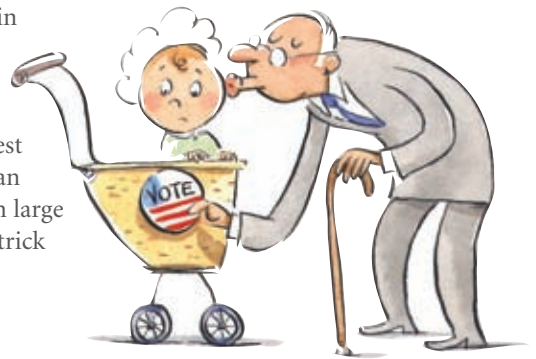
In what could be another sign of shaky personal finances in Springfield, the city now has 16 licensed check cashers, compared with seven in similarly sized Worcester and only 24 in Boston (which has nearly four times the population).



WINNING BY STAYING IN PLACE

With last fall's elections bringing new senators and congressmen in Connecticut and Rhode Island, among other states, Massachusetts has risen to seventh place in going the longest without any change to our congressional delegation. (Our newest member, US Rep. Steve Lynch, was elected on 9/11/01.) Only those dynamic and diverse states of Delaware, Mississippi, North Dakota, Oregon, West Virginia, and Wyoming have gone longer. Among US senators, Ted Kennedy and John Kerry have logged a combined 66 years of service so far, second only to the 70 years for West Virginia's Robert Byrd and Jay Rockefeller. But we have a while to go to reach the 74 years of Senate seniority enjoyed by South Carolina's Strom Thurmond and Fritz Hollings as of 2002—both of whom retired over the next two years, leaving the Palmetto State to start all over again in amassing political clout.

The average age of our entire congressional delegation will hit 60 later this year—older than most, but actually about the same as in “growth” states such as Georgia and Virginia. Meanwhile, Rhode Island now has the second-youngest delegation in the US, with an average age of 47 (thanks in large part to 39-year-old Rep. Patrick Kennedy).



SOCIABLE SPRAWL?

Compared with city dwellers, suburbanites are more involved in civic organizations and have more contacts with their neighbors, according to a new study from the University of California–Irvine. With every 10 percent drop in density, residents are 10 percent more likely to talk to a neighbor at least once a week, and they're 15 percent more likely to join a “hobby-oriented club.” The conclusions were based on 15,000 responses to the Social Capital Benchmark Survey, with data controlled for income, educational attainment, marital status, and the length of time each respondent had been living at his or her address.

“Good fences make good neighbors,” writes Jan Brueckner, a UCI economics professor and lead author of the study. “This contradicts one of the common social and economic arguments against urban sprawl.” Why would this be so? “One possibility is that dense environments offer residents more sources of entertainment (museums, theaters, etc.), lessening the need to interact with others in the pursuit of stimulation,” Brueckner speculates. “Another possibility is that high densities may be associated with criminal activity, making people suspicious of one another and reluctant to interact.”

Schott | FOUNDATION *for* PUBLIC EDUCATION

Fairness Access Opportunity

December 2006

Dear Friends,

After more than five extraordinary years of visionary leadership, Dr. Rosa A. Smith has decided that in the spring of 2007 she will step down as President and CEO of The Schott Foundation for Public Education. As she leaves Schott and enters a new place in her career and life's work, she will take her nationally acclaimed Black boys work to its next level. She put it this way: *"The achievement results for the majority of Black male students are at a crisis level and require the best thinking and practices available to us."*

Some of Dr. Smith's numerous accomplishments during her tenure include:

- **The Campaign for Fiscal Equity (CFE)** and the **Alliance for Quality Education (AQE)** in New York—both Schott grantees—orchestrated an \$11 billion win in the state's courts in 2006 delivering desperately needed resources to create high quality facilities for New York City's underserved public school students. In the process, CFE and AQE created a diverse, statewide coalition, ready to continue the fight to ensure that the court ordered \$5.6 billion annual dollars go for teacher development, small class size, and universal pre-K.
- Schott released three **State Report Cards** on *Public Education and Black Male Students*. These reports unleashed a whirlwind of outrage and determined action on behalf of Black male students across America.
- In Massachusetts, the **Early Education for All Campaign**—a Schott grantee—won unanimous support from both houses of the state legislature in 2006 for a universal pre-kindergarten bill. The Schott Foundation instituted the **Schott Fellowship for Early Care and Education**. With a new home at Cambridge College, the Schott Fellows program is creating a steady supply of new early care and education leaders of color who are creating effective public policy, being invited to sit at critical decision-making tables, and running for public office.

Schott will continue to accelerate and expand all this work. For 15 years we have developed and strengthened a broad based and representative movement to achieve fully funded, high quality pre-K to 12 public schools. Schott will also continue its work of developing and supporting extraordinary leaders in Massachusetts and New York who will mobilize the public to demand high quality pre-K to 12 public education for the children of those states.

Michelle Cruz-Williams of Isaacson, Miller* (www.imsearch.com)—the same executive search firm that found us Dr. Smith—is overseeing our search for a new president.

Sincerely,

Greg Jobin-Leeds, *Chairman*

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Where the economic action is

BY ROBERT DAVID SULLIVAN

AFTER RANKING 13TH in growth of gross domestic product (GDP) over the period from 1997 through 2004, Massachusetts came in a lowly 42nd the following year, behind every northeastern state except Maine. We now account for 2.62 percent of the aggregate for all state GDPs. That's down from our peak during the past four decades—2.98 percent in 1988—but still better than the 2.46 percent at the state's low point, in 1979. In that year, manufacturing was by far the biggest

Real estate is our new economic Bigfoot.

sector in our economy, at 25.6 percent of GDP. (It was at 22.7 percent nationally.) Now it's down to 10.1 percent (versus 12.1 percent nationally), having been passed by finance and insurance, trade, professional services, and our new economic Bigfoot, "real estate, rental, and leasing," as it's described by the Bureau of Economic Analysis. Property-based transactions accounted for 14.6 percent of our GDP, according to the latest figures, which makes us the seventh most dependent on the real estate sector. (Florida is in the lead, and New Hampshire ranks sixth.)

But given the volatility of real estate, our future may lie more in the field of "professional and technical services," which accounts for 10.8 percent of our GDP; the national figure is 7.0 percent, and only Virginia is ahead of us on this score. The Bay State also logged one of the biggest growth rates in this sector in 2005. In contrast, we were one of only six states to see a decline in wealth attributable to the finance-and-insurance sector. And despite our reputation for big government, we now rank 49th in the share of GDP generated by the public sector (8.9 percent), above only Delaware. **CW**

GROWTH IN GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT BY STATE, 2005

	GDP (IN MILLIONS), 2005	% CHANGE FROM 2004	LARGEST SECTOR, 2005*	LARGEST SECTOR, 1980*
1. ARIZONA	\$216,528	9.1	TRADE	TRADE
2. NEVADA	\$111,342	9.0	TOURISM	TOURISM
3. FLORIDA	\$673,274	7.7	REAL ESTATE	TRADE
4. IDAHO	\$47,189	7.4	TRADE	MANUFACTURING
5. UTAH	\$90,778	6.8	GOVERNMENT	GOVERNMENT
6. OREGON	\$144,278	5.9	MANUFACTURING	MANUFACTURING
7. VIRGINIA	\$351,903	5.4	GOVERNMENT	GOVERNMENT
8. DELAWARE	\$56,483	5.4	FINANCE	MANUFACTURING
9. HAWAII	\$54,019	5.3	GOVERNMENT	GOVERNMENT
10. NORTH DAKOTA	\$24,397	5.3	TRADE	TRADE
11. MONTANA	\$29,885	5.2	GOVERNMENT	TRADE
12. TEXAS	\$989,443	4.7	TRADE	MINING
13. NORTH CAROLINA	\$346,640	4.7	MANUFACTURING	MANUFACTURING
14. GEORGIA	\$363,839	4.6	TRADE	MANUFACTURING
15. ALABAMA	\$151,610	4.5	MANUFACTURING	MANUFACTURING
16. COLORADO	\$216,537	4.3	REAL ESTATE	TRADE
17. CALIFORNIA	\$1,622,116	4.3	REAL ESTATE	MANUFACTURING
18. MARYLAND	\$246,234	4.2	GOVERNMENT	GOVERNMENT
19. KANSAS	\$105,574	3.9	MANUFACTURING	MANUFACTURING
20. SOUTH CAROLINA	\$140,019	3.9	MANUFACTURING	MANUFACTURING
21. WYOMING	\$27,269	3.8	GOVERNMENT	MINING
22. NEW MEXICO	\$68,870	3.7	GOVERNMENT	MINING
23. OKLAHOMA	\$121,490	3.3	GOVERNMENT	MINING
24. CONNECTICUT	\$193,745	3.2	FINANCE	MANUFACTURING
25. WASHINGTON	\$267,308	3.2	GOVERNMENT	TRADE
26. NEW HAMPSHIRE	\$55,061	3.2	REAL ESTATE	MANUFACTURING
27. TENNESSEE	\$229,215	3.1	MANUFACTURING	MANUFACTURING
28. KENTUCKY	\$140,501	3.0	MANUFACTURING	MANUFACTURING
29. NEW YORK	\$957,873	2.9	FINANCE	MANUFACTURING
30. SOUTH DAKOTA	\$30,919	2.9	FINANCE	TRADE
31. VERMONT	\$23,065	2.7	TRADE	MANUFACTURING
32. MISSISSIPPI	\$81,290	2.5	GOVERNMENT	MANUFACTURING
33. PENNSYLVANIA	\$489,025	2.4	MANUFACTURING	MANUFACTURING
34. ARKANSAS	\$86,752	2.4	MANUFACTURING	MANUFACTURING
35. MISSOURI	\$216,065	2.3	MANUFACTURING	MANUFACTURING
36. NEW JERSEY	\$431,079	2.1	REAL ESTATE	MANUFACTURING
37. ILLINOIS	\$560,032	2.1	MANUFACTURING	MANUFACTURING
38. WEST VIRGINIA	\$53,050	2.1	GOVERNMENT	MANUFACTURING
39. RHODE ISLAND	\$43,787	2.0	REAL ESTATE	MANUFACTURING
40. MINNESOTA	\$234,552	1.9	MANUFACTURING	MANUFACTURING
41. NEBRASKA	\$70,676	1.9	GOVERNMENT	TRADE
42. MASSACHUSETTS	\$325,917	1.7	REAL ESTATE	MANUFACTURING
43. WISCONSIN	\$216,332	1.5	MANUFACTURING	MANUFACTURING
44. MAINE	\$44,971	1.3	TRADE	MANUFACTURING
45. INDIANA	\$238,568	1.3	MANUFACTURING	MANUFACTURING
46. IOWA	\$113,552	1.0	MANUFACTURING	MANUFACTURING
47. OHIO	\$440,923	0.9	MANUFACTURING	MANUFACTURING
48. MICHIGAN	\$376,243	0.2	MANUFACTURING	MANUFACTURING
49. ALASKA	\$39,314	-0.5	MINING	MINING
50. LOUISIANA	\$168,204	-1.5	MANUFACTURING	MINING
US TOTAL	\$12,409,555	3.6	REAL ESTATE	MANUFACTURING

SOURCE: US Bureau of Economic Analysis (www.bea.gov). Data released in October 2006. *"Manufacturing" combines data for durable goods and nondurable goods. "Trade" combines data for wholesale and retail categories. "Tourism" refers to the BEA's "accommodation and food services" category. "Mining" includes oil extraction.

Bostonians come in many flavors.

But we're working to make health care excellent for everyone.

Boston is rich in ethnic and racial differences. They make our city vibrant.

But when those differences show up in the quality of health and health care, that's a cause for concern. And action.

This is a national problem that Boston shares. Last year, a survey by the Boston Public Health Commission revealed that Boston's racial and ethnic groups have strikingly different risks of illness and death.

The percentage of babies born prematurely and at a low birth-weight to black mothers is nearly double what it is for white mothers. Black men are twice as likely to die from diabetes as white men.

Latino Bostonians are more likely to be hospitalized for or die from asthma and have a higher incidence of diabetes and HIV. Asian people in Boston have higher rates of tuberculosis and hepatitis B.

Mayor Thomas Menino formed a task force to find ways to eliminate disparities in health and challenged hospitals and community health centers, among others, to take concrete steps to make the quality of health care excellent for all Bostonians.

Brigham and Women's Hospital (BWH) and Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH) provided significant funds for the City's special disparities



program and along with other hospitals agreed to take immediate actions that include:

- measuring the quality of patient care and patient satisfaction by race, ethnicity, language, and education;
- improving education and cultural competence for doctors, nurses and other caregivers, and staff and patients;
- helping patients take an active role in their care;
- working to diversity their professional workforce and governing boards;
- collaborating closely with members of the community.

BWH established the Health Equity Program to reduce disparities in neighboring communities. The hospital's new Center for Surgery and Public Health will, among other things, examine disparities in surgical care.

MGH created the Disparities Solutions Center to work with providers, insurers and community groups in Boston and nationwide. The hospitals and Partners HealthCare are putting more than \$6 million into finding and fixing disparities in care.

If there's one place where we should all be the same, it's in the excellence of our health care.

More information at Boston Public Health Commission at www.bphc.org

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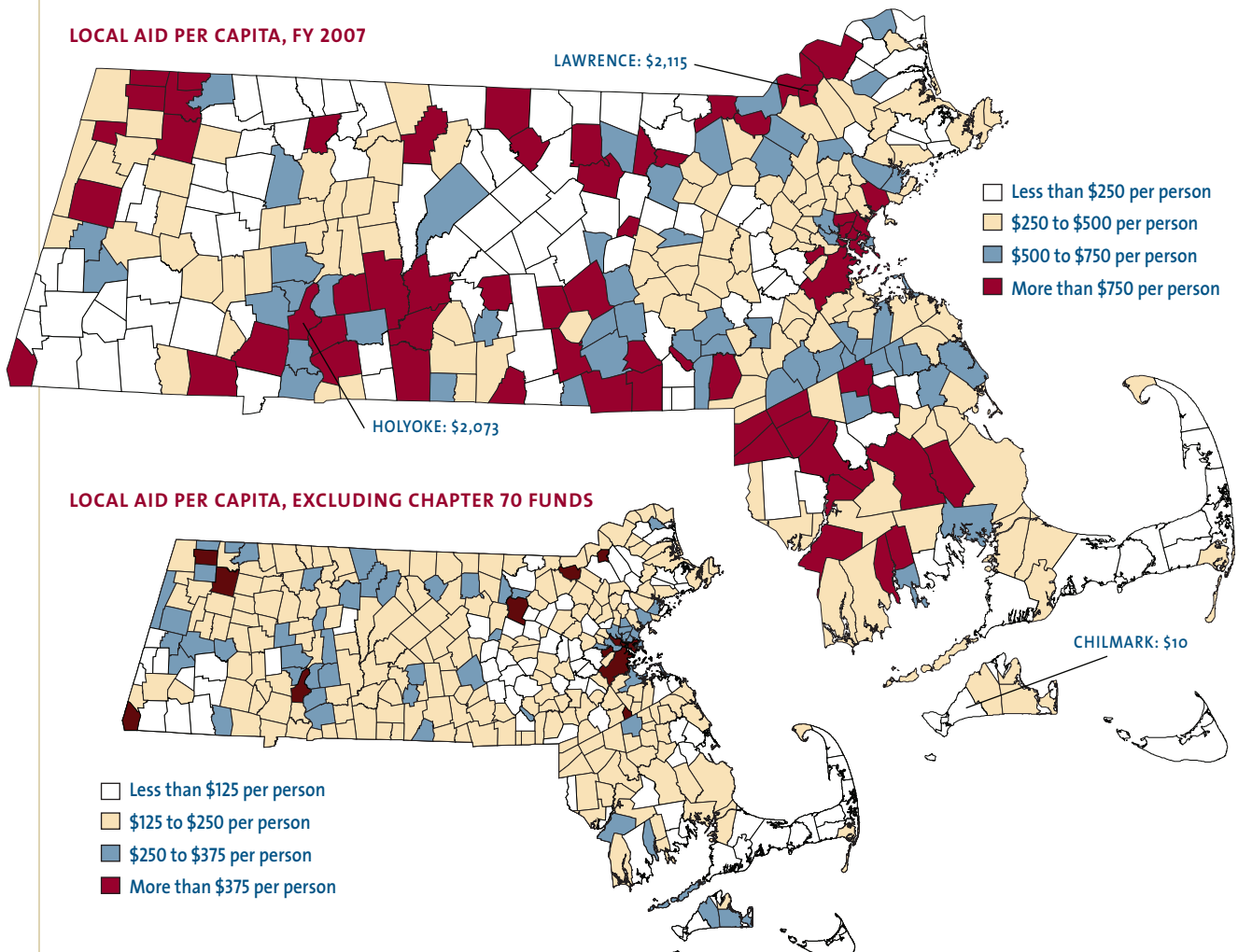
BY ROBERT DAVID SULLIVAN

THE LOW-INCOME cities of Lawrence and Holyoke are the only two communities in the state that will receive more than \$2,000 per citizen in state aid during the current fiscal year, according to the *Cherry Sheet Manual* published by the Department of Revenue (see the larger map below). Meanwhile, only one town will reap less than \$20 per citizen: Chilmark, which will get \$9,176 (mostly proceeds from the State Lottery) for 945 people. Most local aid goes to public schools in the form of Chapter 70 money—which is based on how much a city or town needs, on top of its own resources, to provide “adequate” education as defined by the Education Reform Act of 1993. On average, 59 percent of a community’s local aid comes from this program, but the

share is much higher in cities that get the most local aid overall. In Lawrence, for example, \$123 million of the city’s \$151 million in aid comes from Chapter 70.

At first glance, the less-populated parts of Massachusetts seem to be local-aid losers, but that’s in part because they have regional schools; when a school district comprises more than one town, education money goes to the district rather than to local governments. When Chapter 70 is taken out of the equation, as shown in the smaller map, western communities fare better, thanks in part to Lottery funds (skewed toward towns with lower property values) and payments for state-owned land (which are exempt from local property taxes). **CW**

LOCAL AID PER CAPITA, FY 2007



Source: Massachusetts Department of Revenue, Division of Local Services (www.dls.state.ma.us); 2005 population estimates from the US Census Bureau.

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Homing in on the problem

In his crusade to end homelessness, Phil Mangano is pushing a big idea—from an unlikely perch **BY SHAWN ZELLER**

PHIL MANGANO, FORMER manager of hippie musical acts of the 1960s and volunteer at a downtown Boston soup kitchen, would seem one of the least likely Bay Staters to find a home in the administration of President George W. Bush. But that is where he has been toiling for the last four years, gaining converts—and growing recognition—for work that strikes some as an equally unlikely Bush priority: ending chronic homelessness.

Mangano, a longtime advocate for the homeless in Boston, moved to Washington in 2002 to head the Bush administration's Interagency Council on Homelessness, where he has earned accolades from all quarters. Last fall, *Governing*, the national magazine of state and local government, named Mangano one of nine "Public Officials of the Year" (along with Massachusetts House Speaker Sal DiMasi, for his role in last year's landmark health insurance law).

What he's done to earn such kudos is best captured by a story told by Peter Forman, a former Republican state representative and chief of staff to Acting Gov. Jane Swift. Two years ago Forman, who had two weeks earlier accepted, and still had not started, the job of president of the South Shore Chamber of Commerce, bumped into Mangano in Boston's Back Bay. The chance encounter gave Mangano a chance to give Forman a heads-up about a meeting he'd had that morning with Quincy Mayor William Phelan.

"The mayor is going to call you and you are going to become chairman of this committee" to create a plan to end homelessness in the city, Mangano told him, Forman recalls. "I said, 'That's news to me. I haven't even met the mayor yet.'"

"It was typical Phil," says Forman.

Since leaving his post atop the Massachusetts Housing and Shelter Alliance to join the Bush

administration, a move that left some of his fellow advocates scratching their heads, Mangano has brought his dream of ending chronic homelessness to the nation's capital, and then back again to the cities. He's convinced the mayors of 282 of them—including 16 in Massachusetts—to do as Phelan and Forman have done: develop a plan to wipe out chronic homelessness within 10 years.

Not only that, but he's started to change the way governments and social service agencies think about the homeless. No longer is homelessness to be thought of as a plague that can be treated but not cured. In Mangano's view, it can, in fact, be ended if government teams with agencies to house and provide support services to the hardcore homeless, those who have been on the streets for years and suffer from debilitating mental illnesses, alcoholism, or drug addiction.

Mangano didn't invent the concept, which is known as "housing first," but he's proven to be its most successful evangelist. Asked his party affiliation, the 58-year-old Bush appointee puts himself in a different category. "I'm an abolitionist," says Mangano, tracing the history of abolitionism, the civil rights movement, and the battle for women's suffrage. In each case, he says, people said it couldn't be done—that slavery was a natural state, that blacks were inferior, that only propertied white males should vote. History has proven them wrong, he says, and the same will prove true of homelessness.

Despite the implicit moralism, Mangano makes what is, in effect, a business case for abolishing homelessness, which is one reason his thinking has had appeal in the Bush White House. Constituting about 10 percent of the 25,000 people who spend at least one night a year in a Massachusetts shelter, the chronically homeless consume half of all resources devoted to the homeless, he says—at

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WASHINGTON NOTEBOOK

least \$40,000 per person, and as much as \$150,000 per year. Living almost permanently in what were meant to be temporary shelters, and often finding themselves in emergency rooms or police custody, the hardcore homeless were seen as too uncooperative to place in housing. Not so, says Mangano, who claims that housing and support services for even the toughest veteran of the streets can be had for \$13,000 to \$25,000 per year.

"It makes common sense, and it makes dollars and cents," he says.

Mangano talks the language of government-as-business MBA types, tossing out casual references to the "Killer Bs"—baselines, benchmarks, and budget. Which explains why he insisted to Phelan that, if he wanted to get the homeless off his city's streets, Peter Forman was his man.

"We've evolved from five to 10 years ago on who the stakeholders are," says Mangano. "Then it was a few low-level bureaucrats, the faith communities, and the social service providers. It was well-intentioned and well meaning, but we never got results. They were lacking resources and a strategic business sense. When you convene stakeholders now, you need the chamber of commerce, the hospitals, the providers of substance abuse services, the librarians, law enforcement."

Quincy's mayor, for one, was sold immediately. John Yazwinski, the director of the city's largest shelter, Father Bill's Place, worked with Phelan and Forman to shut down at least 10 shelter beds each year and move an equal number of homeless people into permanent housing. Some short-term shelter beds will always be needed, says Yazwinski, but the closures send an important message about the city's commitment to the permanent housing solution, while also preventing it from becoming a magnet for chronically homeless people from other cities.

Quincy is not the only place in the Bay State to embrace the Mangano model. In October, the South Middlesex Opportunity Council in Framingham closed its Common Ground overflow shelter by moving 30 long-term homeless people into permanent housing. The day the shelter closed "was one of the most satisfying days in the 22 years I've been here," says James Cuddy, the council's executive director.

THROUGH HIS INTERAGENCY Council, Mangano has brought federal agencies together in an effort to coordinate funding streams, and he's pushed the Bush administration for more money. As a result, the 2007 federal budget for homeless services is the first to top \$4 billion. "The president provided the first substantive political will to bring an end to homelessness," declares Mangano.

Some advocates for the homeless are less taken with the president's efforts. Despite their respect for Mangano, they can't stomach giving credit to an administration they

see as doing little to provide affordable housing to low-income families. The vast majority of people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless don't suffer from debilitating addiction or disease, they point out, and the government should be looking out for them as well.

"We strongly believe in what the Housing First model does," says Robyn Frost, executive director of the Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless. "But what concerns us is there isn't nearly as much discussion of people who are tenuously housed." By Frost's estimate, Massachusetts has 550,000 low-income households who could find themselves without a place to sleep if something went awry.

And Mangano's gospel hasn't caught on everywhere in the Bay State. Boston, with some 6,300 homeless people, has agreed to devise a 10-year plan, but has not yet done so. (Officials did not respond to requests for comment, but in December the city announced a "homeless protection program" that includes permanent housing for 30 homeless elders and a 10-bed reentry unit for homeless men released from prison.) "Boston historically has done a great job," says Mangano, "[but] other cities have caught up to it and are now moving past."

That's disappointing for Mangano, a Belmont native who spent much of his life in the city, though not all of it advocating for the homeless. He started out on a career in the music business, promoting concerts in Massachusetts. Later, he moved to Los Angeles and managed performers like Richie Furay of Buffalo Springfield and Noel Paul Stookey of Peter, Paul, and Mary.

Mangano says Franco Zeffirelli's *Brother Sun, Sister Moon*, on the life of St. Francis of Assisi, inspired him to return to Boston and dedicate his life to serving the poor. Though he thought about becoming a priest, he decided instead to volunteer at St. Anthony Shrine's breadline downtown. In 1992, after running two homeless programs in Cambridge, he became founding executive director of the housing and shelter alliance, a statewide advocacy group.

It's there that he first promoted the Housing First concept, and honed his skills as a lobbyist, working the halls of the State House during the Weld and Cellucci administrations. His transformation from bleeding heart to business-minded advocate, he says, came in jousting with Weld aide Charlie Baker, who served as secretary of human services and later administration and finance.

"When we first met with Charlie, we thought anecdotes might work one more time," says Mangano. But Baker told him, "That era is over, and you'd better know what the numbers are and outcomes will be if any resources are going to be invested," Mangano recalls.

Since then, Mangano has taken a more hard-headed approach to advocacy. "We all feel we are doing a good job," he says. "And we are doing good. But what we're trying to do is go to great." **CW**



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Higher authority

Regis College claims that zoning can't stop its retirement village

BY RAY HAINER

WESTON To Regis College, it seemed like a win-win proposition. The 362-unit retirement community the college wished to build on its campus would reverse the school's financial fortunes and bolster its educational mission, while also providing a valuable resource to the town. But when plans for the development were unveiled in 2005, many residents of Weston were aghast, and reacted as though a kindly and unassuming neighbor known for her manicured lawn and tasteful holiday displays had suddenly announced that she'd be installing a cell phone tower in the front yard.

The proposed development, covering 60 wooded acres near the center of town, is unprecedented for Weston, a suburb that prides itself on open space, ample lots, and million-dollar homes. Officially called Regis East, the new complex is expected to cost more than \$200 million to build and would be a fan-shaped collection of eight buildings, including four towers of between eight and 11 stories. It would include more than 600 parking spaces and just over 767,000 square feet of interior space—a number that has elicited comparisons to airport terminals and downtown Boston office buildings.

"It dwarfs any other development in town," says Michael Harrity, the chairman of the board of selectmen.

Regis East would burst the seams of the town's zoning laws. The height of the tallest building (117 feet) more than triples the height restriction in the neighborhood, which is zoned for single-family homes, and the complex also exceeds limits on lot size, setback, and parking. In the fall of 2005, Regis requested variances from the zoning board of appeals, but, to no one's surprise, the board rejected the request unanimously.

Regis responded by suing the town in Land

Court, based on a state law known as the Dover Amendment, which exempts religious and educational institutions from local zoning. The college argued that Regis East, which would include classroom space in addition to residential units, was critical to fulfilling the school's educational mission. But the town of Weston—the state's wealthiest community in terms of household income, according to the US Census Bureau—and a group of abutters to the campus are fighting back. They believe that Regis East, far from being an extension of the college, is nothing more or less than a commercial real estate venture. Or, as one resident put it, "a wolf in sheep's clothing."

FOUNDED IN 1927 as a Catholic liberal arts college for women, Regis has been foundering financially in recent years, in large part because of its dependence on tuition at a time when single-sex schools are considered passé. (It now has an enrollment of slightly more than 600 full-time undergraduates and about 1,000 "non-traditional" students, which includes graduate students.) Over the past decade, the school has run operating deficits—of up to \$6.8 million—in every year and has been forced to cover expenses by dipping into its endowment, which has shrunk from more than \$30 million to about \$14.5 million. (By comparison, the endowment of nearby Wellesley College is more than \$1.3 billion.) In 2003, Standard & Poor's downgraded the college's bond rating to below investment grade, or "junk" status, where it has remained. As of September, according to the *Boston Business Journal*, Regis was the only Bay State college in that category.

In 2001 the college hired its first lay president, Dr. Mary Jane England, a child psychiatrist by

training, to begin bailing out the ship. Since then Regis has laid off more than 20 percent of its staff, eliminated six majors from the curriculum, sold off 28 acres of its campus for \$9.3 million, and, just last fall, announced that it would begin to admit men as undergraduates. But Regis East, which has been in the planning stages for five years, represents by far the most radical step, and is nothing less than an effort to “set up the institution for the next 75 years,” according to Thomas Pistorino, the college’s chief financial officer.



Emulating the dozens of colleges that have built or partnered with retirement communities (including Dartmouth College, Cornell University, and the University of Florida), Regis is targeting the growing demographic of well-heeled and well-educated retirees. The college envisions Regis East—which, in addition to apartments and classrooms, will include labs, libraries, and dining halls—as an “innovative educational community” where students and retirees will learn side-by-side and from each other. Although the details have yet to be spelled out, retirees will take courses at the college and perhaps assist with teaching, while Regis’s students will gain real-world experience working with elderly residents. (More than half of Regis students are in nursing or other health programs.) And perhaps most important, Regis East will also provide a much needed revenue stream independent of tuition: The college expects entrance fees for the units to range from \$500,000 to over \$1 million, and has said it expects to derive about \$5 million in annual revenue from the development, which would likely be run by an outside management company.

When the plans for Regis East were announced, opposition in the town formed almost immediately. A group of abutters to the site that called itself Stop Regis Overdevelopment printed hundreds of lawn signs with an eye-catching stop-sign logo, and began organizing opposition through e-mail bulletins. The abutters also circulated an online petition that garnered some 400 “signatures” from residents, many of whom typed a brief comment along with

their names. “This is the beginning of the end of the town as I know it,” wrote one woman who has lived in Weston for 35 years. Regis East, another resident added, “will turn this town into Needham and Wellesley.”

Residents and town officials, who were well aware of the school’s financial troubles, also began to question whether Regis had the resources and expertise to oversee such a massive project, and worried about various nightmare scenarios, such as a half-finished project or a bankrupt college—and perhaps even a private developer carving up a vacated campus. And though some residents saw the merits of a campus-based retirement community, they were astonished by the scale. Anticipating the school’s recourse to the Dover Amendment—Regis telegraphed this strategy by submitting its plans directly to the zoning board of appeals rather than to the planning board—they were also skeptical that such a mammoth project was driven solely by the school’s educational mission.

“The general belief is that wrapping a commercial undertaking in the guise of an educational endeavor by claiming there will be classes offered to residents and a learning experience for some of the students is misrepresenting the actual undertaking,” says Selectman Harrity, a commercial real estate broker who teaches real estate and finance courses at Babson College in Wellesley. “It would be like Babson College saying, ‘We’re going to build a Wal-Mart outside because we have marketing and managing courses, and it’ll be an educational undertaking since we’ll offer management classes to the employees.’”

At the zoning board of appeals hearing in September 2005, more than 150 residents gathered in Town Hall to

‘This is the beginning of the end of the town as I know it.’

criticize the proposal. Officials and residents expressed concern about the potential increase in traffic on the roads around campus and the development’s impact on the town’s water supply and public safety costs. (In a letter to the board, the fire chief pointed out that the town’s ladder trucks could not reach the upper floors of the Regis East towers.) Residents booed and yelled, according to press reports, and were so loud at times that the board’s chairman had to call for order.

“There was a lot of rancor,” recalls Arnold Zenker, a founding member of Stop Regis Overdevelopment, who lives across the street from the development’s proposed location. “And there still is a lot of hostility. Regis never reached out to the neighbors, never reached out to the town. They just sort of said, ‘Here’s the Dover Amendment, we believe we have the right to do it, and by God, we’re going to do it.’”

Marjorie Arons-Barron, who serves as a spokesman for Regis, disputes that the college failed to solicit the town's input. "We started conferring with the town five years ago," she says, adding that Regis invited abutters to view the first architectural renderings in early 2005. Town officials don't deny they communicated with the college—but they also note that their concerns about the development's size seem to have had no effect on Regis's plans.

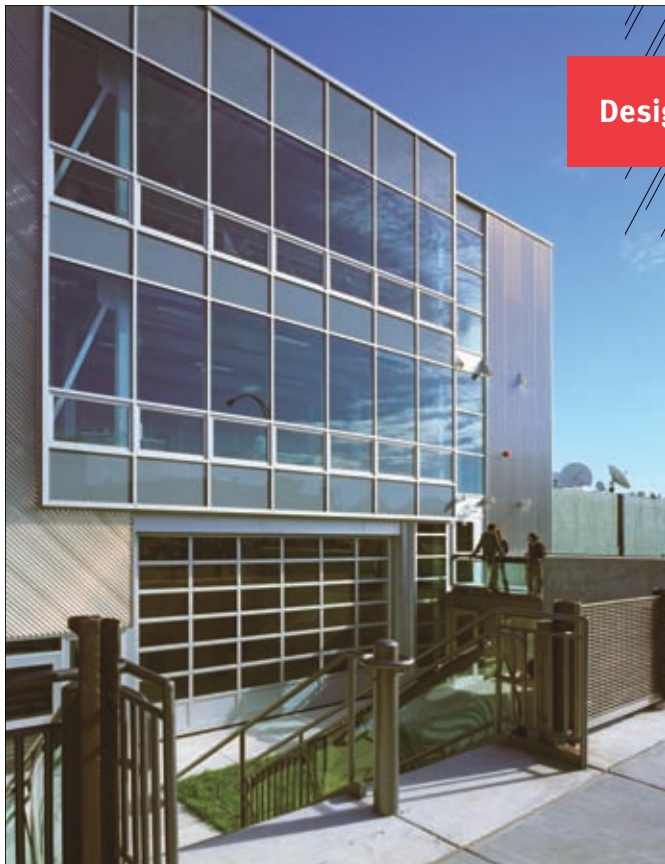
From the beginning it seemed likely that the development would end up in court, so no one was surprised when Regis announced its intention to sue after the board's decision. Even before the ruling, in fact, Stop Regis Overdevelopment formed a nonprofit corporation to begin raising money for a legal fund.

Finally, in late November, Regis filed a complaint against the town in state Land Court, naming the members of the board of appeals as defendants. Without an exemption from the town's zoning laws, the complaint read, "the Regis East Campus Development would not be economically feasible; the educational programs proposed by Regis College would be thwarted; and Regis College would suffer serious financial difficulties." The town's limits on Regis's development would cause "irreparable harm" to the college and its educational mission, the

complaint concluded, and are "in direct violation of the Dover amendment."

THE DOVER AMENDMENT, a state law added to the books in 1950, takes its name from the nearby town of Dover, where the board of selectmen had tried to block the Catholic Church from converting an old estate into a monastery. Though the town eventually backed down, the Legislature (which had shifted to Democratic control in 1948), moved to make sure that sort of thing never happened again. The law states that on land owned by a church or a nonprofit educational institution, local zoning laws shall not "regulate or restrict the use of land or structures for religious purposes or for educational purposes." The law also says, however, that "such land or structures may be subject to reasonable regulations" concerning building size and height, setbacks, parking, and other characteristics.

Roughly two dozen cases involving the Dover Amendment have made their way through the Massachusetts courts over the past quarter-century—in one of the most publicized, a group of Belmont residents argued in vain that the amendment should not apply to a 69,000-square-foot Mormon temple with a 139-foot spire along Route 2



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—and at least three of them involved colleges seeking to construct buildings. Cases brought by Tufts and Boston College hinged on the scope of “reasonable regulations,” but the courts have not defined “reasonableness” beyond a case-by-case weighing of a school’s needs and the interests of the municipality. In *Regis College v. Town of Weston*, however, that issue may be superseded by the larger question of whether Regis East is protected by the Dover Amendment at all. And here the most relevant precedent is Newton’s Lasell College, just a few miles from Regis.

In 1990, Lasell—a small liberal arts college then limited to women—applied to the city of Newton for a special permit to build a 200-unit retirement community and nursing facility, known as Lasell Village, in which residents would be required to participate in at least 450 hours of educational activities each year. Amid sustained opposition from abutters, the city’s board of aldermen rejected the proposal, and Lasell, invoking the Dover Amendment, sued the town in 1991. Two years later, the Land Court, and then the state’s Appeals Court, sided with the college.

That ruling would seem to bode well for Regis, but in 2001, a year after Lasell Village opened, Newton began tax-

ing the Village property (to the tune of about \$400,000) despite a preexisting payment-in-lieu-of-taxes agreement. After a failed attempt to secure an abatement from the state’s Appellate Tax Board, Lasell appealed in 2005, reminding the appeals court that the Village had qualified, years earlier, as a nonprofit educational corporation for the purposes of the Dover Amendment.

Last fall—after Regis had filed its complaint against

Regis insists that education is at the heart of the project.

Weston—the Appeals Court affirmed the tax board’s decision, and made it clear that the exemptions from zoning afforded by the Dover Amendment and exemption from taxes are not a package deal. The court stressed that the Land Court’s decision regarding the zoning was made seven years before Lasell Village opened its doors in 2000, and that the operation of the facility in reality, rather than on paper, suggested that its purpose was not “predominantly educational.” (The court pointed to the tax board’s opinion that Lasell’s oversight of the educational requirements was “at best informal and at worst lax.”)

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“We take heart in that finding, because there weren’t many examples of this in Massachusetts before Lasell,” says Selectman Harrity, expressing a hope that the Lasell tax ruling, while not a precedent per se, will sway the Land Court in the Regis East case.

Regis also seems to be considering that possibility, and so it takes great pains to underscore the differences between Regis East and Lasell Village. “Lasell is an obvious comparison, but it’s incomplete,” says Arons-Barron. “My sense is, the integration of the educational component and the two-way synergy of the education model is even more substantial at Regis. It’s a much more integrated educational model than that of Lasell.” She adds, “If I leave you with only one message, it’s that education—whatever [the opponents] say—is the essence of the Regis proposal: education for Regis’s students, education for Regis’s residents, and long-term educational opportunities for Weston. Denying that educational reality doesn’t change it.”

THE LAND COURT case looks to be a long one. After more than a year, it is still in the discovery phase, and the trial isn’t expected to begin until spring. Meanwhile, the legal fees are accumulating on both sides. (The board of selectmen has already appropriated nearly \$80,000 for the litigation.) The court’s decision has the makings of a bellwether for towns and institutions—but only if the case runs its course. In fact, the town and the college have been attempting for several months to reach a compromise out of court, even as the litigation marches on.

For several months beginning in the fall of 2004, a delegation of Weston residents and officials met sporadically with representatives of the college in an attempt to carve out common ground on Regis East, and early last year the selectmen sought to formalize those talks. On Valentine’s Day 2006, Weston’s three selectmen voted to send a letter to the president of Regis, Mary Jane England, proposing that the town hire a professional mediator to help the town, the abutters, and the college arrive at a compromise development plan. As Ann Leibowitz, the (now former) selectwoman who spearheaded the idea, elaborated to the *Weston Town Crier*, the selectmen sensed that a lengthy and costly legal battle—which Leibowitz suspects the town is willing to fund, through a Proposition 2½ override if needed—might ultimately result in a Pyrrhic victory. “The Dover Amendment may or may not protect [Regis East],” she said at the time. “But it will be tied up in litigation for years. At the end of the day, bankrupting Regis, win or lose, does not serve anybody.”

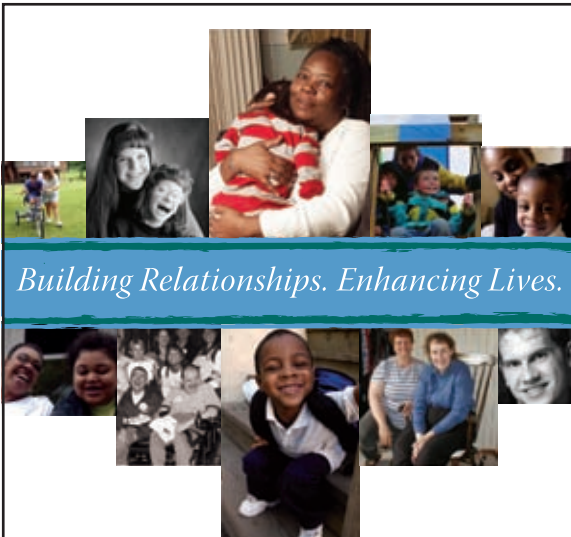
A successful mediation seems unlikely, but not out of the question. According to Harrity, nearly all of the 400 residents who have contacted him about Regis East expressed support for a compromise that would both help

Regis survive and reduce the size of the development. And there are a few scattered residents who have suggested that Regis East is not the beginning of the end of Weston. Noting the need for senior housing in town, resident John Evans wrote to the *Town Crier* in October to express his dismay at the “narrowly focused objectives” of the Stop Regis Overdevelopment group, and urged the stakeholders to “work together cooperatively and not squander precious time and financial resources.” For her part, Arons-Barron, emphasizing Regis’s commitment to the mediation process, suggests that the abutters and their sympathizers are drowning out residents like Evans. “We believe that the town and most of its residents are reasonable and fair-minded, and that the opponents are a small but very vocal group,” she says.

But it is Regis College’s misfortune to be tangling with a small-but-very-vocal group that’s also exceptionally dogged, sophisticated, and wealthy. The four officers of Stop Regis Overdevelopment are: Zenker, a former news manager at the CBS television network who now runs a media consulting company (he’s also an attorney); Robert Hedges, a former executive vice president at Fidelity Investments; Ahmed Mohiuddin, a prominent cardiologist; and hotelier Robin Brown, who is currently developing the Mandarin Oriental luxury hotel-and-condo complex on Boylston Street in Boston. As one Stop Regis ally, Dave Harmon (who participated in the early talks between the town and the college), summed it up neatly in one of his many letters to the editor, they are a “group of citizens who in all probability have a combined net worth much higher than Regis’s endowment and the willingness to spend some of it fighting the development.”

As abutters they have sizeable investments to protect—the assessed value of their homes averages out to around \$1.67 million—and they are doing so aggressively. In February, three days after the selectmen sent the letter proposing mediation to Regis, the Hedges, Mohiuddins, and Zenkers filed a successful motion in Land Court to intervene in the case as defendants, allowing them to defend their interests (and property values) independent of the town. The motion argued that town officials “will ultimately pursue the interests of the Town as a whole rather than the interests of the abutters.” Leibowitz phrases it somewhat more bluntly: “Their concern is probably that the town would sell them out.”

Since then the case in Land Court seems to have eclipsed the mediation, which has proceeded haltingly. The increasingly contentious discovery has involved numerous thrusts and parries: Stop Regis Overdevelopment has challenged Regis’s request for access to their correspondence and fund-raising records as a ploy designed to harass the group and “chill” its fundraising, while Regis has accused the town of evading depositions



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and employing an overall strategy of “delay and protraction.”

But a recent development has potentially reframed the case. In early 2006, as Zenker tells it, a resident approached Stop Regis Overdevelopment with a box containing videotapes of town meetings dating back to 1998, when Regis petitioned the town for an easement, eventually granted, to install a sewer that would connect the campus to the MWRA wastewater treatment plant in Waltham. The tapes showed public meetings at which residents confronted the then-president of Regis, Sister Sheila Megley, with “rumors” of plans for a development like Lasell Village at Regis, which the sewer connection would facilitate. “We are not building anything on that land,” Megley is shown telling town meeting in December 1999, before a vote on the easement warrant article. Armed with the tapes, the town filed a counterclaim in Land Court in November invoking promissory estoppel, a legal doctrine used in contract law that, put simply, prevents a party (in this case, Regis) from breaking a promise that another party (Weston) has relied and acted upon.

Harrity speculates that the cost of the approaching trial might motivate the parties to compromise, but the estoppel counterclaim has opened up a new front in the case independent of the Dover Amendment, and, if it succeeds, could drastically curtail what Regis is able to build on the Regis East parcel. “The discovery of the videotapes,” says Zenker, “has toughened our resolve.”

Still, Zenker says, the abutters are “not interested in driving Regis to its knees,” and he points out that they agreed to mediation and are still at the table. “At least from the point of view of our group, it’s not so much ‘Stop Regis’ as it is ‘Keep Weston,’” says Zenker, stressing that the group’s name is Stop Regis Overdevelopment.

In the next moment, however, it sounds as though the dispute between Regis and the abutters may have already escalated—as disputes between neighbors will—into a matter of principle, and not just money or setbacks. “What are they *doing*?” Zenker asks, his voice rising. “Forget about whether they have a right to do it or not. Forget about whether or not they win or lose on the promissory estoppel case. They keep saying they’re good neighbors. Why would they want to do something that’s clearly not being a good neighbor?”

But Arons-Barron asks, “Who could be a better neighbor than one responding to town issues like a growing aging population, who could well benefit from a program like this?”

The future of Regis East and *Regis College v. Town of Weston* may not be decided for months, but perhaps it’s not too soon to update for the 21st century, and for Weston, that old saying about fences: Good *lawyers* make good neighbors. **CW**

The Cable Guys

Two stalwarts demonstrate what public-access television can do

BY DAN KENNEDY

IT MAY NOT be etched in stone, but it's a rule nonetheless: No one can write about public-access television without making reference to "Wayne's World," the *Saturday Night Live* skit—later a movie—about an access show starring two high-school-age stoners who prattle on about the heavy metal they can't play and the sex they haven't had. If you don't believe me, try Googling "public access" and "Wayne's World," and you'll see what I mean.

Not only that but you can't even *talk* to people involved in access TV without the Mike Myers–Dana Carvey stereotype creeping in. That's what I discovered when I set out to write this story about Joe Heisler, Chris Lovett, and Boston Neighborhood Network (BNN), the city's public-access system. Heisler hosts a weekly political talk show. Lovett anchors a nightly newscast. Both they and their programs are well-regarded. But "Wayne's World" hangs over the whole operation like a cloud.

"Some people make fun of public-access programming. They call it 'Wayne's World,'" says Heisler, before I even bring it up. "But it is what you make it." Similarly, Curtis Henderson, BNN's general manager, adds, "People refer to public-access television as 'Wayne's World,' and I'm trying to change that kind of image for BNN." Lovett, who's more reserved, keeps the "Wayne's World" analogies to himself.

Well, party on, Garth. Party on, Wayne. There's more to public-access television than amateur-hour programming taped in someone's basement.

Across the Commonwealth—and people who follow such things say the access picture is brighter here than in most other places—people are tuning in to watch city-council meetings, school plays, and call-in shows that deal with local issues ranging from property taxes to whether or not to build a bike path along an old railroad bed. According to the Alliance for Community Media, a national organization of access producers, more than a million volunteers are involved in making some 20,000 hours of local programming every week. And sure, you might occasionally run into Wayne and Garth wannabes; access is, after all, open to everyone. But the truth is that local access plays a crucial role in the

civic life of many communities.

"I think there's absolutely nothing that compares to access TV for local information and news. It's a really important part of our communities," says Wendy Blom, a BNN alumna who's now executive director of Somerville Community Access Television. And it's not a matter of numbers, according to Felicia Sullivan, the program manager for new media at the University of Massachusetts–Lowell and an access producer since 1992. "If it's important information for 20 people, and those 20 people really need that information, then it should be put out there," says Sullivan.

Because Boston is the largest city in the Commonwealth, BNN is the Massachusetts giant of public access. (The access funding formula is based on the cable providers' revenues within each community. The total amount is negotiated at the local level, within limits set by the state.)

According to BNN, one-third of the city's more than 160,000 cable subscribers watch at least some of its programs. With a budget of \$1.7 million, roughly two-thirds of which is paid by the city's main cable provider (Comcast), BNN can afford to do things that other cities and towns can't.

Foremost among those is *Neighborhood Network News*, a 30-minute newscast hosted by Lovett that airs three times each weekday on Comcast's Channel 9 (RCN shows it on Channel 15), at 5:30, 9:30, and 11 p.m. A tiny operation compared with the news programs at the city's commercial stations, it is nevertheless well beyond the scope of what other access outfits in Massachusetts can offer.

By contrast, *Talk of the Neighborhoods*, hosted by Heisler and airing live on Tuesdays from 7 to 8 p.m. (it's repeated several times during the week), is not all that different from talk and call-in shows in many other cities and towns. What makes the program stand out is that it's steeped in Boston's rich political tradition—and that Heisler himself is a certified Boston politics junkie. If he didn't tell you he'd grown up on a farm in South Dakota, you'd swear he was born and raised in Dorchester. (Although it's difficult to see either show if you

don't live in Boston, reruns of both programs are broadcast Sunday mornings on WPAX-TV, Channel 68.)

"Those are shows that appeal to hardcore city viewers," says Seth Gitell, a former press secretary to Boston mayor Tom Menino who's now a freelance journalist. "If you've got a decent city initiative that you need viewers to learn about, those are some of your only outlets for that."

LOCAL NEWS

It's mid-October, four weeks before Election Day. Joe Heisler is chatting it up with Tom Birmingham, the former state Senate president who's now practicing law with the Boston firm of Edwards Angell Palmer & Dodge. They're in BNN's studio on the second floor of the state Transportation Building, in Park Square, seated at a chrome-and-black table. The theme music, the Lovin' Spoonful's "Summer in the City," comes on, and Birmingham starts bopping his head in time.

Democratic gubernatorial candidate Deval Patrick has pulled out to a double-digit lead over his Republican rival, Lt. Gov. Kerry Healey. And Birmingham, not surprisingly, is predicting a big Patrick victory, despite surveys that show voters are closer to Healey on issues such as rolling back the income tax and cracking down on illegal immigration. "I

think sometimes we might have a tendency to attribute too much to specific issues," Birmingham tells Heisler. "Ultimately, people form judgments about the type of person who's running."

In the second half of the show, Heisler brings on Jim O'Sullivan, a reporter with State House News Service, who proves to be a challenge. He's smart and amiable but also the very definition of noncommittal. ("Want me to point out one of the delicious ironies? Journalists are some of the worst guests," Heisler tells me several weeks afterward, referring to their frequent reluctance to take a stand. To be fair, he wasn't singling out O'Sullivan.)

Later that week, in a third-floor studio at Boston University's College of Communication, Chris Lovett reads the city news of the day from the anchor desk, then interviews two elderly men from Veterans for Peace. They're advocating an advisory question on the ballot in some state Senate districts calling for the withdrawal of American troops from Iraq. "Our men are subject to a turkey shoot. It's going to get worse," says Anthony Flaherty, who served in Vietnam. Adds Hamer Lacey, an octogenerian who fought in World War II: "If there is a draft for this kind of a war, there's going to be a revolution."

Next up for an in-studio interview is Lee Matsueda, a

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For *Talk of the Neighborhoods*' Joe Heisler, local access is a labor of love.

young man wearing a T-shirt labeled TRU, for the T Riders Union. He's come to denounce a proposed fare increase by the MBTA. Lovett challenges him: "Can you really ask the rest of the state to ease the T's debt burden? Politically, that doesn't sound like an easy thing to do."

Finally Bill Forry, managing editor of the weekly *Dorchester Reporter* and three other community papers, comes on to deliver the "Dorchester Report," something he does every other Thursday. "For folks like me, at the community-journalism level, it's a place where we can get neighborhood-news stories out that are pretty much not going to see the light of day on television otherwise," says Forry of *Neighborhood Network News*. And Dorchester's not the only neighborhood that gets air time. Other contributors report on the Asian community, South Boston, the Fenway, Allston-Brighton, Roslindale, and Hyde Park.

Heisler and Lovett are hardly media revolutionaries, but they've succeeded in positioning themselves as effective alternatives, or at least supplements, to the mainstream, covering local stories and discussing neighborhood issues in ways that the city's daily papers and television newscasts, which appeal to regional markets, never get around to.

The two are also a study in contrasts. Heisler, a manager for the state Department of Transitional Assistance, is ex-

pansive and effusive, with a tendency to fawn over his guests, though he'll ask tough questions, too. *Talk of the Neighborhoods* was an unpaid gig until the past few years; now he receives a small stipend. For Heisler, local access is a labor of love—and a reflection of his enthusiasms, whether for politics (he calls an unsuccessful 1992 run for state representative "one of the greatest experiences of my life") or journalism.

It's a labor of love for Lovett, too, but he's also a full-time employee of BNN, and one of three at *Neighborhood Network News*. (As part of the arrangement BNN has with Boston University, Lovett is also paid as an adjunct professor.) Cool and cerebral, Lovett keeps some distance from the people he's interviewing. Unlike Heisler, Lovett really is a Dorchester boy who's lived in several other Boston neighborhoods as well. Lovett's late father, William, was a district chief in the Boston Fire Department from the late 1960s until 1980. He was assigned to the fire station on Meeting House Hill, a block from the three-decker where he'd been raised, during a time when that neighborhood was wracked by arson. Chris Lovett recalls watching one such fire while he was at a party (a "Bronx is burning" moment, as he describes it). Still, Chris was interested in other things. A graduate of Boston Latin, he got his degree from Columbia University in comparative literature—a long way from the streets of Dorchester, and a long way from the voice of the neighborhoods that he would later become.

"I looked down at journalism," he recalls. "I was a real snotty kind of guy."

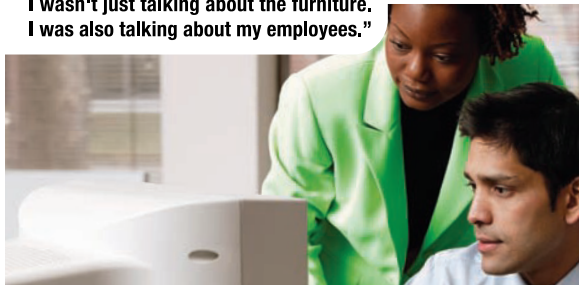
Heisler and Lovett do share certain qualities: They're both white, fiftysomething suburbanites (they each moved out of the city about a decade ago, Heisler to Dedham, Lovett to North Quincy) in a city that is rapidly becoming younger and more ethnically diverse. But no one in Boston politics seems to hold that against them. Suffolk County sheriff Andrea Cabral, an African-American whose 2005 victory over Boston City Councilor Stephen Murphy was seen by many as a triumph of New Boston over Old, credits a debate on *Talk of the Neighborhoods* with helping to put her over the top.

"It sounds funny," Cabral says with a laugh. "But I don't think either Joe or Chris is held back by the fact that they're both middle-aged white guys." After all, she adds: "I got a lot of votes from middle-aged white guys, too."

And there's nothing white-bread about their shows. "The diversity of the characters they have on is pretty incredible," says *Boston Globe Magazine* columnist Tom Keane, a former city councilor.

The same is true of the rest of the BNN lineup. *Neigh-*

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MASS. MEDIA

borhood Network News and *Talk of the Neighborhoods* are his signature shows, but general manager Curtis Henderson points out that the schedule is filled with programming produced in conjunction with various nonprofit agencies, some of it aimed at foreign-language minorities and ethnic groups. Cabral herself hosts one such show, *Common Ground*, which focuses on the business of the sheriff's office.

For BNN—and for Lovett and Heisler—the real challenge isn't New Boston versus Old Boston. Rather, it's the civic-engagement ethos they personify, and what may happen to that ethos in a world that's rapidly being changed by technology and the clash of giant media corporations. It's a world that's very different from the one that gave birth to BNN a generation ago.

OCCUPATIONAL HAZARDS

Chris Lovett was there at the beginning. *Neighborhood Network News* made its debut in 1984, not long after the city had been wired for cable. And Lovett, the editor of the *Dorchester Argus Citizen*, was recruited along with several other community journalists to report for the fledgling newscast. In one memorable early report, Lovett tracked down, *60 Minutes*-style, state Rep. James "Jimmy" Craven, a longtime Jamaica Plain lawmaker known for campaign trickery, to answer questions about two apparent "straw" candidates (named MacDonald and McLaughlin) in the 1984 Democratic primary eventually won by John McDonough, now executive director of Health Care for All. Craven refused to talk with Lovett, who instructed his videographer to film Craven as he walked away—fair play, in Lovett's view, since Craven had already declined to respond to at least one earlier request for an interview.

"I later realized this made the difference between an ambush and the fairness of showing what Jimmy Craven could have avoided," Lovett said in an e-mail follow-up. Three years later, Lovett became anchor and news director, the position he continues to hold.

Rory O'Connor, the first news director and now the president of Globalvision, a New York City-based production company, says his goal was to build an "intensively local" newscast as an alternative to what was available elsewhere on the dial. "Chris was one of the first people I brought into the mix," O'Connor says. "He's the perfect example of what I'm talking about. He was an outstanding local—and 'local' is a badge of honor—print reporter who had never done any television."

Right from the start, *Neighborhood Network News* set up shop at Boston University, an arrangement that has proved beneficial both to the newscast and to journalism students, who help with the production and editing of the show. "It gives them the opportunity to work on a daily news product," says Jim Thistle, director of the broadcast-journalism



Chris Lovett has helped guide *Neighborhood Network News* into the New Boston era.

program at BU and a former news director at Channels 4, 5, and 7.

Joe Heisler came along in 1995, following more than a decade of reporting for and editing community newspapers, working as the chief aide to Democratic state Rep. Angelo Scaccia of Boston's Readville section, and either running for office (he unsuccessfully challenged state Rep. Shirley Owens-Hicks in 1992) or thinking about it (he considered running for Tom Menino's City Council seat in 1993, after Menino became mayor).

So how did Heisler come to BNN? "I talked to them, and I guess they were desperate for hosts at the time," Heisler says. His original idea was to interview the editors of neighborhood newspapers. It worked—for a while. "As you can imagine, we quickly ran out of neighborhoods," he says. It was then that he turned to political figures, and discovered that the phones would light up. His avocation as a talk-show host was off and running.

Now, though, there are threats to these kinds of programs—over the horizon at the moment, but sure to become more visible in the years ahead. In the past, cable companies had to negotiate with local officials for the right to wire a city or town. As part of what was, at least initially, an exclusive franchise arrangement, they agreed to pay a certain amount of money to fund access operations such as BNN. (In a few communities, a second cable provider has come to town, such as RCN in Boston, and paid a portion of the access funds.) If the amount of money isn't huge—and, in most communities, it certainly isn't—at least it's reliable.

Technology could soon change that. At both the state and federal levels, two telephone companies, Verizon and AT&T,

want to offer television through a new fiber-optic cable that also carries phone service. Verizon is currently pursuing the town-by-town process of cracking into the Boston suburbs, but the two telecom giants are also seeking a stripped-down process that would allow them to negotiate with state and federal regulators rather than local officials. The cable companies are fighting the change (after all, they've profited enormously from the current regulatory regime), but if the local franchising system disappears, what happens to access funds is unclear.

"Local access is the counterbalance to media consolidation," says Chuck Sherwood, a veteran media activist based on Cape Cod and a principal in Community Media Visioning Partners. He fears the loss of that counterbalance in years to come. Adds Jeff Chester, executive director of the Center for Digital Democracy and the author of the new book *Digital Destiny: New Media and the Future of Democracy*, "There's a digital gold rush going on by the largest players."

In addition, there's little doubt that we're moving toward a time when television and the Internet will merge. And when you're getting all of your programming from the Internet, there's no need for traditional cable—and, thus, no clear notion of who, if anyone, should pay for public access.

"We've got to realize that if we're going to continue to provide services to communities, to provide this First Amendment forum, then the money isn't all going to come from cable companies anymore, because technology is changing," says Nancy Richard, national vice chair of the Alliance for Community Media and the executive director of Plymouth Area Community Television. "We've got to look at other revenue streams."

Still, she says, local-access activists have time. "I don't think the shift is going to happen overnight," Richard says. "The technology may change quickly, but you've still got generations of people who do not anticipate getting their information over the Internet."

BNN head Henderson says he's trying to prepare for that change. Later this year, BNN will close its studios at the Transportation Building and in Roxbury, and will consolidate in an old MBTA power station in Egleston Square. (Chris Lovett and company will remain at Boston University.) Henderson also wants to move toward financial self-sufficiency by lining up underwriting for BNN's programs—not through large foundations and companies, but through "people and businesses that are close to the ground in the community."

It's an intriguing vision, and one that might become essential in the years to come.

MEETING A NEED

On February 26, 2006, Joe Heisler commemorated 10 years on the air with an hour-and-a-half special from Doyle's, the legendary political tavern in Jamaica Plain—a favored

eating place for Boston mayors John F. "Honey Fitz" Fitzgerald, James Michael Curley, and, now, Tom Menino, as Heisler noted in a promo that aired several times during the evening.

While Heisler held forth at a table in the Fitzgerald Room, Chris Lovett interviewed guests at the front of the restaurant. It was a celebration of Old Boston (retired state treasurer Bob Crane, retired mayor Ray Flynn) and New (City Coun-

BNN is trying to move toward financial self-sufficiency.

cilor Sam Yoon, state representatives Marie St. Fleur and Linda Dorcea Forry, and Sheriff Cabral). St. Fleur had just withdrawn her one-day candidacy for lieutenant governor following revelations about her family's tangled personal finances, and was back to campaigning for reelection to the House.

"I have to say that I'm glad you're running again," Heisler told her, touching her hand. He then proceeded to tell both women that people think of them as "leaders," adding, "It doesn't have anything to do with your color. It has to do with your ideas, with your energy."



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It was an awkward moment. But it was real.

Heisler admits that there have been moments when he's considered giving up the show, but says the anniversary broadcast "re-energized" him. His view of himself is modest. "I don't have any notes. I go in there with the idea that it's a blank slate. Sometimes, unfortunately, it's blanker than others," he says. But there's genuine pride, too.

"There is still this love affair with politics here in Boston, and if there weren't, I wouldn't be on the air. I'm not suggesting that it's the crispest, most scintillating stuff in the market, but it fills a void," Heisler says. "People can say what they want about my show, but I'm fair. I think that's why people trust me enough to appear on the show. I don't carry water for anybody, you know what I mean?"

Sitting in his tiny, ramshackle office at Boston University, Chris Lovett voices the same kind of modest pride in serving a community in all its dimensions. "In a show like this, you avoid the tyranny of the majority, but you also avoid the tyranny of the niche," he says. "We're not serving a particular ethnic or other self-identified group. We serve all types of people."

Lovett is no raconteur, though he does mention the time a spark fell from the studio lights and ignited a guest's hair. "A grad student put it out, but I was thinking how long we could go and finish the interview before it really got going," he recalls. "She took it very well. If I were the guest, I would have been outraged."

More than anything, Lovett talks about the satisfaction that comes from serving his viewers in small but important ways. For instance, he remembers announcing a clinic to screen men for prostate cancer in Mattapan, and then having someone come up to him to tell him he'd gotten a check-up after learning about it on TV.

"That makes my day," Lovett says. "Some people might say that's not hard-hitting journalism, that's just a community bulletin board. I can't argue with that. But it's about making the community better, and I'm just happy to see that in the mix of the show."

Indeed, it's that kind of hyperlocalism that gives Heisler's and Lovett's shows their strength, and differentiates them from the mainstream. "There's no way that I'm going to get down to that level of local neighborhood stuff. It's just not going to happen," says Jon Keller, who covers politics for WBZ-TV (Channel 4). "They're meeting a desperate need, I think."

So party on, Joe. Party on, Chris. You deserve it. The city—and the civic life of the people who live there—would be poorer without you. **CW**

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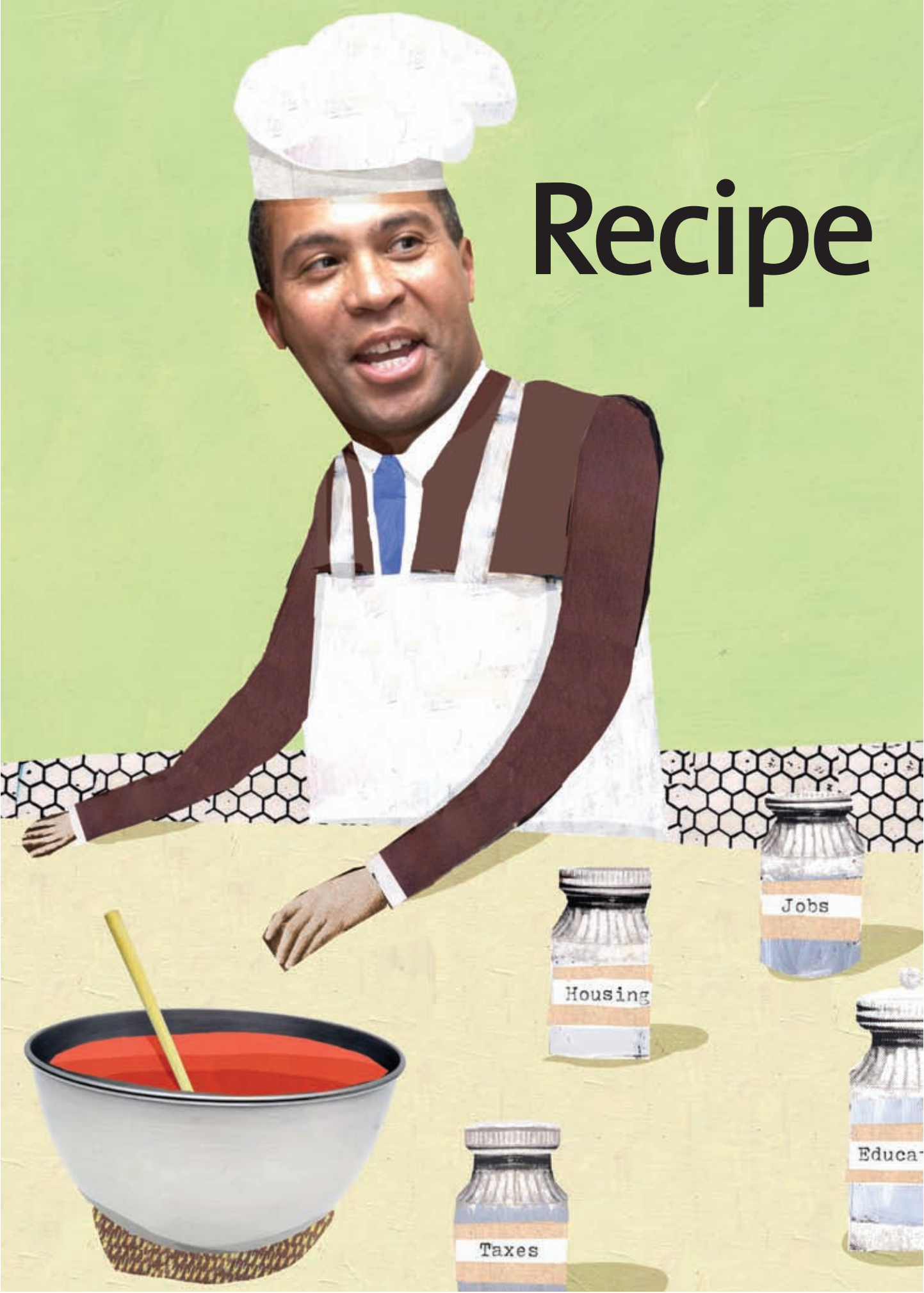
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Recipe



for success

What ingredients would make Patrick a good governor—or even great?

BY DAVE DENISON

SHORTLY AFTER THE polls closed on election night, November 7, it was clear that voters from all around Massachusetts had turned out in droves to elect Democrat Deval Patrick as governor. At one point that evening, CBS4 political analyst Jon Keller went on the air with some wry advice for the governor-elect. Noting that there were still several weeks before the official swearing-in, Keller turned to the camera as if addressing Patrick himself and said, “Run for your life!”

If the humor depended on the notion that the new governor was about to step into a booby trap, the suggestion was defensible. It’s not often that someone succeeds—*really* succeeds—in the job of governor of Massachusetts. Consider the recent record. Since 1974, six individuals have served in the governor’s office over eight terms. Only two of those terms can be seen as notably successful: Michael Dukakis’s second stint (1983-1987) and William Weld’s first (1991-1995). Two out of eight suggests that the mathematical odds of success for a new governor in the modern era are 25 percent.

But what do we mean by success? It is a testament to Patrick’s uplifting campaign that the question seems to have suddenly come alive. Keller’s jest aside, the state’s political mood as Patrick takes office is anything but fatalistic.

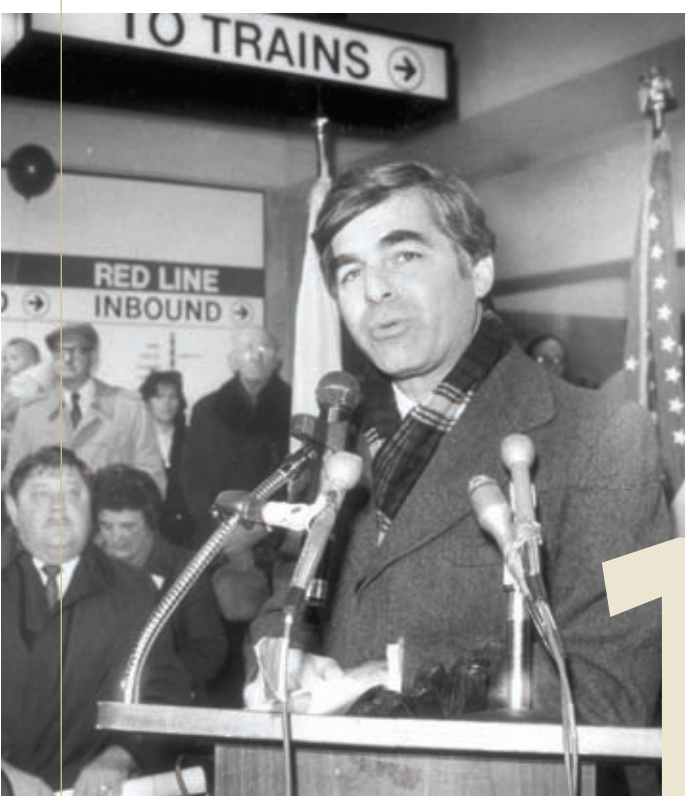
“He’s coming in with expectations that are sky-high,” says Charles Baker, an official in two Republican administrations in the 1990s and now chief executive of Harvard Pilgrim Health Care. “A lot of people have sort of cognitively mapped their vision of the world and the future onto his administration, and onto him.”

And why not? One of Patrick’s campaign slogans was “Hope for the best—and work for it.”

The high expectations derive, as well, from a sense that Patrick may be able to make the governorship powerful again. His campaign organized a large, highly motivated network of supporters; he won by a large margin; and unlike the Republican governors of recent years, he doesn’t start off immediately hobbled by the Democratic Legislature.

In his election-night speech, Patrick said the state has gone through a period of “government by gimmick and photo op and sound bite.” He added, “Do not expect more of that from me.”

But what should we expect? What will he need to do to succeed? In the weeks before and after the election, I spoke with several astute observers of Massachusetts politics and asked their opinions about who has succeeded, and why, as governor. (The assessment above about Dukakis and Weld is the consensus view.)



Since 1974, only two governors have been notably successful: Weld in his first term and Dukakis in his second.

What are the most important habits of highly effective governors?

It's a simple question, and it is answered simply enough. The baseline for good performance is to hire talented people; set a few clear, achievable priorities; work with the Legislature to produce a balanced and productive budget;

insist on high ethical standards throughout government; and stay focused on the job for a full term.

But in the spirit of "hope for the best," I pressed the question a bit further. How might a governor—in this place, in these times—lead an administration that is better than good? To borrow the title of the bestselling management book by Jim Collins, what would it mean to go "from good to great"? Is it even possible to imagine greatness in government?

When thinking it over, some of my experts talked about the skills necessary to be an excellent manager in the public sector. Others spoke of leadership skills, which overlap with management ability but are not the same. As Marty Linsky, an early Weld aide who teaches leadership in Harvard's Kennedy School of Government, puts it, "There is a huge difference between governing well and leadership." He notes that a governor can sometimes "succeed" by avoiding contentious issues that a true leader will take on. In his book *Leadership on the Line* (co-authored with Ronald Heifetz), Linsky makes a distinction between the way leaders confront technical problems, for which solutions already exist if the right people are tapped, and the way they respond to "adaptive challenges," which are problems that involve sweeping change and uncertain outcomes. In Linsky's view, looking for new solutions and coping with people's resistance to change is a higher-order challenge for leaders.

Governing well, of course, is the starting point for greatness. From my interviews, I have distilled eight commonly agreed-upon elements that have defined "good" in past administrations. Making the leap from good to great depends on combining competent management with visionary leadership on the tough calls. And succeeding as a visionary leader depends on judgment—not on whether a governor's decisions are immediately popular but whether they are the right ones. In other words, whether they lead to lasting improvements in the living and working conditions of the Commonwealth.

Here, then, are eight elements of success for a governor in Massachusetts:

1. HIRE GOOD MANAGERS

Practically the first words out of Michael Dukakis's mouth when I sat down with him at his office at Northeastern University were, "It starts with people." Running an administration requires the ability to choose good managers who will, in turn, choose other good managers.

Charles Baker, who worked for Republican governors Bill Weld and Paul Cellucci, explains it this way: "If you're the governor, you appoint a whole bunch of people who work directly inside your office, then you appoint a whole bunch of people who become cabinet secretaries, and they appoint a whole bunch of people, with your permission, who become commissioners of big agencies and department heads. And at the end of the day, for better or for worse, a

lot of those people you put in those jobs are going to define your administration.”

As anyone who has ever been involved in hiring knows, there is always an element of chance involved in selecting personnel. “You pick someone you think is going to be terrific and they turn out to be less than terrific,” Dukakis says. “Sometimes you pick somebody you’re really kind of concerned about and they turn out to be your star.”

The media glare can be especially hot when a governor first starts to build an administration. Massachusetts has a rich tradition of patronage hiring in the public sector—as well as a reactionary subculture of contempt for government hiring, in which columnists and talk-radio windbags routinely characterize public employees as “hacks.” In the weeks after the election, Patrick showed an awareness of the perils of patronage, notifying legislators that he intended to make hiring decisions based on “merit,” not connections. Of course, that’s easier said than done. Everyone is connected to someone—and the recommendation of an “insider” may be more reliable than a résumé delivered over the transom.

Dukakis started his first term, in 1975, with a reformer’s high-minded disdain for patronage. As he is the first to admit, the Democrat’s first term was not a success, partly because he had strained relationships with legislators, so when he returned to power in 1983 he made a point of interacting with lawmakers. By the time he left office eight years later, a noisy chorus of critics, fired up by anger over tax increases and an economic downturn, christened a generation of government employees as “Dukakoids.”

When Weld took office in 1990, the boil was lanced. The new governor pledged to get rid of “the walruses”—the

place.” And there’s a leadership lesson for Patrick in Weld’s approach, Baker says.

“As he starts choosing people to fill some of these jobs, I would argue that boring is better,” says Baker. “If I were him, I’d be looking for talent, competence—I sound like Mike Dukakis here, I guess—and a little less for ideology. At the end of the day, most of the voters of Massachusetts are pretty pragmatic. They just want stuff to work. And his challenge is going to be that he’s going to get tremendous

As governor of Arkansas, Bill Clinton advised chief executives to focus on one or two things.



‘As [Patrick] starts choosing people to fill some of these jobs, I would argue that boring is better.’

lounging, long-in-the-tooth state bureaucrats. Whether Weld’s hiring practices were superior to Dukakis’s tends to be a matter of partisan perspective. The “hack” epithet didn’t disappear in Weld’s term, but there was no general abuse of “Weldoids.”

Baker maintains that new talent from unexpected quarters was what made Weld’s first term as governor a singular success: “I would argue that Bill Weld’s first cabinet was as good as any cabinet any time, anywhere, any

pressure from a lot of places to [consider] philosophy and ideology first and experience and skill-set second.”

For his part, Dukakis faults recent Republican administrations for a lack of energy and activism. Patrick doesn’t

necessarily need new programs and new funding to make significant change in state government, Dukakis says. Instead, he needs new blood: “If he picks the kind of people I think he’s going to pick, and they in turn recruit the kind of people they should, you’ll see a transformation in the way this government works that will be dramatic and very impressive—without any [new] money.”

The challenge in getting from good to great, though, goes beyond recruiting. It’s not how many “stars” are hired but whether an ethic of good management works its way from top to bottom. “Managing in the public sector is 50 times more difficult than managing in the private sector,” Dukakis says, “because you don’t control your environment.” Talented public officials find ways to handle the public scrutiny and countervailing power that is inherent to government.

The slow pace of change can frustrate the very type of

people government needs: people with good ideas for change. A great governor would find ways to inspire the legions of government workers, at all levels, to believe that public service requires more patience and dedication than ordinary jobs do.

2. SET AN ETHICAL TONE

Corruption, or the appearance of corruption, can sink an administration. Joanne Ciulla, a leadership scholar who teaches ethics at the University of Richmond, says the most important thing for any leader to realize is that “the first handful of major decisions you make sets your values system for the rest of the term.” That’s especially the case with ethics.

Democrat Edward King’s term (1979-1983) was marred by charges of cronyism and corruption. When his transportation secretary, Barry Locke, was convicted in early 1982 of conspiracy to commit bribery, the headlines helped doom King in his rematch against Dukakis later that year.

In fact, Massachusetts government in the 1960s and 1970s was rife with bribery, extortion, and kickbacks, especially in the awarding of public construction contracts. A special commission led by John William Ward concluded in 1980 that corruption was “a way of life” in the Commonwealth.

One of the accomplishments of Dukakis in the 1980s, and of the Republican governors who followed, is that out-and-out graft was mostly rooted out of state government. Locke remains the only Cabinet official in recent decades to serve time for official corruption.

The governor’s chief legal counsel serves as the top ethics enforcer in the executive branch, but the governor is the one who is responsible for setting the tone. “If there is any impropriety, they have to be fairly draconian about it right up front, because that’s the only way you start nipping it in the bud,” Ciulla says. “Leadership is a lot like parenting. If you let everyone run amok in the beginning, and then try to get strict, it really doesn’t work too well. But if you start very, very strict and you fire people who have done things wrong and you’re really tough, you have way fewer problems later on. And you can even loosen up a little bit. But you can never go from loose to tight.”

3. SET CLEAR PRIORITIES

Jeanne Shaheen has something in common with Deval Patrick. When Shaheen was elected governor of New Hampshire in 1996, Democrats had not held the office in 14 years, almost as long as the 16-year Democratic exile that has just ended in Massachusetts. Now director of the Institute

of Politics at the Kennedy School, she remembers the exhilarating but daunting moment of taking office.

“Suddenly people feel like you can do everything that’s on everybody’s agenda,” she says. “So it’s important to try and be clear about what you want to do and try and manage those expectations from people.”

David Osborne, who studied six governors for his 1988 book *Laboratories of Democracy*, sees a challenge on that front for Patrick. “In politics and government you can’t focus your public energies on too many things,” Osborne says. “Bill Clinton taught me this, back when he was governor. He said the public has to be able to articulate what you’re about in one or two sentences. If you’re doing 15 good

‘If you’re lucky, you set 50 percent of the agenda. The other 50 percent is what you can’t know about in advance.’

things, to them it’s nothing. It needs to be one or two big things that they understand about you.”

Choosing those one or two issues involves using what political scientists call the agenda-setting power of the executive. It’s widely accepted that the agenda has to be limited and focused, but there is also a matter of timing. The savvy leader must recognize when windows of opportunity are open. In the early 1990s, the time was right in Massachusetts to concentrate on wholesale changes to public education. But the drive for a universal health coverage law that started at the end of the final Dukakis administration languished in the 1990s. Suddenly, for several reasons, the chance for health care reform came in 2005 and the governor and the Legislature reached agreement on a major initiative.

Governors always hope to drive the agenda, but sometimes events force their hand, and the best they can do is recognize opportunities and react. “If you’re lucky, you set 50 percent of the agenda,” says Shaheen. “The other 50 percent is what you can’t know about in advance.” For Shaheen, an urgent item was dropped on her desk when the state’s Supreme Court invalidated New Hampshire’s system for funding public schools. For Republican Mitt Romney last year it was construction defects on the Big Dig. Other governors—such as in Florida, Louisiana, and Mississippi—have faced severe natural disasters. An obvious rule for governors today is that if you do not make emergency preparedness a priority, you may well end up costing people their lives. And ineffectiveness in an emergency can put the rest of a governor’s agenda in jeopardy.

Osborne says one challenge sure to face Patrick is that he does not have the expanding economy that allowed Dukakis in the mid 1980s to focus on revitalizing older cities and “spreading the wealth,” or the technology-fueled prosperity of the 1990s that allowed Weld to simultaneously cut taxes and increase spending on education. The current economic situation, according to Osborne, calls for finding ways to “squeeze more value for less money out of state agencies,” to control costs in health care and public pensions, and to focus on budget reforms.

Osborne’s perspective rests on the idea that “there’s just no way people are going to accept significantly higher taxes.” But that gets at the heart of the priority question. Lower taxes were a top priority for Weld in the 1990s, and he worked with the Legislature to enact more than two dozen tax cuts. Patrick campaigned on the idea that local property taxes should be cut but that state tax levels were about right. Of course, in campaigns most budget numbers are fictional. One cannot govern successfully without making the leap from wishful numbers into the cold waters of budgetary reality. Candidates don’t need to limit their promises, but governors do.

4. MASTER THE BUDGET

Former Senate President Tom Birmingham, now comfortably ensconced in the downtown Boston law offices of Edwards Angell Palmer & Dodge, still shakes his head in wonder at the way Weld mastered budget details, especially given Weld’s reputation for a short attention span. Birmingham was elected to the state Senate in 1990, the same year Weld was elected governor. As Senate chairman of the joint education committee and then, beginning in 1993, as chairman of the Senate Ways and Means Committee, Birmingham became familiar with every nook and cranny of the state budget. From the start, Birmingham was negotiating with Weld on a vast expansion of state funding for public schools.

“I remember being involved with him about the Education Reform Act,” Birmingham recalls. “This was when he was really engaged, right at the beginning. He was as bright a person as I ever met in state government. And the Education Reform Act was a fairly complex piece of legislation. Weld grasped not only the initial and secondary implications on some of the financing pieces, but even the tertiary implications.”

When it comes to the state budget, knowledge is power, and it’s a power that has to be acquired quickly. After just eight weeks in office, a new governor must submit his first budget proposal to the Legislature, setting out his priorities for state government in cold, hard cash.

“Most people who become governor don’t realize how fast that process sucks you in and how hard it is to get on top of it,” says Robert Pozen, who served as secretary of eco-

REPUBLICANS HAVE A POSITIVE ROLE TO PLAY

BY BRUCE E. TARR

For the past 16 years, the Massachusetts Republican Party, including its legislators and candidates, has been dominated by the agendas and personalities of single individuals: governors who mobilized the Republican base and appealed to voters wanting balance in state government. For all that time, the party focused its efforts on keeping hold of the governor’s seat, even as disparities in representation between Democrats and Republicans in the Legislature grew larger and larger.

Now the party of Lincoln has lost the corner office, and its numbers in the Legislature have reached a new low. There are just five Republican state senators out of 40, and 19 Republicans in the 160-member House. Not since the end of the Civil War has GOP presence in the Legislature been lower. And there has been no Republican in the Massachusetts congressional delegation, House or Senate, in a decade.

A key element in the current scenario is morale, and in this Republicans could use a boost. Two-party government is important to democracy. Yet many observers are left wondering how a small, if energetic, band of Republican lawmakers can provide for the robust debate that the founding fathers intended, and, in doing so, be a positive influence on state government.

Against this backdrop, I offer the following ideas to keep Republicans relevant in the State House:

LOOK WEST: While the situation for Massachusetts Republicans may seem uniquely difficult, there are lessons to be learned from Republican Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger of California and his path to political revitalization. After a series of humiliations in the 2005 elections, in which voters rejected every initiative petition he put before them, Arnold came roaring back to win a resounding victory in his bid for reelection a year later.

“You rarely see in politics anybody come up from where the governor was,” said the polling director of the Public Policy Institute of California in *USA Today*.

How did Schwarzenegger save himself from political peril and turn himself into an action hero at the ballot box last November? For one thing, he capitalized on another transformation, from confrontation to collaboration.

Early in 2006, he sat down with legislative leaders of both parties and vowed to work things out, for the good of the state. In a speech to the California Policy Issues Conference, he described the process this way:

“I think that it was really incredible, especially this year, that we were able to sit down and we looked at each other and said, ‘We know it is an election year where normally everyone tries to derail each other, but let us be different. Let us make decisions [based not on] what is best for our party, but what is best for the people of California.’ And I tell you, it was a really incredible moment, because all four leaders, Republicans and Democrats alike, all shook their heads and said, ‘Yes, let us be different, and let’s commit to

that.' And that's exactly what happened.... We met in the middle. That is exactly what you do; you compromise."

To his great credit, Gov. Deval Patrick also promised a new era of cooperation, in a post-election meeting with Senate Minority Leader Richard Tisei and House Minority Leader Brad Jones. Patrick's tone was civil, even collegial. We Republicans need to show, like Gov. Schwarzenegger, that we can cooperate—and test Gov. Patrick's willingness to enlist Republicans in achieving his goals in the upcoming legislative session.

ENGAGE, DON'T ENRAGE: Although recent electoral results reflect domination by the Democratic Party, other indicators continue to support the case for balance. Between 1986 and last November's election, voters registering as Democrats and as Republicans increased by almost the same number, with the GOP slightly ahead, 109,000 to 105,000. But the ranks of unenrolled voters leaped by 811,000 during that time, swelling from 40 percent of the electorate to 69 percent. It would seem that a significant percentage of today's voters are not voting for candidates based on party affiliation.

Massachusetts Republicans need to resist the temptation to fall into the role of "loyal opposition" to the majority party, and instead seize the opportunity to develop an idea-based agenda. What is there to be gained—for the GOP, or for the Commonwealth—by Republican lawmakers setting themselves up in partisan opposition to a governor and a legislative majority whose party seems to have so little meaning for the electorate?

Politics has been a turnoff for many citizens of Massachusetts, but not so much because their favored party has been out of power. Rather, as media consultant Ben Kilgore put it to Joan Vennoch in these pages ("A Turn Toward the Flat and Bland," *CW*, Spring '06), the "ceaseless gamesmanship" between the Legislature and a series of Republican governors left things such that "the people simply don't count for much anymore. Only time will tell if there is anything we can do to get back in the game, but the emergence of inspirational leadership would be a good start."

Since then, Deval Patrick has emerged as a dynamic leader who captured the imagination of the electorate, and the people of Massachusetts got back in the game in a big way. Voter registration increased dramatically, and on Election Day, some polling locations in Boston ran out of ballots.

Now is not the time for Republican legislators to begrudge Gov. Patrick his due, or to set themselves up as reflexive naysayers. In fact, the leverage provided by his victory may be just what Beacon Hill needs to be a more open marketplace for ideas, regardless of their party of origin.

FOCUS ON WHAT'S IMPORTANT: Massachusetts is losing population, hemorrhaging manufacturing jobs, and becoming increasingly unaffordable for middle-class families. This is no time for monopoly control of state government by the Democrats. At the same time, problems like these ought to

be addressed in economic affairs for Mitt Romney at the start of his administration in 2003.

Many new governors come in pledging to squeeze fat out of the state budget. Birmingham is skeptical there is much fat to be squeezed out. In his view, 16 years of Republican administrations, along with careful scrutiny by legislative committees, have kept the budget reasonably lean. "Unfortunately, there's no line item in the budget that says 'waste and inefficiency,'" Birmingham says.

The difficulty for Patrick, says Pozen, is that however tight the current budget is, the appetite for expansion may be overwhelming. "There's this pent-up demand" among Democratic constituencies that may make it harder for Patrick to keep the lid on, says Pozen.

Though Patrick's primary task will be to get the budget into balance, government reformers say there's a bigger job ahead: What about transforming the budget-writing process so that spending trends can be more easily analyzed?

New governors pledge to cut fat, but the state budget may already be reasonably lean.

What about making the budget a tool for streamlining government?

These are perennial questions but not always welcome ones in the Legislature and the state agencies. Weld's first secretary of administration and finance, Peter Nessen, made a run at "performance-based budgeting," but the Legislature didn't go for it. In the most recent administration, Pozen was part of an unsuccessful effort to set up "performance metrics" designed to answer, throughout the state's agencies, a simple question: Did you get what you want out of the money you spent?

Osborne, who lays out a process he calls "budgeting for outcomes" in his book *The Price of Government* (see Considered Opinion, *CW*, Spring '04), argues that "people don't realize how bad the fiscal future is" in state government. With more of the budget eaten up by health care and pension costs, Osborne says, there is little room for growth for anything. Therefore, he argues, the budget process should be turned into a process of focusing on better results with the money available.

As Baker points out, that hasn't happened in Massachusetts because legislators want to have control over the budget. "The Legislature really wants to be able to own that document every year," he says. Good governors are part of the annual effort to balance the books. But it would take a

great one to guide the Legislature toward a whole new way of using the budget to improve results.

5. FIND A WAY TO WORK WITH THE LEGISLATURE

One of the surest ways to earn a national reputation as a good governor is to work well with a legislative branch controlled by the opposite party. Former Virginia governor Mark Warner, for example, was considered to be a future Democratic presidential candidate after he worked with a Republican legislature on a challenging agenda, which even included tax increases. Democrats Janet Napolitano in Arizona and Kathleen Sebelius in Kansas have also won high marks for working with Republican lawmakers.

Weld's success derived from his ability to work things out with a strongly Democratic Legislature. Though he campaigned as a Republican against Beacon Hill, he struck up a working relationship with then-Senate President William Bulger and House Speaker Charles Flaherty. Birmingham, who succeeded Bulger as Senate President in 1994, says that Weld's virtues were his pragmatism, his flexibility, and his ability to have fun with Beacon Hill insiders even as he slammed them with partisan rhetoric.

"You could cut a deal with Weld," Birmingham says. "He was prepared to come to agreements on issues when his staff was kicking and screaming and saying, 'You shouldn't do it.'" The fact that Weld held weekly meetings with legislative leaders made a big difference, Birmingham says. "You can't underestimate that—it counts for a lot."

Patrick faces a different dynamic. If some expect him to achieve great things because he will be working with fellow Democrats, others will want him to hold the Legislature in check—in lieu of an effective block by Republicans, who have at least temporarily gone out of business in Massachusetts.

Dukakis's three terms demonstrated the various perils of the legislative relationship among members of the same party. The lesson he says he learned in his first term is that a governor can't get much done by casting himself as a scold of the Legislature. His second term saw major steps forward in transportation and economic development policy because, he says, he and his staff spent much more time developing a collaborative relationship with lawmakers.

"You don't begin to go down a policy road without involving key legislators from the beginning. That's the rule," Dukakis says. "You bring them in from the beginning."

Birmingham notes that it helps if a governor has good chemistry with the two top legislative leaders, especially if the Senate President and House Speaker are not as ideological as he and former Speaker Tom Finneran were. There wasn't much Gov. Paul Cellucci could do, Birmingham admits, during the legislative battles of the late 1990s. "Finneran and I were like a Japanese horror movie," he says.

be a call to action for a Republican Party that too often has had its bread-and-butter economic issues drowned out by what are often more sensational, but less consequential, social issues.

Similarly, our state and our nation face extraordinary challenges surrounding energy independence and the impact of energy production on the environment. The scope and complexity of these issues call for debate and collaboration, not a closed door, with Democrats on the inside and Republicans on the outside.

I authored a comprehensive bill to promote alternative fuel vehicles and technology in Massachusetts, and co-sponsored it with Senate President Robert Travaglini and Senate Transportation Committee chairman Steven Baddour, both Democrats. The legislation requires that a minimum of 5 percent of new vehicles purchased by the Commonwealth each year be powered by alternative fuels, so that at least 50 percent of the state's vehicle fleet will be alternative-fuel-based by 2010. The bill further provides sales-tax incentives for consumers who purchase hybrid and alternative fuel vehicles, and substantial incentives for corporations to purchase or lease these environment-friendly vehicles. Despite a 38-0 vote in the Senate in September 2005, and support from then-Gov. Romney, the bill never made it out of the House.

Here again, we can look west for contrast, and inspiration. In September, Gov. Schwarzenegger signed into law an extensive global warming initiative, calling the fight against global warming "one of the most critical issues of our time." Assembly Speaker Fabian Nunez (D-Los Angeles) said, "Today, we tell the rest of the world that California has the courage and the know-how to turn this tide and the ability to move forward to putting an end to this creeping disaster we know as global warming."

Nunez helped write the bill, which passed in the last week of the legislative session, giving Schwarzenegger a triumph of good government just before the November election. Isn't it time for such a thing to happen in Massachusetts?

The natural tendency of those in the opposition is to become abrasive critics of those in power. Massachusetts Republicans could follow that path, hoping that vocal attacks would make them appear involved in the process. That would be a mistake.

The time is now to advance innovative proposals, including those that Republican legislators have to offer. Those proposals that have merit should be well received by the governor and by the Democratic leaders of the Legislature, and form the basis for the type of collaboration that so many hope for. If not, the blame will be on them.

Massachusetts is well known for the "shot heard 'round the world," a revolution that put the power of ideas in the hands of the people. Let it be so again.

Sen. Bruce E. Tarr represents the 1st Essex and Middlesex District and serves as Senate Minority Whip. He is also Senate chairman of the newly established Republican Party Conference.

Romney made a rule early on that his agency leaders were not allowed to speak with legislators unless authorized by his legislative liaison's office. The result was perhaps the worst executive-legislative comity since Dukakis's first term. Romney and legislative leaders managed to produce a significant health care law, but only because of a unique set of external pressures, including a drive to put the issue on the state ballot and the federal government's threat to withhold Medicaid funds if the state didn't reform its system for covering the uninsured.

Perhaps Romney saw the Legislature as a lost cause, since he had no power base there. But a governor who doesn't want to mingle with lawmakers — and cajole and exhort and wheel and deal — might as well look for another job. The great governors are the ones who can walk among a group of backslappers, policy wonks, ideologues, egomaniacs, seat-warmers, and pork-barrel pragmatists, and move them in one direction.

6. STAY ON THE JOB

Nobody has been more scathing about Mitt Romney's job performance as governor than Mike Dukakis. Romney's efforts to move onto the national stage exposed him to crit-

icism that he became an absentee governor halfway into his term. "That guy was out of there two years later," Dukakis says. "There was no interest."

But, I asked Dukakis, didn't you also take your eye off the local scene in 1988? That was different, he protests, asserting that he made it a rule to be on the job, in the State House, four days a week while he sought the presidential nomination in the middle of his third term.

But still, wouldn't you agree it's a hazard to run for higher office while still serving as governor? "It's a hazard," he agrees.

It's impossible to know whether Dukakis could have emerged from his third term in better form had he stuck with his day job. The recession that hit the East and West coasts in 1989 would have created severe pressures in any event. But the fact that Dukakis appeared to be AWOL in 1988 made the public reaction to hard times more severe.

Today, there's bipartisan agreement that the state needs a governor who will put national ambitions aside, and that greatness is only possible with full immersion in the governor's office. Says Baker: "There's no way you can be a great governor if you don't invest yourself completely, utterly, and totally in that job the entire time you are doing it. No way."

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7. SHOW SOME COURAGE

David Osborne recalls the battles Bill Clinton waged in Arkansas for education reform in the 1980s. One of his more controversial proposals was competency tests for teachers, which were strongly resisted by the teachers' union. Clinton pushed it through by generating public support, and by emphasizing other gains for teachers in his education reform package. He was aware of what New York City mayor Fiorello LaGuardia long ago said is the most important lesson in politics: how to say no to your friends.

In Marty Linsky's view, saying no is practically the definition of good leadership, and good leaders challenge their constituency rather than pander to it. Linsky cites the decision by Gov. Francis Sargent, a liberal Republican in the 1970s, to oppose a new ring of urban highways in Boston. A former public works commissioner, Sargent was "a highway guy" and was expected to be on board. Instead, he stopped the project, infuriating his core constituencies. That, says Linsky, "was a very gutsy thing to do." The maxim Linsky offers is: "Leadership is about disappointing your own people at a rate they can absorb."

Osborne sees several tests of greatness for Deval Patrick when it comes to reforms that public employee unions oppose. "If he has the courage to cross some of these interest groups at times, then he has the potential to become a great governor, I think," says Osborne.

Joanne Ciulla, though, resists the notion it is inherently admirable to say no. "That assumes the leader is always right, which isn't the case," she says. "Americans have a very macho view of leadership—and also men do." There is a necessary collaboration between leaders and followers, she says, and the learning must go in both directions: "There is a really big difference between leadership in business and in politics. Businesses are not democracies."

But Osborne says there is a time for give-and-take, and a time to stand firm. "I'll tell you that the single most important thing I've learned about leadership over the last 25 years is, 'It takes courage,'" says Osborne. "In times like this, where you have to reform institutions—because we've got these Industrial Age bureaucracies—you don't get results without courage."

8. INVIGORATE DEMOCRACY

Nobody's quite sure what to make of Patrick's idealistic campaign rhetoric (which was a big part of his appeal) about a "transformed politics and a whole new civic life," as he put it in one speech. What does he envision? Will there be a new Bureau of Democratic Renewal? How does a campaign plank for "reviving citizenship" translate into gubernatorial policy?

Patrick is justifiably proud of the grassroots organization that propelled his campaign, and he speaks movingly of the need to keep such activism alive. That could mean steering

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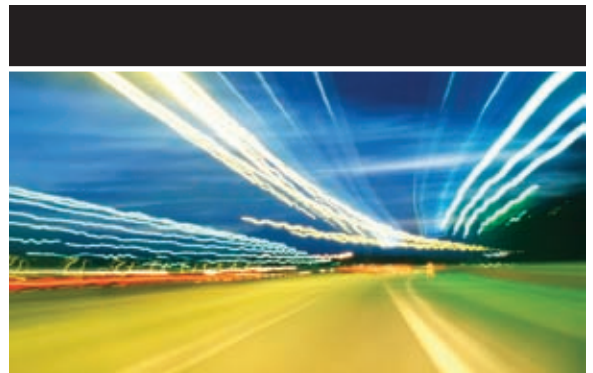
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his network of volunteers into Democratic Party politics, and it could mean reactivating the ground troops when the governor wants to put pressure on the Legislature, as Clinton did when he pushed education reform.

Patrick has authorized his lead organizer, John Walsh, to keep a grassroots organization alive and buzzing. But Baker, who sends out a regular Friday e-mail message to the employees of Harvard Pilgrim Health Care, says the new governor must find ways not just to stay in touch with his political base, but also to enlarge his sphere to include the slightly more than 100,000 full- and part-time workers for the state.

"If he really wants to succeed, to be great, he's going to have to figure out some way to communicate with his own employees in state government, and with the larger body politic in Massachusetts, that goes beyond communicating through the press conference and through the news media," Baker says. "He's going to have to come up with some way to communicate more directly and more regularly."

Any excitement Patrick creates that keeps people politically active has to be considered a gain. Much of what he wanted to accomplish in his campaign was to show that politics could be hopeful and idealistic, not bitter and vituperative. It's part of his strategy of encouraging more people to participate. By maintaining a positive, inclusive style of gov-

erning, Patrick may improve the tone and tenor of politics in Massachusetts.

Yet there are a host of problems that can be seen as part of a democratic dysfunction here that only a great leader with a genuine passion for democracy could address. For instance, the Legislature has consistently nullified the process that gives citizens the right to propose, vote on, and enact laws and constitutional amendments. This contributes to the kind of public cynicism about politics that Patrick decries.

There are several other reform issues that could be on a civic agenda: Is one-party rule healthy in civic life? One of the reasons Republicans are given no chance to get a foothold in the legislative and congressional delegations is that Democrats control the drawing of political district lines. What about the lack of people willing and able to run for public office? Is it a problem that mounting a challenge costs so much that most incumbents go unopposed?

Maybe direct democracy and nonpartisan "good government" reforms don't really lead to results that are in the best long-term interests of the Commonwealth. That has surely been the judgment of the top legislative leaders here for a long while. And Patrick himself showed no interest in the campaign for a constitutional amendment banning gay marriage (throughout the campaign, Patrick said the pub-



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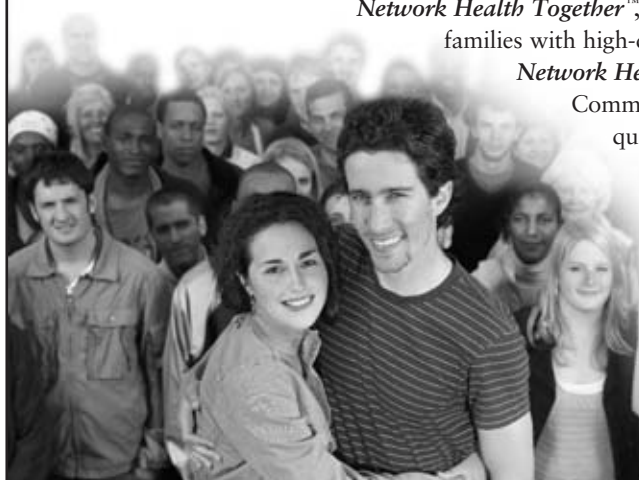
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lic has “moved on” from the question) and raised no objection when the Legislature failed to give the amendment an up-or-down vote in November.

The Supreme Judicial Court has several times ruled that the Legislature has violated the state’s constitution by blocking citizen-initiated laws and constitutional amendments. An ordinary governor would chastise the Legislature when he disagreed with its ends. An idealistic governor would champion the democratic process even when he’s not sure where it leads. Perhaps it would take a great one to address the mistrust that now exists between citizen activists and elected representatives—and to lead the way to an honest democratic dialogue.

ISING TO GREATNESS

One way of thinking about how a governor can go from good to great is to think in terms of hitting on all eight cylinders. Turning in a good performance on all the elements described above might add up to a great tenure. Another factor is whether a leader is willing to take enough time to succeed. In Jim Collins’s book *From Good to Great*, he notes that some companies amble along for many years with average performance, then suddenly come upon a turning point that allows them to take off.

As Patrick himself has noted, the job may take eight years rather than four. Nelson Rockefeller was elected to four terms in New York, serving from 1958 to 1973. He had some stormy times, but there’s no question he left his mark on the Empire State. And, like Dukakis, Bill Clinton had a better second term in Arkansas after learning painful lessons in his first one.

In Osborne’s *Laboratories of Democracy*, Clinton talked about his attempts to create “lasting change” as Arkansas governor: “I think the acid test is, when you’re through, have you made a difference?” It could be argued that policies enacted in Dukakis’s second term made a real difference by dramatically improving conditions in decaying cities such as Lowell. It could be argued that Weld made a difference by putting the brakes on the growth of state government while going along with an ambitious plan to make Massachusetts public schools some of the best in the country.

Robert Pozen argues that to match the successes of Dukakis and Weld, the new governor needs to accomplish only two things: “He’s going to be a great governor by keeping the budget in balance and by making health care work.” If the new health insurance law succeeds by extending health insurance to all residents without breaking the budget, Pozen says, it will be a model for every other state. “If he can do that, then he’s a hero.”

Jeanne Shaheen says “there’ll be a lot of other things he’ll have to deal with” to keep Massachusetts economically

competitive, such as new initiatives in education. But, she notes, the governor’s success ultimately depends on taking the long-term view.

“[For] a lot of the decisions that you make, you’re not going to be able to determine what the ramifications are for a number of years down the road,” says Shaheen. “When Jesse Ventura was governor [of Minnesota, from 1999 to 2003], there were a lot of people who thought at the time he was a great governor. But if you look at it 10 years from now, the decisions that he made, will they really have meant that it was great for the state? That’s probably not an assessment you’re going to be able to make right now.”

In the end, greatness is a matter of legacy. Looking back, are there some governors who have left their states different—and better—for having been governor?

Alan Ehrenhalt, executive editor of *Governing* magazine, has written about a lasting change made by Woodrow Wilson in his one brief term as governor of New Jersey. Wilson was a pioneer in inserting himself into the legislative process and pushing his own agenda. Before his tenure, most Americans had assumed the separation of powers made such executive activism improper. In an interview, Ehrenhalt notes that Robert LaFollette took a similar approach as a Progressive reformer in Wisconsin. But the chief executive who stands out for him is Al Smith, who served as governor of New York from 1919 to 1921 and again from 1923 to 1929.

Patrick can be “a great governor by keeping the budget in balance and by making health care work.”

“He really found ways to take Progressive reform ideas and make them practical,” Ehrenhalt says. “His greatness was that he had the practical political skill of a Tammany Hall politician and the vision of a Progressive, even though he was an uneducated man.” Smith pushed for worker’s compensation and occupational health and safety, among other measures. “He was the person who figured out ways to protect people against some of the worst abuses of the industrial system of that era,” Ehrenhalt says.

It’s no accident that Progressive-era governors come to mind when we think of great leaders, Ehrenhalt suggests. It was after that period that Justice Louis Brandeis referred to states as “laboratories of democracy.”

Could the new governor of Massachusetts make that phrase ring true here? It’s something to wish for. It might even be what Deval Patrick calls “hoping for the best.” **CW**

the New Math

K-8 schools have become popular, but in Rochester, NY, Manny Rivera, Boston's incoming superintendent, opted to put middle and high schools together instead. Is 7-12 a better formula for urban schools?

BY MICHAEL JONAS

AS THE BOSTON public schools struggle to raise achievement and keep students and families connected to schools, the system has followed the national march of big city districts toward a model that keeps students in the same school from kindergarten through eighth grade. The K-8 movement is gaining steam in larger districts across the country, including Philadelphia, Cleveland, and Pittsburgh, where Superintendent Mark Roosevelt, the former Massachusetts lawmaker who co-authored the state's Education Reform Law, has not only doubled the number of K-8 schools, he convened a "K-8 summit" last spring with educators from across the country, including Boston.

The move to K-8 is also, not coincidentally, a move away from middle schools, which were conceived as a nurturing bridge from early elementary grades to high school but now more often resemble a giant moat, where urban youth sink into education failure.

"Middle schools are the great disaster of the education system," says Robert Gaudet, senior policy analyst at the University of Massachusetts's Donahue Institute, who has extensively studied school performance across the state. A 2004 report from the Rand Corp. concluded that there is "weak empirical support" for the idea of separate schools for this three-year span, and it recommended consideration of models that reduce the number of transitions children make between schools.

But if middle schools are the weak link in the educational chain, could it be that the K-8 solution has it all backward? That's the view of leaders of some of the most impressive, high-achieving urban schools in Massachusetts, which have



Manuel Rivera, who arrives in Boston in July, launched a wholesale reconfiguration of the Rochester school system.

taken the opposite approach to the middle grades. Rather than extending elementary schools upward, as the K-8 model does, they are joining middle school and high school grades in a way that emulates some elite private and public schools. These school innovators are convinced that a rigorous six- or seven-year curriculum, within a single school extending through 12th grade, offers the best hope for achieving success with students of all races—especially those from lower-income families, where a college future is not nearly the presumed path that it is in middle-class homes.

While this type of reform has not had nearly the visibility of the K-8 movement, its supporters here will soon have an important ally in a very high place.

Manuel Rivera, who takes office in July as Boston's next superintendent of schools, has led what is probably the

most ambitious effort in the United States to adopt the upper-grades model. In Rochester, NY, where he has been superintendent for the last four years, Rivera launched a wholesale reconfiguration of the city's schools into a system in which most students will attend grade 7-12 schools.

In published interviews and in get-to-know-you visits to the Hub, Rivera has said little about his plans for Boston's schools. He has certainly given no indication that he plans to push for a similar, wholesale reshuffling of Boston's schools. But extended grade-span secondary schools are quietly gaining support in Boston, with at least two of the city's better-achieving high schools interested in expanding to include middle school grades, and one middle school hoping to extend its reach upward to include high school grades.

And well they might, considering that Boston has long had a few schools with this grade structure. The three competitive-admission exam schools, including the renowned Boston Latin School, all use a 7-12 sequence to offer a college preparatory curriculum for the city's highest-achieving students. With more than 375 years under its belt, might Boston Latin be on to something?

"If we think it's good for the elite, and we want to have high expectations for all, [then] have the same structure," says William Henderson, principal of Dorchester's Patrick O'Hearn elementary school.

An across-the-board remake of Boston's schools along 7-12 lines would seem unlikely. Nevertheless, Rivera's impending arrival is being welcomed by those eager to see Boston make room for a model that some think may offer the best hope for dramatically ratcheting up school achievement in a district whose performance remains, despite a decade of steady improvement, among the lowest in the state.

BIG BROTHER, BIG SISTER

One reservation often expressed about joining middle school with high school is that students as young as 11 years old will be subject to the not-always-wholesome sway of 17- or 18-year-old high school juniors and seniors. But at University Park Campus School in Worcester, one of a growing network of successful small urban schools that have put students of that age range under one roof, school leaders and students alike say the older students can be vital in forging a school culture that is both caring and focused on high achievement.

At University Park, the role modeling starts even before the school's incoming seventh-graders attend their first class. The new students attend a five-week orientation program at nearby Clark University, together with a group of University Park students preparing to enter 11th grade. Once the school year starts, older students are assigned an incoming student to tutor, helping them with their studies but also introducing them to the school's routines and expectations in a way that teachers could not. As Jorge Ramirez, a 17-year-old senior, puts it, "We help seventh-graders who still don't have a vibe for school."

Recalling her own tutor from six years ago, senior class president Deeanna Leite says, "You're able to see the role models they are, and you want to become that." Two years ago, Leite, the 18-year-old daughter of a Worcester electrician and waitress whose college application list includes Tufts University, Boston College, and the University of Connecticut, became that person for Alexis McCullough, now a ninth-grader at the school. McCullough, 14, credits Leite with helping her get on track in math, a subject she was struggling with in her first year.

"She helped me go from a C to B-plus," says McCullough. "It was a good experience. It was, like, if the teacher couldn't help me, I had like a younger teacher. They have a better understanding because they just went through it."

Ricci Hall, a history teacher who also serves as the school's assistant principal, says mentoring moments take place all the time. Recently, an eighth-grade boy having behavior problems in class was sent to Hall's office, where he was meeting with two high-flying 11th-graders who are in his AP US history class. Before he knew it, says Hall, the 11th-graders were talking to the younger student about getting his act together and telling him about their own studies, including classes they were taking at Clark. Says Hall, "To have them talk about what he can be in a few years if he makes the right choices—I could never provide that powerful an interaction."

—MICHAEL JONAS

MANNY BEING MANNY

The 54-year-old Rivera is now wrapping up his second tour of duty as Rochester's superintendent of schools. He served a three-year stint in the early 1990s before spending eight years as a vice president with Edison Schools, a national for-profit school management company based in New York City. Edison has earned a mixed record in its attempts—sometimes controversial—to turn around troubled schools, but the company has not shied away from bold steps, showing a willingness to shake things up that Rivera shares.

When Rivera returned to Rochester in 2002, it was initially as interim superintendent, serving while the district conducted a national



Principals Joseph Munno and Toyia Wilson run two 7-12 schools under the same roof in Rochester.

search for a permanent schools chief. He says the school board cautioned him against “advancing any major program changes” while the search was in progress. Rivera says he pushed back, making it clear he didn’t intend to simply warm the seat, especially if he felt there was a compelling case

Rivera: ‘We were losing too many young people’ in the transition from grade eight to nine.

for change. He quickly discovered such a case in low achievement scores and an abysmal high school graduation rate, hovering around 50 percent. But Rivera saw the problems beginning well before the high school years.

“There was a lot of frustration with the middle schools,” he says. Achievement levels were particularly low, and the system was experiencing 20 percent to 30 percent annual turnover in middle school teachers, a revolving door that undermined the idea of middle schools providing a stable, guiding hand to young adolescents in the throes of suddenly

activated hormones.

“It was horrible,” says Rivera. And in moving on to high school, “the transition from grade eight to nine, with a completely different faculty, a completely different facility with folks who have no knowledge of who you are, at a very sensitive age for young people, really was a problem point,” he says. “We were losing too many young people who were finding themselves in the rigor of a ninth-to-12th-grade program that they were not prepared for.”

Rivera’s solution, a model he says he borrowed in part from high-performing private schools, was to do away with middle schools that had a 6-8 structure, add sixth grade back into the city’s elementary schools, and create new high schools spanning the six years from seventh grade to 12th. Emphasizing the need for students to master basic skills in earlier years, and the importance of focusing in upper grades on continuing into college or other training, the schools are divided into a “foundation academy” for seventh through ninth grades and a “commencement academy” for 10th through 12th.

Rivera says he had no illusions that reconfiguring grade structure alone would do the trick. “It was much more than changing grade levels,” he says. “We also said, ‘Let’s tackle the

curriculum, let's tackle the training we want to provide for our teachers, let's create larger blocks of time for our students to focus on reading and math." But the key, he says, is continuity, a "seamless accountability system" with students entering a school that would be "responsible for their outcomes six years later."

THINKING SMALL, AIMING HIGH

In Rivera's Rochester, the switch to 7-12 is paired with a push to get small, a move that Boston and many other districts are also making. Take John Marshall High School, a sprawling, 1920s-era brick edifice tucked into a residential neighborhood in northwest Rochester. Once a school of about 1,500 students (which has been 7-12 since 1998), Marshall has been broken into two smaller 7-12 schools under the same roof, one retaining the school's original name, the other called the Northwest College Preparatory School.

The national trend toward smaller schools has been led by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, which has poured hundreds of millions of dollars into breaking up US high schools into smaller units. The thinking is much the same as that behind extended grade-span reforms: Students will do better when they can develop supportive bonds with

peers and become well known by teachers, things that can be achieved in smaller schools and in schools that students attend for a longer period of time.

Joseph Munno, who has been principal of Marshall for five years and was on the school's teaching staff for 31 years before that, thinks the revamped structure of grades and size holds promise. Seventh- and eighth-grade English and math teachers now meet together once a day to share strategies and discuss individual students. In another change, students have just four classes per day, which meet for extended 85-minute sessions. "I focus very strongly on math and ELA [English language arts]," says Munno. "I'm down to one kid at a time, where almost every kid has their own program."

Munno has also sought to turn on its head the common practice of more experienced teachers gravitating toward the higher grades. "I think the best teachers should be with the neediest kids," says Munno, who has three of his most seasoned math teachers now in eighth-grade classrooms—an example of the administrative leeway made possible by a union contract in Rochester that is regarded as one of the most reform-minded of any big district in the country.

Marshall students have a long way to go, but the early results have been encouraging. On last year's state test, eighth-graders recorded a 20-point increase in competency

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Like many parents, Alice McCabe (with sons DeVonté and Tyler and husband Chris Austin) is wary of middle schools in Boston.

in English, going from 9.9 percent the previous year to 29.9 percent. For math, the school had a one-year jump of 30 points, from 12.0 percent to 42.9 percent making the grade.

In the same building, the Northwest College Preparatory School is one of two new Rochester schools being run under the guidance of the College Board, the organization best known for administering the SAT test. The College Board was funded by the Gates and the Michael and Susan Dell foundations to establish up to 18 schools in New York state that would provide low-income and minority students with a rigorous 6-12 or 7-12 grade curriculum geared toward the successful completion of college.

Northwest Prep admitted its first students—75 seventh-graders and 75 ninth-graders—this fall, and the school will add new classes in each of the coming years until filled out with about 450 students. As Northwest Prep grows, the main John Marshall High will shrink from its current population of 1,380 to between 700 and 800 students. There are three classrooms per grade at Northwest Prep, and the students stay with the same group of classmates for their core academic classes. Teachers receive training in College Board-designed curricula in math and English geared toward preparing student for Advanced Placement classes (all students must take at least two AP classes to graduate) and college.

The school's mantra is that everyone can go to college, says Toyia Wilson, Northwest Prep's energetic, 35-year-old principal, who served as an assistant principal under Munno. "It's not too far out of reach for them."

That's a new attitude for Rochester, where college attendance is hardly the norm. The city has the 11th highest child poverty rate in the country, according to the Washington, DC-based nonprofit Children's Defense Fund, and half of public school students don't even make it through high school.

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drumming the idea of college into students at an early age. Northwest Prep starts taking students on visits to area colleges at the beginning of seventh grade. "So many of them haven't seen beyond Rochester," says Wilson, a reference that seems both literal and figurative.

It's far too early to know whether Rivera's ambitious restructuring plan will translate into big improvements in outcomes for Rochester's schools. "The proof points aren't there yet," says Helen Santiago, executive director of the College Board's high school effort, which also includes schools in New York City and Buffalo. But she gives Rivera credit for recognizing the need to be daring. "I like out-of-the-box thinkers," she says, "and I think it's something that's very difficult to do from a high-level position in public education."

"He's not afraid to try new things," says Diego Garcia, president of the Rochester school board. "He makes changes quickly, but gets people to go along with his goals and objectives."

OWNING THE KIDS

If there is a model for what Rivera is trying to achieve in Rochester—and what some hope he will set his sights on for Boston—it might be found in an aging former elementary school in Worcester. The small red-brick building is home to the University Park Campus School, a 7-12 public school in one of Worcester's toughest neighborhoods, which has had extraordinary success educating students from working-class families and catapulting them on to college. (See "Worcester's Wonder," CW, Spring '04.)

The school offers an honors-level curriculum across the board, and over the course of its eight-year history, every graduate, 95 percent of whom are first-generation college-goers, has gone off to seek a higher education degree. Some of them haven't had to go very far. When the school was founded in 1997, Clark University, whose campus sits just blocks from the University Park school, offered to provide four years' tuition-free education to any graduate of the new school who was accepted through the university's standard admissions process.

"I thought if we were going to open a new school and we were going to have a shot of getting the kids college-ready, of taking Clark up on the offer of free tuition, we were going to have to start in seventh grade," says Donna Rodrigues, the school's founding principal. "If you start in seventh grade, you own the kids," she says. "The buck stops here."

Rodrigues, who now works for the Boston-based organization Jobs for the Future, says most entering seventh-graders at University Park are several years behind grade level in reading and math. By getting a head start on high school, however, the school can get even students who arrive reading at a third-grade level (50 percent of the incoming students)

ready to tackle University Park's high school honors curriculum by the time they reach ninth grade. Over the past six years, every single sophomore at the school but one has passed the 10th-grade MCAS test on the first try, and the one student who narrowly missed had transferred to University Park in ninth grade. Averaged over the past five years, 84 per-

Every graduate of University Park, a 7-12 school in Worcester, has sought a college degree.

cent of University Park 10th-graders have gotten advanced or proficient MCAS scores in both English and math, rivaling the most affluent suburban districts in the state.

The impressive results don't happen by magic. The 230-student school provides a level of personalized support rarely possible in high schools of 1,000 or 2,000 students. That support comes with a demanding academic curriculum, which includes a relentless focus on reading and writ-

ing in the early grades.

"The kids are reading and writing in every subject," says Dan Restuccia, the coordinator of a training institute for educators interested in learning about the school's approach. "If you look at the research on dropouts, it's almost always related to kids not being able to read." The Institute for Student Success, established by University Park and Clark University, has drawn educators from across the country—including Rochester, which has twice sent delegations to Worcester, once led by Rivera himself.

Thanks to its extended grade span, University Park can make sure seventh- and eighth-graders are building skills they will need, and develop further, in the upper-level courses they will take in later years. Teachers at the school say that coherence in the curriculum across grades, called "vertical articulation," is a key to their success, and would be much harder to achieve with separate middle schools and high schools.

One morning in October, Kevin Moylan's seventh-grade English class is working on "cumulative sentences," which build clause upon clause to give rich texture to a description. What the students are trying to describe is an image Moylan has projected on the classroom wall, a snapshot of himself

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"Smiling, the ugly guy stood by the side of the road," comes the offering from one boy, playing the part of a seventh-grader to type.

Moylan isn't offended, but he isn't impressed, either, and he pushes for more color and specificity. "If you're going to insult me, you better insult me with style," he says, as the class breaks into laughter. "Don't be boring."

Moylan's 10th-grade English students work on the same writing concepts, but it all starts here, explains Restuccia, standing in the back of the class. "The 10th-graders are reading more challenging books and expected to be more accomplished writers," says Restuccia. "But he's demanding the same level of thinking skills from seventh-graders." The idea, says Restuccia, is to have students "start to think like a writer, think like a historian, think like a scientist—even as they are still shoring up their basic skills."

For Kimberly Surette, the oldest of 10 children, the expectations at University Park were clear from day one, and the rigor appears to have paid off. "It was the expectation that you were going to college, there weren't any 'ifs' about it," says Surette, 20, now a junior at Clark on full scholarship. Surette comes back to tutor at University Park, where four of her siblings are currently enrolled.

There is also little room for "ifs" and "buts" at Boston Collegiate Charter School, a 400-student school near the Dorchester–South Boston line that serves children in grades five through 12, and, like University Park, has an impressive record of achievement with a predominantly low-income urban school population. Its name telegraphs the school's relentless message that college should be in every student's future. School cofounder Brett Peiser says the school's extended grade span has been a key part of translating that message into reality.

"The reason why Boston Collegiate has had four years of everyone passing 10th-grade math and English" on the state MCAS exam "comes directly from the fact that we start with our kids in the fifth grade," he says. Over the last three years, among a student body where only about one in four has a parent who attended college, every Boston Collegiate graduate has been accepted to a four-year college.

BOSTON ACCENT

Boston's public schools seem ripe for a discussion of different grade structures, and not just because of the imminent arrival of Manny Rivera and his outside-the-box thinking on the matter. Last fall, the Boston School Department

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named a 17-member Middle Grades Task Force.

"We're looking, quite honestly, at whether the system wants to sustain a portfolio that includes middle schools," says Michael Contompasis, a veteran Boston school admin-

Parents like the idea of their children staying at a school they have come to know.

istrator who is serving as interim superintendent during the one-year interregnum between last summer's departure of Thomas Payzant and Rivera's scheduled arrival in July.

The rising popularity of K-8 schools in Boston, which reduces the number of students attending stand-alone middle schools, was a big factor behind the formation of the task force, which is due to report its recommendations in the spring. In early November, the school committee approved conversion of the Joyce Kilmer School in West Roxbury from a K-5 school (the standard configuration of Boston's

elementary schools) to K-8. When it reopens next fall, the Kilmer School will be the 20th K-8 school in the Boston system, and 17 of them have been formed since 1998.

At the Rafael Hernandez School, which in 1991 became the second Boston elementary school to convert to the K-8 structure, veteran principal Margarita Muniz echoes University Park's Donna Rodrigues and her vow that "the buck stops here."

"Our students are our students," says Muniz. Many of the 370 students at the Hernandez, a two-way bilingual school in which all students strive to become fluent in both English and Spanish, spend nine years at the school. "We're not blaming anyone for our failures and we bask in our successes. So we work very hard to make sure we have very few failures."

Few failures, indeed. The school's most recent seventh-grade English MCAS scores not only surpass Boston's district average, they exceed the statewide average, a claim that few urban schools can make.

The K-8 movement in Boston has been driven in part by parents, who like the idea of their children staying at a school they have come to know—and who are wary of the city's middle schools, many of which are notoriously troubled. According to a preliminary report from the Middle Grades

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Task Force reports, there was an average of 8.33 students seeking every open seat in a K-8 school last year but only 0.64 students seeking an open seat in a middle school.

Despite the momentum behind the K-8 structure, some Boston school leaders are starting to push for the upper-grades configuration that Rivera installed in Rochester, or variations on it. One school hoping to expand in such a manner is TechBoston Academy, one of eight pilot high schools in Boston, which are district schools that operate free of many union work rules.

TechBoston, which integrates technology and computer coursework into a college preparatory curriculum, has been one of the success stories in the city's move to break down its large district high schools into smaller learning communities. With a longer school day and highly individualized instruction for its 360 students, who occupy one floor of the three-story former Dorchester High School building, TechBoston's 10th-graders outpace the district average on the MCAS test, and last year, 94 percent of the school's first graduating class went on to college. But headmaster Mary Skipper is convinced the school could do even better if students entered TechBoston earlier.

"We very much want to become a 6-12 school," says Skipper, who has raised the idea with school department officials. She says TechBoston's teachers are the strongest advocates for expanding the schools' grade span, because they find themselves struggling to get ninth-graders up to par. "They see what we could do if we had the kids earlier," she says. There is also support for such a move from parents, who are eager to have younger siblings of TechBoston students immersed sooner in its culture of high standards and benefiting from its longer school day.

Linda Nathan, headmaster of Boston Arts Academy, another pilot high school, is working on a proposal for an arts academy for middle school grades. She says students would get more out of Boston Arts Academy's interdisciplinary approach to learning—incorporating a sophisticated understanding of anatomy and physiology into its dance program, for example—if their middle-school studies were geared to preparing them for it. "We're teaching engineering in the ninth grade, and they need a different kind of exposure to math earlier on," she says.

One approach would be a variant on the 6-12 or 7-12 grade model: establishing a separate arts-centered middle school, from which many, but not necessarily all, students would move on to the arts high school, admission to which is based on audition or portfolio.

This type of "feeder school" model is already in place between a Dorchester elementary school and middle school. Since 2005, all fifth-graders at the Patrick O'Hearn Elementary School have been guaranteed a seat for sixth grade, if they want it, at the Harbor School, a pilot middle school, rather than having to vie for a middle-school slot in the city's

lottery-based choice system. Of last school year's 35 O'Hearn fifth-graders, 20 moved into sixth grade seats this year at the Harbor School, which is itself exploring the possibility of becoming a 6-12 school.

Henderson, the O'Hearn's veteran principal, says such reforms are overdue in a system where students leaving elementary school have long been cast out into what he calls a middle school "diaspora." Boston has suffered, he says, because of a lack of "community and continuity" in its schools.

Although O'Hearn students move on to a new school, they do so as a group. What's more, two fifth-grade teachers at the O'Hearn have been given four hours a week to meet with Harbor School teachers and help them understand individual learning issues of their new students. "If our kids were going to nine different schools, realistically, we can't help nine different schools with transitions, in depth," says Henderson.

For Alice McCabe, the feeder school relationship between the O'Hearn and Harbor schools presents the kind of dilemma many Boston parents would love to have. Although McCabe has been working part-time as a paid coordinator of the new O'Hearn-Harbor School link, it is not certain that her 9-year-old son, Tyler, now in fourth grade at the O'Hearn, will make the move to Harbor. She and her husband, Chris

Austin, could also opt to send him next year to the 5-12 grade Boston Collegiate Charter School, where his older brother, DeVonté, now in sixth grade, has been thriving.

"I had no sense that there was a middle school in Boston that I wanted to send him to," McCabe says of DeVonté, 11. For Tyler, she says, "I feel I have two pretty good choices."

SMOOTH TRANSITIONS

What the K-8, 7-12, and feeder-school models all have in common is they are alternatives to the hop, skip, and jump from elementary school to middle school to high school. Each additional leap in this game of hopscotch is fraught with educational peril, experts say.

John Alspaugh, an emeritus professor of education at the University of Missouri, has studied the effect of school transitions. "No matter what grade level it occurs at, there is always a sharp drop in achievement in the first year of a new school," he says. Alspaugh also analyzed Missouri school districts that have just a single school transition during the K-12 span, but which make that break at different points. Those districts in which the transition occurs at seventh grade had lower dropout rates than those where the switch was made at ninth or 10th grade, he found. Alspaugh the-



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orizes that this transition comes at an early point, when “you’re too young to drop out, so you settle in and you establish yourself in this new social structure.”

Neil Sullivan, executive director of the Boston Private Industry Council, a business-backed agency that coordinates workforce training programs and has been influential in efforts to reshape Boston high schools, supports the idea of reducing the number of school transitions each student must endure, especially in Boston’s case. Because the district’s elementary schools end with fifth grade, students who attend one of the city’s three examination high schools, which start in seventh grade, often attend three different schools in three years. “From the perspective of a young person’s development, a lens we don’t use often enough, it’s absurd,” says Sullivan.

But in terms of when transitions should best take place, “there isn’t a clear victor” in the limited research on K-8 schools and 7-12 grade structures, says Paul Reville, president of the Cambridge-based Rennie Center for Education Research & Policy. The only emerging consensus, he says, is that “middle school is a weak point.”

For their part, however, leaders at Worcester’s University Park Campus School wonder whether the K-8 model, which

has gained support in Boston largely because parents lack confidence in the city’s middle schools, provides the same path to high achievement as expanded secondary schools.

“We think what happens in K-8 schools is, rather than taking the rigor and expectations of high schools and bringing them down, you end up stretching elementary level ex-

The hop, skip, and jump from elementary to middle to high school is full of peril.

pectations up,” says Restuccia, of the University Park training institute. “Certainly you could have a 6-12 school that was as dysfunctional as any other urban school. But I think this structure, when done right, has a unique ability to prepare kids for college.”

That view appears to be gaining support. In addition to Rochester’s restructuring and the College Board’s 18 new extended grade-span high schools, the City University of



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New York is helping the New York City schools open 10 “early college” secondary schools, which will combine middle and high school grades and also allow students to gain up to two years’ worth of college credit at CUNY campuses while still in high school.

What course Boston will take under Rivera’s leadership is unclear. Advocates of the 7-12 model will be “welcoming him with open arms,” says Dan French, executive director of the Center for Collaborative Education, a Boston-based nonprofit organization that works closely with the city’s pilot schools.

“If there are schools interested in moving in that direction, that is clearly something I would want to support,” Rivera says of 6-12 or 7-12 grade schools in Boston. But he gives no indication of imposing the model more broadly here. “You want major change to be owned by the people who have responsibility for the students,” says Rivera. At the same time, school leaders in Rochester say Rivera also has a gift for getting others to sign on to his plans.

Elizabeth Reilinger, president of the Boston School Committee, thinks there is room for a mix of schools with different grade structures. “I’m very resistant to go to one model completely, because it’s like anything else in the world,” says Reilinger. “We see one model and say the data tells us to go in this direction, unequivocally. Then 10 years later, we see more data and say, ‘Go the other way.’” The driving principle, she says, should be “building on our strengths”—with better performing elementary schools expanding to become K-8 schools, and high schools that are gaining traction adding in middle school grades.

Contompasis, the interim superintendent, says the practical issues of finding facilities for expanded grade-span schools are daunting enough in a district with 58,000 students. For example, the Timilty School, a Roxbury middle school, has expressed interest in adding a 9-12 grade component. “Where the hell do we put them?” says Contompasis. “The good news is people are thinking, and they’re thinking about different configurations and approaches.”

Peiser, cofounder of the Boston Collegiate Charter School, says that an expanded grade structure is just one of many ingredients that set high-achieving urban schools apart. Boston Collegiate, he noted, also has longer school days and a longer school year than Boston’s district public schools.

“Effective schools are based on a hundred 1-percent solutions, not one 100-percent solution,” he says.

But none of that argues against rethinking school grade structures as part of the answer. Marilyn Patterson-Grant, the chief of academics and small school development for the Rochester schools, is the point person responsible for putting the city’s move to smaller 7-12 grade schools in place. If there is one thing she has learned over the course of 31 years in public schools, she says, it’s that “if you continue to do the same thing, you’ll get the same result.” **CW**



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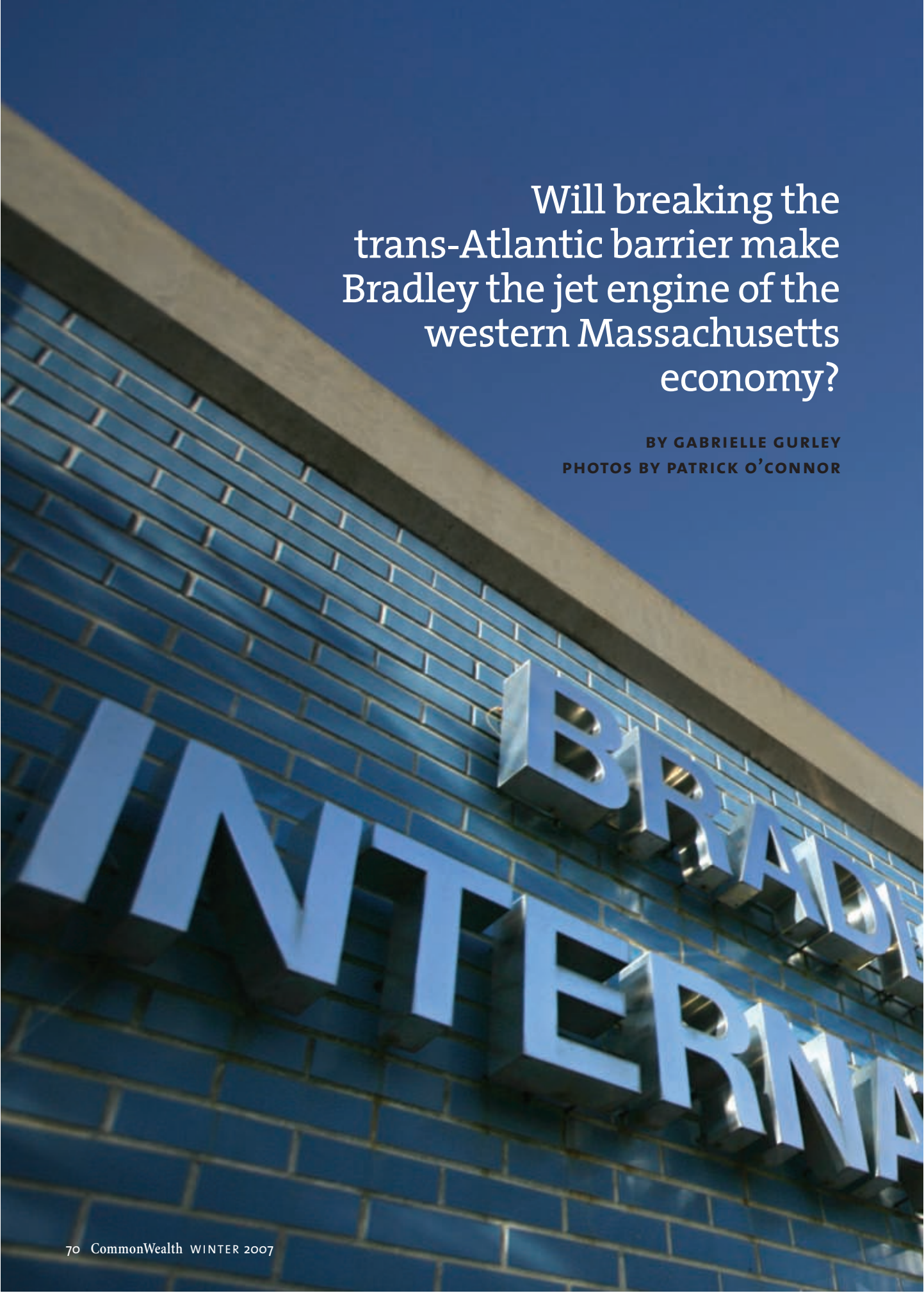
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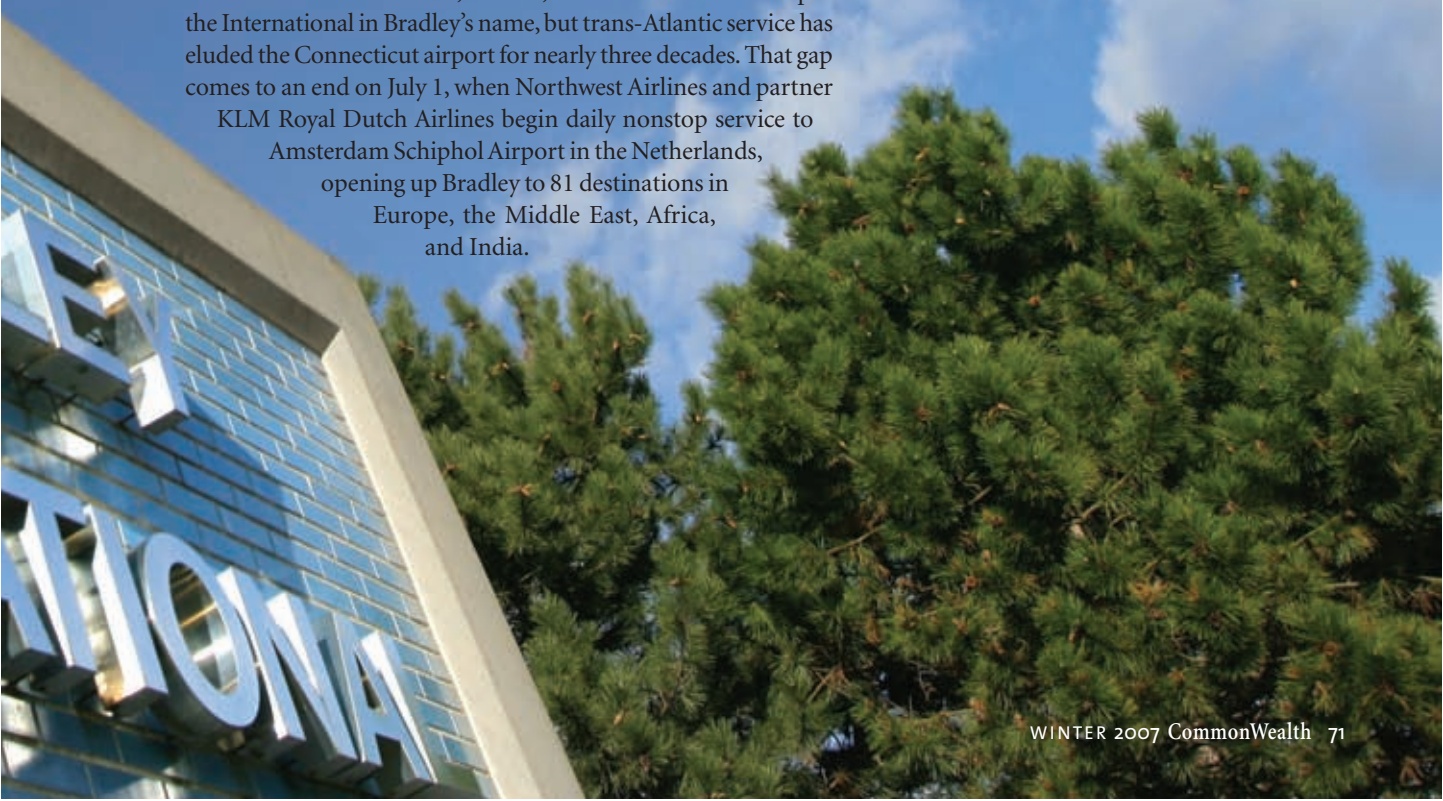
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TAKING OFF

ANDREAS GOTTSMANN RACKS up quite a few frequent-flyer miles, traveling to Germany on business, but getting to the gate is a hassle. With no flights to Europe from Hartford's Bradley International Airport, the president and CEO of Süddekör, a German-owned company with offices in Agawam, treks to Logan International Airport six to eight times a year for travel to his firm's design center in Düsseldorf. However, some of his European associates beg off stateside business trips, balking at flying to Boston or New York and then driving to western Massachusetts.

Destinations in Canada, Mexico, and the Caribbean have put the International in Bradley's name, but trans-Atlantic service has eluded the Connecticut airport for nearly three decades. That gap comes to an end on July 1, when Northwest Airlines and partner

KLM Royal Dutch Airlines begin daily nonstop service to Amsterdam Schiphol Airport in the Netherlands, opening up Bradley to 81 destinations in Europe, the Middle East, Africa, and India.



“Obviously, we hope to attract people to Amsterdam *per se*, but it is more about, ‘You don’t have to torture yourself by driving to Boston or New York,’” says Phil Haan, the Northwest executive vice president who oversees the airline’s partnership with KLM. Gottzmann puts it this way: “It will help a lot of us here [to be able] to say, ‘OK, let’s go!’”

This trans-Atlantic connection is coming not a moment too soon, both for the Hartford area of Connecticut and for economically struggling western Massachusetts. Bradley is ideally situated to serve—and stimulate—the “knowledge corridor” that runs along I-91, stretching from the Vermont/New Hampshire border to the Five Colleges area around

largest airport, after Logan, Bradley is already a resource valued by people on both sides of the Connecticut border, contributing \$2.5 billion to the regional economy. It’s also one that many are banking on to make this one of the top 25 economic centers in the US.

“Bradley is one of the very, very few major keys to the region,” says Mike Graney, senior vice president for business development of the Western Massachusetts Economic Development Council (WMEDC). “Connectivity in a lot of ways is critical.”

It seems to be a good time for building an economy around a second-tier airport. Logan and other major airports are crowded, traffic-clogged, and bogged down with post-9/11 security, so mid-size airports are becoming popular with travelers. Lines at car-rental counters and security checkpoints are short, and parking is cheap and abundant.

All that’s true for Bradley, which placed sixth among airports serving fewer than 10 million passengers per year in the J.D. Power and Associates 2006 North America Airport Satisfaction Study. The attraction is access: a half hour or less from the Springfield area. Jeanne Young, vice president for global travel at the Springfield-based MassMutual Financial Group, says Bradley has zero traffic bottlenecks.

Even pilots appreciate Bradley. American Airlines captain Jeffrey Dill says the air-traffic controllers there are confident, forgiving, and alert; the arrival and departure times are straightforward, at least compared with the generally crowded Northeast Corridor; and the physical layout is spacious and uncomplicated. He thinks Bradley could easily handle more traffic and asks, “Has the time come to take market share away from New York and Boston?”

The answer to Dill’s rhetorical question is still unclear. Bradley has reached out to major corporate customers such as MassMutual (the Bay State’s largest company, with 6,000 employees in the cross-border region), but the airport has come late to an understanding of its own competitive advantages. “They could and should and now *are* managing it more strategically,” says Young.

Many observers blame the airport’s late arrival to this realization on its governance structure. Bradley is owned and operated by the Connecticut Department of Transportation, known as ConnDOT, and is one of just two state-run airports in the country. (The other is Maryland’s Baltimore/Washington International Thurgood Marshall Airport.) Some say the airport is run more like a government bureaucracy than an entrepreneurial enterprise, resulting in fewer route options, outdated infrastructure, and a lack of shopping-mall services found at many US and overseas airports run by quasi-public entities or private management firms.

“The general feeling is that it’s sort of been a DC3 in an era of 757s,” says Tom Condon, editor of the *Hartford Courant*’s weekly “Place” section.

No matter what model of aircraft it resembles, Bradley is also a symbol of the potential, thus far unrealized, of interstate cooperation in a region artificially divided by a line



Getting from Agawam to Düsseldorf via Logan Airport is a hassle for Andreas Gottzmann.

Amherst and Northampton, the cities of Springfield and Holyoke, and, finally, Hartford and its suburbs. Much of the corridor is included in Bradley’s catchment area, defined as cities and towns within an hour’s drive of the airport. Bradley is located in Windsor Locks, Conn., 13 miles north of Hartford.

Airports with true international connections are conveyor belts for the global economy. As New England’s second

on the map. With areas of western Massachusetts like the Pioneer Valley “seeking to break out of ongoing stagnation,” as Robert Nakosteen, executive editor of *MassBenchmarks* (a quarterly journal of the Massachusetts economy), recently put it, what happens in Greater Hartford, down the road, is likely to mean more than what happens in Greater Boston, across the state. And the best thing that could happen in Greater Hartford would be for Bradley to blaze a trail

Bradley could jump-start the economy of a region artificially divided by a line on the map.

of commerce from the Pioneer Valley to Europe. But whether it will succeed in doing so is entirely in the hands of Connecticut officials.

Could Massachusetts get a representative on the airport’s governing board? Or could Bradley be put in the hands of an independent authority shared by the two states? Perhaps. But in Massachusetts, at least, neither option seems to be on the radar screen.

DUTCH TREAT

The lack of trans-Atlantic flights from Bradley hasn’t brought commerce to a screeching halt. The facility served 7.38 million passengers in 2005, setting an all-time record and surpassing its previous high of 7.34 million in 2000, before the 9/11 terrorist attacks decimated the industry. According to *The New England Regional Airport System Plan*, released by the New England Airport Coalition last fall, volume at Bradley will continue to rise, reaching 10 million passengers by 2020.

But that upward trend is not certain, in part because airlines have begun cutting back on flights from small and medium-sized airports during low demand periods. Some carriers are sending larger planes to service international flights in other markets, replacing them with smaller aircraft, thereby reducing the number of available seats. At Bradley, this trend caused a nearly 18 percent drop in seats, from 176,160 in June 2005 to 145,100 one year later. Overall, passenger traffic at Bradley dropped 4.9 percent in the first nine months of 2006, compared with the same period in 2005. Unless airport officials can convince airlines to stand pat at Bradley, fewer seats could send passengers scurrying for other options—at other airports.

Becoming a truly international airport could help Bradley compensate for fewer seats on domestic flights. It could

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also help close some business deals in the region. Some companies considering a move “specify that they must be within so much time of an international airport. That would keep us out of the running,” says Ellen Bembem, president of the Regional Technology Corp. in Springfield, an entity that encourages the growth and development of technology-based industries.

However, the existing businesses in the area don’t log much overseas travel. Of MassMutual’s 1,000 frequent-flying employees, for example, 95 percent travel only domestically, says Young. That leaves some observers doubtful that Bradley can sustain a route to Europe. On *USA Today*’s “Today in the Sky” blog, a poster named Brett asserts, “Even with KLM connections/Europe feeder traffic at [Schiphol], I don’t see how [Bradley] is going to be a huge destination for Europeans or how [Bradley] will have enough local traffic to fill 160 daily seats.” Flightmapping.com, a Web site targeting British travelers, is also dubious: “How many passengers are there who want to fly point-to-point between Hartford...and Amsterdam?...Are business links between these two cities really strong enough

to support daily flights between them?”

London is actually the top international destination for the business community in western Massachusetts, according to Allan Blair, president and CEO of the WMEDC. But flying into London’s Heathrow Airport is out of the question. That route is governed by the Bermuda II Treaty between the US and the United Kingdom, and until a new

Are the links between Hartford and Amsterdam really strong enough to support daily flights?

agreement is negotiated, American Airlines and United Airlines are the only US carriers permitted to fly into the world’s busiest international airport—although Bradley is pursuing other options into the UK “pretty aggressively,” says Connecticut Aviation Administrator Stephen Korta.

WORCESTER’S AIRPORT TO NOWHERE

Worcester Regional Airport is one terminal where you don’t have to worry about getting told to move along by state troopers: There aren’t any in sight. Two Hertz rental car agents are available in the terminal, with no lines, no waiting. Nearby café tables are empty. The only sound is an electromechanical hum. In all, the scene, or lack of one, is worthy of *Waiting for Godot*.

Last August, low-cost carrier Allegiant Air cancelled its Worcester–Orlando route after less than a year, bringing scheduled commercial service at the airport to a halt—again. The city and the airline tussled over the withdrawal in the pages of the *Telegram & Gazette*, with Timothy Murray—then Worcester mayor, now lieutenant governor—calling Allegiant Air president and CEO Maurice Gallagher Jr. “an example of the charlatans that exist in the corporate world.” Gallagher fired back, “The market has spoken.”

Allegiant spokesperson Tyri Squyres cites rising fuel costs and weak market response as reasons for the airline’s pullout, but she also says that Allegiant was neither able nor willing to engage in fare wars with

Logan-based competitors aimed at preserving market share rather than making a profit. Worcester officials insist the airport can fill seats, citing the four weekly flights’ passenger loads of 80 to 90 percent of capacity. (Allegiant disputes the city’s figures.) Assistant city manager Julie Jacobson argues that Worcester needs an airline going to the right destinations, at convenient times, at a competitive price. But local businessman and flyORH blogger Bill Randell says Allegiant’s withdrawal sends a different message: “You can’t make money in Worcester.”

The airport has gone through 13 airlines in almost 20 years, each one trying out Worcester-based routes, then abandoning them. Prior to Allegiant, there was US Airways Express, which pulled out in 2003. With the airlines gone, all that’s left are private planes and charters. Only 1,729 passengers used the facility in 2005.

A catchment area of 2.2 million passengers should generate more than 284,000 travelers by 2020, according to *The New England Regional Airport System Plan* forecasts. But in trying to tap this market of

travelers, Worcester has barriers to overcome. First, the airport is surrounded by competitors. Airlines are less likely to gamble on Worcester-based flights to popular destinations like Baltimore/Washington, DC, Chicago, or Florida if they suspect people will opt for Logan, where 57 percent of area passengers go now, or Rhode Island’s T.F. Green, used by 18 percent—especially if cheaper fares are to be had. With the most populous areas of the state served by these airports, Worcester is left with a primary market, apart from the city itself, of relatively sparsely populated territory: Infrastructure Management Group’s June 2006 *Worcester Airport Master Plan Update* identifies the airport’s natural core market as west of I-495, south and west of Fitchburg, east of Brookfield and Sturbridge, and communities along the Massachusetts Turnpike.

Second, the airport lacks direct access from I-290, the main Worcester highway artery. That’s a problem because cargo carriers generally prefer airfields served by highway routes. (The regional airport report forecasts zero annual cargo growth for

In the meantime, Bradley plans to spend up to \$350,000 specifically promoting Northwest's new route, and is waiving up to \$235,000 in fees and other charges to the airline. For Northwest, the Hartford–Amsterdam route resembles the airline's Portland, Ore.–Tokyo service, launched in 2004, that has appealed to a ready-made market of small Pacific Northwest firms with Japanese ties. Haan considers that service a success, and a model for European service out of Bradley. "We can always run a sale and let y'all go to Paris for a couple of hundred bucks, but that's not a long-term sustaining business for us," says Haan. Translation: What the airline wants are suits in seats.

Gottzmann, for one, is happy to oblige. The Süddekor president once worked for the German airline Lufthansa, and he says he's happy to take a "hopper" from Amsterdam over to Düsseldorf, a 30-to-45-minute flight. Northwest spokesman Kurt



MassMutual's Jeanne Young says the lack of traffic bottlenecks is a major advantage for Bradley.

Worcester through 2025.) And some travelers have a tough time even finding their way to the airport along Worcester's residential streets. Coming off I-290 West at Exit 18, for example, there is no readily visible signage to direct drivers to the left or right.

"The problem is, even if you talk to people in Shrewsbury, they have no idea of how to get to that airport," says Roberta Schaefer, executive director of the Worcester Regional Research Bureau. "Their attitude is, 'It'll take me less time to get to Logan or to Providence.'"

Thomas Kinton Jr., executive director and CEO of the Massachusetts Port Authority, which runs the airport for the city, doesn't buy that. "Why did Allegiant have 85 percent of load factors if people couldn't find it?" he asks. Yet the regional airport system study found that roadway access and infrastructure improvements, including signage, would benefit the airport and the region. Traffic signal upgrades and road widening are on tap, but a dedicated access road from I-290 is a dead letter due to community opposition.

Some, including Schaefer, wonder whether Worcester should even be in the airport business. Massport began operating the city-owned airport in 2000. The current three-year operating agreement, which expires June 30, stipulates that in fiscal 2007, the authority will pay 68 percent of the airport's \$2.17 million operating deficit. The remainder, as well as all capital costs, are on the city's tab. Converting the location to another use—a wind farm was suggested in 2004—isn't likely, thanks to the formidable legal and financial hurdles involved in deactivating an airport.

Another possibility is selling the facility to Massport outright. Airports are complex businesses, argues Schaefer, who supports the idea. "It's not clear to me that [running an airport] should be the responsibility of a municipal government," she says. Pointing to Massport's successes at Logan and Bedford's Hanscom Field, blogger Randell agrees that a sale or a long-term lease is the best bet to get the authority motivated to improve the airport.

"If you were renting an apartment, you're not prone to spend \$10,000 rehab-

bing the kitchen," he says.

Would Massport take it on? "That I don't think is something that is on the top of the list for either side, but I don't rule it out," says Kinton.

If Worcester Regional is to drive economic development, it needs a niche, as do other regional airports in Massachusetts, says Allan Blair of the Western Massachusetts Economic Development Council, who would like to see a statewide airport development strategy similar to those pursued by the biotechnology or life sciences sectors. Absent such a strategy, a replication of Hanscom may be the most promising prospect. In November, the city and Massport issued a request for proposals for the development and operation of a "first class" corporate/general aviation facility.

But Kinton hasn't given up on commercial service yet, either. "Worcester will have its day," he says. "It will have a role to play, once the airlines go back into those markets as they saturate the major markets, and they get their financial houses in order."

—GABRIELLE GURLEY



MetroHartford Alliance's Sandra Johnson says the cost of doing business in western New England is a bargain compared with Europe.

Ebenhoch declined to provide advance bookings figures, but he claims they are meeting expectations. "We are getting a positive response from the business community," he says.

COME TO LOW-COST NEW ENGLAND

Area business leaders see the new air service as key to building a European connection, which they say is, surprisingly enough, a natural. Lyle Wray, who heads the Hartford-based Capital Region Council of Governments, says western New England is an attractive place for German and Dutch companies to do business.

"When you look at businesses expanding, they feel pretty comfortable when they have a straight shot home," Wray says. "[They] see us as a low-cost, cheap place to do business compared to home, which is not how Americans see us."

When American firms look to cut costs, they head to the South or to offshore locations like China or India. With the exodus of domestic firms, the Massachusetts Office of International Trade and Investment made a strategic decision in 2003 to seek foreign direct investment. And it seems to be paying off. Last year, Massachusetts ranked 11th in the country for the total number of insourced jobs, with at least 191,000 workers in foreign firms, or more than 6.5 percent of the private sector workforce.

And when Europeans look at western New England, they see a bargain in the cost of doing business and the cost of living compared with the Continent. "There is no sticker shock for a European company in New England," says Sandra Johnson, vice president and business development officer for the MetroHartford Alliance, which is planning to host a group from the German Consulate in New York during the

first quarter of this year.

The Dutch and the Germans were the third and fourth largest foreign investors in the United States in 2004 after the British and the Japanese. According to a German agency headquartered in the US (the Representative of German Industry and Trade), Massachusetts ranked 13th in employment by US affiliates of German-owned firms in 2003, providing 16,300 total jobs with 2,800 in manufacturing. Connecticut ranked 18th with 15,300 total jobs and 7,500 manufacturing positions.

If cost is not a paramount issue, explains Marius Carstensen, president of the German-American Business Council of Boston, having a large pool of qualified people to choose from is an important factor in location, along with more

Having a large pool of qualified workers may also make the area attractive to foreign firms.

flexible working conditions, contacts with other established German firms, proximity to American customers, and ease of contact with the home office in terms of time zones and travel. That package makes this area attractive for German firms, says Carstensen. There are 17 German firms in the Hartford metropolitan area, and of a sampling of 24 international firms in western Massachusetts, 10 are German.

Then there are the intangibles that, for some European businesspeople, make Massachusetts seem like home. "There are things that you have here that are more in common with

Europe than with other parts of the US," says Gottzmann.

Süddekor, which designs and prints decorative papers for flooring, countertops, and furniture, set up shop in western Massachusetts in the late 1990s. Today it employs 105 people between its Agawam offices and printing plant and its East Longmeadow paper treating facility. German companies, Gottzmann says, are accustomed to recruiting university graduates and training them in-house according to industry standards. He finds that the region's college and university graduates fill his engineering, chemistry, and information-technology needs.

HANDS ACROSS THE BORDER

If making Bradley pay off for them means working more closely with Hartford than with Boston, that would probably suit most people in western Massachusetts just fine. Shortly before the November election, the Western New England College Polling Institute asked area residents whether they got their fair share of representation in state political decision-making, and 68 percent said no.

The region's business and economic-development leaders certainly see a more natural affinity between north central Connecticut and western Massachusetts than between I-91 and Route 128, an affinity that could make for a regional identity across state lines.

"When you are in a state like Massachusetts, with an internationally known city like Boston, and you aren't within Boston's sphere, developing your own sense of self around those issues of attractiveness and ambiance is very important," says WMEDC's Blair. "Bradley presents that opportunity for us in a way that few other things can."

Wray calls the Springfield-Hartford connection "a real relationship" based, in part, on transportation links. And there are moves afoot to make more of them. Business and political leaders are hard at work on a proposed New Haven-Hartford-Springfield commuter rail line, which would have a shuttle bus to Bradley. Connecticut is already in the preliminary design and engineering phase and is prepared to invest \$300 million initially in construction. Start-up costs for Massachusetts would be an estimated \$30 million, with about \$1 million in annual operating expenditures; the state's Executive Office of Transportation is now reviewing the results of a feasibility study done by its neighbor's counterpart, ConnDOT.

"There's probably never been a more open or willing time to look at transportation, including Bradley, in a more regional way," says Connecticut aviation administrator Korta.

Some say the Hartford-Springfield ties should be drawn tighter by means of a cross-state airport and development authority, sort of a "Mass/ConnPort." During the Connecticut gubernatorial campaign last fall, the unsuccessful Democratic nominee, John DeStefano, called for just such

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Robert J. Haynes, *President*

an entity, funded by the two states, to expand and market the airport, negotiate with airlines, and lobby for commuter rail and other transportation improvements. (No such idea was broached in the Massachusetts governor's race, however.) Regional business leaders are all for the idea.

A separate, but related, notion is to put Bradley under the control of an independent management authority. Today Bradley is a self-sustaining entity operating under the Bradley Enterprise Fund. The facility doesn't receive a dime of Connecticut tax dollars, but instead makes do—very well, according to Korta—on airline and non-airline revenue from landing fees, parking concessions, and levies on private charters, restaurants, hotels, taxis, and limousine services.

But locally Bradley has long been considered an underperformer, with numerous studies over the last decade faulting its lackluster business development strategies and its failure to capitalize on the congestion at Boston and New York-area airports. An October 2006 *Hartford Courant* editorial, besides urging local economic development groups and state agencies to beef up marketing the airport to businesses, noted that there are thousands of acres of land near the airport that are ripe for development

and would be more valuable with a busier Bradley.

The call for independent management of the Connecticut airport is a familiar refrain, but so far the idea has gone nowhere. A 2001 bill to create a strong independent board of directors ran into opposition in ConnDOT and Connecticut's General Assembly. According to the *Courant's*

Studies have faulted Bradley for not taking advantage of congestion in Boston and New York.

Condon, when the measure finally passed, it was with a board of directors so weakened that he calls it "a misuse of the term."

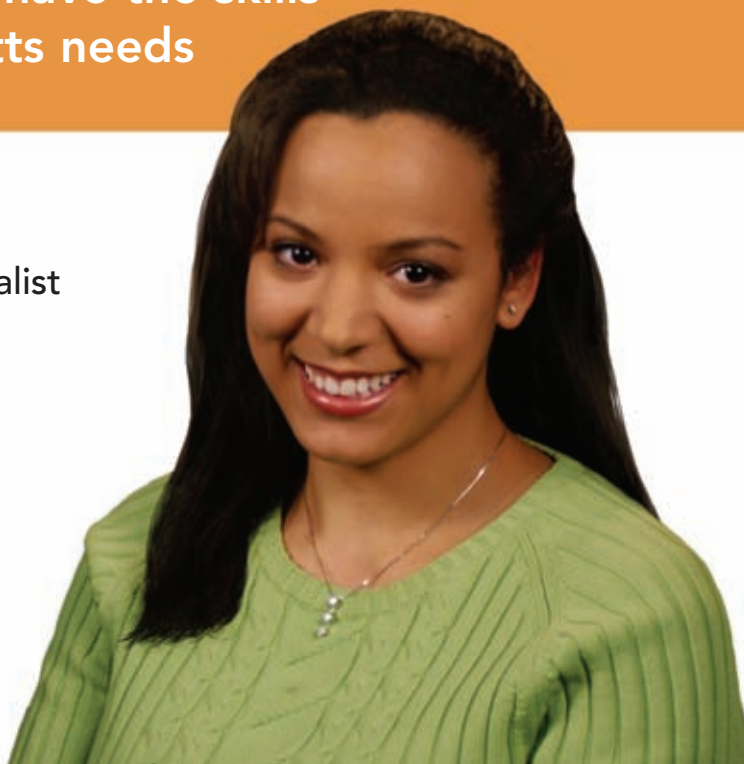
L. Scott Frantz, chairman of the Bradley Airport board of directors, says the board gets along with ConnDOT "quite well" but admits that it doesn't have the teeth to make the will of the board a reality. State ownership does have benefits, he says, including "great talent" that takes care of everything

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from air operations to finance. But he acknowledges that decisions can get swallowed up by the ConnDOT bureaucracy, making it complicated to take initiative—to get someone “to pull the trigger,” he says.

However, Frantz rejects the suggestion that, under his board’s watch, Bradley has failed to market its brand. After 9/11, the board went into “survival mode” to keep the airport afloat, without cutting back on services or planned upgrades, he says. Over the next few years, the airport managed to keep a new terminal and concourse on track (it opened in 2003). By 2011, officials hope to move ahead with the demolition and first phase of construction to replace the Murphy Terminal, the oldest continuously operating terminal building in the country. Frantz also credits Kiran Jain, the airport’s marketing and route development director, whom he calls a “star in the industry,” with securing for Bradley a “valuable set of flights”—to such destinations as Los Angeles, Salt Lake City, and now Amsterdam.

Frantz says a seat on the board for someone representing western Massachusetts is not an unreasonable idea at all. But that, let alone a bistate authority, would require an act of the Connecticut Legislature. Connecticut state Rep. Tony Guerera, the House chairman of the Transportation Committee, doesn’t dismiss the idea out of hand, but neither does he endorse it. “One thing I’ve learned up at the Capitol—anything is possible,” he says. “It’s something that we’d almost have to have a roundtable [about,] in regards to the benefits for everyone, before we would invest in something like that.” (His Massachusetts counterpart, Rep. Joseph Wagner, a Chicopee Democrat and House chairman of the Joint Committee on Transportation, did not respond to repeated requests for comment.)

Yet Oz Griebel, MetroHartford Alliance president and CEO and former Bradley board member, says he doesn’t see a bistate authority gaining traction. “I don’t see who is the champion right now, [other] than a few of us on the business side.” From his vantage point, Griebel says, “When I was on the board, I, for one, was very supportive of having a designation for a Massachusetts representative [on the board]. That was not where the Legislature wanted to go.”

Ultimately, whether Bradley can become an economic driver for western Massachusetts may depend on whether Connecticut and Massachusetts work together to make the facility the priority it would need to be.

“I think an overture needs to be made by the governor of Massachusetts to the governor of Connecticut to say, ‘Look, we share a common interest here. How can we work out something?’” says Blair, of WMEDC. “Inducing the political leadership in Massachusetts to understand that in western Mass., in western New England, Bradley is an engine just as Logan is in the east, and, therefore, we need to be aggressive and more assertive in helping to grow it, that’s a tough educational hill to climb.” **CW**

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Massachusetts Maritime Academy’s turbine (top) is estimated to produce about a third of the academy’s annual power needs and save some \$300,000 each year.

Brockton Brightfield, a 425-kilowatt photovoltaic solar energy system (middle) received more than \$1 million from the Trust. (Photo credit: SCHOTT Solar Inc.)

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Risky business

Political scientist Jacob Hacker says that individuals and families are bearing more economic risk than ever. Are employers and government leaving us too much on our own?

FEW BOOKS HAVE generated as much anticipation here in the *CommonWealth* office as Jacob Hacker's *The Great Risk Shift*. In terms of addressing themes we keep coming back to in this magazine, the only equivalent that comes to mind is Robert Putnam's *Bowling Alone* (see "Picking up the Spare," *CW*, Summer '00), the book-length expansion of his famous journal article, written five years earlier, alleging a broad decline in civic participation.

As with *Bowling Alone*, the suspense built in part because *The Great Risk Shift* seemed a long time coming. Hacker, a professor of political science at Yale and fellow at the New America Foundation, began making the book's central argument in print two years before the book came out. In an August 2004 article in *The New Republic*, he explained the jitters reported in public opinion polls—despite steady, if not spectacular, growth in the economy—as a function of increasing financial insecurity, which was undermining the confidence that ought to accompany improving economic prospects. To him, the anxiety came not from the oft-cited "middle class squeeze" of lagging incomes and rising living costs, but from a more fundamental increase in economic risk facing individuals and families over the course of their lives.

"The income squeeze that families face is not exactly the same as insecurity," wrote Hacker. "Insecurity is something larger—the risk of large drops in living standards caused

by loss of income or catastrophic expense. And, my research suggests, insecurity is something that more and more Americans, even the relatively well off, are confronting."

It was at about that time that *CommonWealth* (along with our parent organization, MassINC) began to explore economic uncertainty, in the form of the changing nature of work and benefits, as a creeping threat to middle-class hopes and dreams. In these pages, associate editor Michael Jonas reported on the outsourcing of jobs overseas ("Offshore Leave," *CW*, Summer '04) and on the rise of temporary and freelance workers as companies began shedding permanent jobs with full benefits ("Lone Rangers," Summer '05).

In research, MassINC documented the replacement of traditional pensions with often-meager 401(k) tax-deferred savings plans, the result being a generation of Massachusetts adults heading toward retirement without adequate means to support themselves (*The Graying of Massachusetts*, 2004). Small wonder, then, that MassINC's 2005 survey of Baby Boomers (*A Generation in Transition*) found nearly two-thirds of respondents planning to work, at least part-time, after they retired from their careers.

By the time Jonas checked in with families on *CommonWealth*'s bellwether middle-class street in Billerica for our 10th anniversary issue ("Heritage Road Revisited," Spring '06), it was no surprise to find that, even among those cur-



rently comfortable, worries about the future abounded, along with resentment that their taxes gave town employees benefits that they could no longer count on themselves. “A generation ago, the divide wasn’t nearly as stark,” Hacker commented for that article.

In *The Great Risk Shift*, Hacker pinpoints the source of that divide as the shifting of economic risk from institutions—corporations and government—to individuals, or at least those employed in the private, rather than public, sector. He identifies two trends that have made for a rise in economic insecurity: increasing income instability and declining benefits from America’s uniquely mixed (public and private) system of social insurance. Together, these

factors leave American families more exposed to financial risk and less confident that, whatever their economic circumstances today, tomorrow will be as good or better.

Hacker mines the Panel Study of Income Dynamics, a national survey that has tracked the earnings of families since the 1960s, to reveal an “economic rollercoaster” that more and more Americans find themselves on. Family incomes, it turns out, rise and fall substantially over time, and the fluctuations are greater now than ever before. This, to Hacker, is more unsettling than the recent widening in income inequality, though he decries that as well.

“The gap between Bill Gates and Joe Citizen is a lot larger than it used to be,” writes Hacker, “but it’s actually

grown less quickly than the gap between Joe Citizen in a good year and Joe Citizen in a bad year.”

And in benefits, the mix of government- and employer-provided “social insurance”—health care, pensions, and the like—is eroding, as employers shift more of the cost of health insurance to their employees and replace traditional pensions with retirement savings accounts, while officials in the White House and Congress talk of Social Security privatization and Health Savings Accounts. To Hacker, this is not just a function of short-term dominance by conservative political leaders (a phenomenon threatened by last fall’s national elections, in which the Republicans lost control of both houses of Congress) but the product of a long-term ideological campaign, which he calls the Personal Responsibility Crusade, that has undermined the very notion of broadly pooling economic risk to provide financial security for individuals and families.

“The core assertion of the Personal Responsibility Crusade is that Americans are best off dealing with economic risks on their own, without the overweening interference or expense of wider systems of risk sharing,” writes Hacker.

To Hacker, these trends of uncertainty in income and self-reliance in benefits make for a one-two punch to the midsection of middle-class families, leaving him to ask, “Why, at the same time that Americans are becoming more insecure, is more and more risk and responsibility being shifted onto them?”

I spoke with Hacker by phone, at his New Haven office, about this shifting of risk and how individuals, employers, and government could provide a renewed measure of financial security in an age of economic turmoil. What follows is an edited transcript of our conversation.

—ROBERT KEOUGH

COMMONWEALTH: We’re now five years out from the official end of the last recession, but there continue to be worries nationally and here in Massachusetts about the state of the economy. We hear a lot nationally about the wage-less recovery and rising levels of inequality, and in Massachusetts sluggish job growth is the big concern. But your book is focusing on what you see as a structural change under way that is eroding the average family’s sense of economic well-being, a shift of financial risk. Whom is the risk being shifted from and to?

HACKER: You’re absolutely right that my book is trying to change the conversation from just a focus on inequality or wages to a focus on the way in which our financial lives have become less stable and secure over the last generation. The risks I’m talking about are the major economic risks

and responsibilities that we face in our lives—health care, pension plans, job security, the stability and security of our family finances. And I argue that in every one of those major facets of our economic life, risk and responsibility have shifted increasingly from government and corporations, which once managed and pooled these risks extensively, onto individual workers and their families. A generation ago, a majority of Americans had a guaranteed pension from their employer that would top off Social Security in their old age. Now most workers, especially younger workers, who receive a pension from their employer receive a 401(k)-style individual retirement account that offers no guarantee of a fixed benefit in retirement. A generation ago, most workers who had health insurance had relatively generous first-dollar coverage that paid most of the costs of their health care. Now, especially in the last decade, work-

Personal finances are now ‘less stable and secure.’

ers are paying a large chunk of those costs on their own, and some employers are even shifting to more individualized forms of health benefits, such as Health Savings Accounts, that make employees deal with routine medical expenses on their own. A generation ago, if you lost a job, you could usually get re-employed in a similar line of work with a similar level of pay and benefits. Increasingly, we’re seeing that job losses are structural rather than cyclical—they’re permanent or long-lived, and they often involve having to gain new skills and shift into different lines of work. Finally, a generation ago very few families filed for bankruptcy or lost their home, but in the last 30 years we’ve seen a dramatic increase in rates of bankruptcy among households and in rates of home mortgage foreclosure.

CW: A number of these changes are fairly visible things, like the shift from traditional pensions to 401(k)s. And the whole issue of who’s going to pay and how much for health insurance is a raging debate, and has been for some time. The things in your book that I found most surprising were the increased risks that show up in the way people earn their living, in terms of incomes, and, as you mentioned, jobs. Tell me a little bit about what you refer to as the increased “volatility” of income. What does it mean to say that incomes are becoming more volatile? And what are the implications for personal financial security?

HACKER: Well, volatility is an accepted measure of the riskiness of stocks. It basically is a measure not of how big the returns of the stock are, but of how risky or uncertain those returns are likely to be. To say that family incomes are volatile is to say that families are experiencing more up-

and-down movement of their incomes over time. The standard way we talk about our economy is in terms of static measures like inequality or average wages or median earnings. But volatility tells us whether the American family income stock, if you will, is more or less risky than it used to be. I have a number of different ways of looking at this. The most intuitive measure is the probability that a family, or an individual, will experience a large drop in income. In the early 1970s, the chance of an average working-age individual experiencing a drop in family income of 50 percent or greater in a given year was around 7 percent. By the early 2000s, the chance for an average individual experiencing a drop of 50 percent or greater had increased to around 17 percent.

CW: What is behind this greater volatility? What is it in the economy that makes people more subject to either big gains or big losses year to year?

HACKER: There are a number of big factors at work. First, our job market has changed in ways that increase the probability of large income drops. We know that our economy produces huge turbulence; 57 million jobs are created each year and 54 million jobs end each year. Of those 54 million

that end, about 20 million represent involuntary job losses, and we know that about a third of those involuntary job losses result in people having lower incomes over the next 10 years.

CW: This is a secular change over time, right? We all know that the unemployment rate rises and falls along with the business cycle. You're suggesting that a certain rate of job loss has become a constant feature of the economy, and that it isn't so much subject to cyclical or seasonal swings but is an ongoing process of job replacement.

HACKER: That's right. It used to be that when you lost a job it was relatively easy to get back in the game when the economy picked up. But increasingly we're seeing structural unemployment, where people are displaced from jobs and have to retool their skills or shift lines of work or go out on their own. The work of [Princeton economist] Henry Farber shows that job-loss rates, defined as involuntary separation from employment over a three-year period, are as high today as they were during the deep recession of the early 1980s, when the unemployment rate was 10 percent, or twice as high as it is now. We see this trend also in the increase in long-term unemployment, which is quite striking.

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The average duration of unemployment has risen in every recession for the last 50 years, and in the most recent recession we saw the most stubborn problem of long-term joblessness that we've ever seen, with more professional and educated workers likely to experience long-term joblessness. The other place where we see this trend is in the slow job growth in this economy, not just in Massachusetts but nationwide. Indeed, Katherine Bradbury of the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston has calculated that, if we had seen increases in labor force participation similar to previous [economic recoveries], in 2005 there would have been as many as 5 million more workers in our economy overall, and if those workers had been actively seeking work but not employed that would mean an unemployment rate of around 8.7 percent, rather than 5 percent, which is what it was. I'm not the first person to say this, but the unemployment rate is a pretty limited measure of the instability of our job market.

CW: As you see it, this rise in risk associated with jobs and income comes along just as elements of the uniquely American form of the social safety net are coming apart. In an earlier book (*The Divided Welfare State*), you argued that the US welfare state is as large as that of most Scandinavian and other European social democracies, but that it has the unusual feature of being divided between the public and private sectors, with employers providing some of the benefits people elsewhere get from government. At this point, you also see the very notion of social insurance, the idea of the broad sharing of economic risk by all, as under attack by a so-called Personal Responsibility Crusade led by conservative ideologues. But hasn't this crusade already shown the limits of its appeal? The talk of privatizing Social Security went nowhere, and Medicare is expanding rather than contracting—now covering, however controversially, prescription drugs. Entitlement has become a dirty word in political discourse, but aren't these forms of social insurance as sacrosanct as ever?

HACKER: I certainly think we've seen the real limits of conservative attacks on social insurance when it comes to Medicare and Social Security, the two most popular social programs in the United States. But we shouldn't miss the larger ways in which the conservative attacks on insurance have both reshaped our debate and reshaped public policies largely beneath the radar screen. A good example of this is the erosion of unemployment insurance. The mid 1970s was a peak in the coverage and generosity of unemployment insurance and it's eroded quite significantly since, with a little bit of an increase in both coverage and generosity in recent years. Only about one-third of unemployed workers receive any unemployment benefits. One of the main reasons why unemployment insurance has eroded is that there's been very little attention to it or support for it at the federal level. The broader argument I want to make is that it's the failure of

government leaders to think creatively and strenuously about how to reconfigure the social contract that really shows the strength of conservative ideology and political strategy. We have seen a dramatic erosion of employer provision of social benefits, yet we've largely seen our national government pull back or fail to step in.

CW: Certainly we have seen some erosion on the employer side of the social insurance equation. But I wonder if that hasn't been as much a matter of economic necessity as an off-loading of risk by greedy corporations. What's happened to traditional pensions is one of your key examples. They

Kodak. We in Massachusetts had our own photographic example in Polaroid, a generous, paternalistic employer that ultimately went belly up. Many retirees ended up paying the price for that. Isn't it simply the case that, in today's economy, we can't really count on corporate America to take care of us in our old age?

HACKER: It is the case that we can no longer count on corporate America to be as committed to the provision of broad-based benefits as it once was. And I do think that this is largely a response to changes in our economy. But I don't think this is to say that there aren't ways in which we could

We can't 'count on corporate America' for old-age benefits.

seem to be disappearing in part because they're proving untenable. They were predicated on the 1950s notion that the American economy would continue to be dominated by large, stable corporations that would be able to support workers in their old age. But these corporations have come under competitive pressure from global competition and technological change. One of your examples is Eastman

respond to these shifts that would provide people with a stronger foundation of security in a more globalized and competitive economic environment. We are a much richer society than we used to be. Our corporations, while experiencing much more turbulence than they used to, are envied throughout the world for their products and innovation. I don't think it's realistic to expect that employers are going to reconstruct the mini-welfare states of old, but given how much we spend as a nation on social benefits, especially health care, and given how strong an economy we have over-

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all, I think it's completely realistic to expect that we could create a new social bargain that included employers, individuals, and government and that ensured that the overall prosperity of our economy and dynamism of our economy produced real gains and security for middle-class Americans.

CW: You treat the conversion from traditional pensions to 401(k)s as a sign of the shift in providing for retirement from a company-sponsored plan that took care of you for as long as you lived, to a savings plan that depends largely on the employee providing for their own retirement savings. But you also see 401(k)s, with some changes, as possibly being part of the solution.

HACKER: Absolutely right. What is wrong with 401(k)s is not that they provide greater autonomy to individuals to plan for their own retirement, because I think that we're going to have to move away from an exclusive reliance on employers as the means of obtaining valued benefits. What is wrong with 401(k)s is that they don't give people the incentives or the tools to confidently plan for their retirement and ensure that they have a guaranteed income in retirement. I argue that we should move to a system in which Americans can invest in a 401(k)-style account regardless of whether their employers see it as in their interest to offer one, and also a system in which 401(k)s are completely portable from job to job, so that no worker is given a lump-sum payment when they leave a job. A majority of those payments are not rolled over into new retirement savings accounts; the majority of money is, but the majority of accounts aren't. And I argue that we need to reorganize the tax breaks for 401(k)s to increase the incentives for middle-income and lower-income Americans to save for retirement. Perhaps the most innovative and potentially controversial change I propose is a measure to ensure that every American can turn their 401(k) account into a guaranteed income in retirement, a so-called annuity, and the way I do that is by essentially allowing government to provide low-cost annuities—and indeed requiring that individuals turn their 401(k)s into annuities if they don't have sufficient assets [to guard against investment risk in retirement]. A shocking number of older Americans are deeply in debt; bankruptcy rates are actually rising among the aged faster than among any other group. One of the reasons is that, as more and more of this responsibility is shifted onto workers, more and more workers are finding themselves managing their retirement accounts well into retirement, often depleting those accounts very early in retirement. What an annuity or any other kind of guaranteed retirement benefit does is ensure that, whatever happens, you have a basic level of protection. That's what we should

be striving for, universal 401(k)s that can easily be converted into a guaranteed benefit in old age.

CW: Let me turn to the other big benefit that's generally delivered primarily through employment rather than government, and that's health coverage. Isn't the private health insurance system that we've got, largely operating through employers, partly a victim of its own success? This was a benefit introduced as a way around wage and price controls, a way to increase compensation without raising wages during World War II, but it also was for many years a relatively cheap benefit. It had tax advantages for employers, and medical care just was not that expensive. Today, health insurance covers a great deal more than it used to, everything from routine check-ups to prescription drugs, and the cost of medical care is rising precipitously. Employers, who pay most of these premiums, are at their wits' end. Don't they need to do something?

HACKER: Yes, we need to do something—that's the way I would put it. I think employers can do some things on their own, but in point of fact employers are largely price takers rather than price makers in the market. They're responding to the larger changes in medical care. They don't have the ability to effectively manage those costs on their own. Employers are in serious trouble, and a program that would provide broader coverage and reduce costs would be an important step toward helping employers deal with the strains they're facing. American medical care is so costly that employers can be paying much more than they used to and individuals can be paying much more as well. In fact, between 1996-97 and 2001-02, according to the Medical Expenditure Panel Survey, the share of families that were

Personal responsibility is 'a good thing' but not a cure-all.

paying more than 10 percent of their income on out-of-pocket medical costs increased from 8 percent to 11 percent—18 percent if you include premiums. So individuals are more and more burdened by these costs, even as employers are. A solution that would provide broader coverage as a step toward restraining costs would be beneficial to both employers and government. The step that employers may take that I think is worrisome is that they may shift toward providing individuals with high-deductible Health Savings Account-style plans. My worry there is that not only will this leave some Americans inadequately protected against medical costs, but it could also lead to continued unraveling of the private employment-based system, because lower-cost patients are the most likely to take out health savings accounts. Absent concerted government action, either

at the federal level or at the state level, we're going to see a continued erosion of employers' ability and willingness to finance generous health benefits. I don't think employers should be the ones who decide whether people have health benefits, and I don't think that employers today really want to be the ones fully on the hook for these costs. The real challenge is finding a solution that will help employers manage these costs and provide Americans with the health security they desire while ensuring that we maintain a broad risk pool in health insurance. The best way to do that would be to expand Medicare to cover those Americans who work in firms that are now heavily burdened by health costs or don't provide coverage at all, while letting higher-income workers and their employers remain in the private insurance system.

CW: Here in Massachusetts we're embarking on a little experiment of our own in expanding access to health insurance. I wonder what you make of our new health insurance law. It's based, in large measure, on that notion of personal responsibility. Everyone will be required to obtain health coverage, whether from an employer or on their own. But the state is required to make sure that there are quality health insurance policies available and affordable for people at all

levels of the income scale, with premiums subsidized for everyone earning up to 300 percent of the poverty level. Through this individual mandate no one will have the option of staying out of the risk pool just because they're young and healthy, and no one who is unable to afford health insurance will need to have their care subsidized by those who do have it. Isn't this a way to use that Personal Responsibility Crusade to spread risk as well as benefits?

HACKER: I should be clear that I think personal responsibility is generally a good thing. My critique of the Personal Responsibility Crusade is really a complaint about those who say that personal responsibility alone—greater thrift in savings and individual self-reliance by Americans—will solve the severe problems of security that we face today. And the Massachusetts model, whatever its weaknesses, is not based on the idea of personal responsibility alone. You might say, with apologies to Alexis de Tocqueville [who wrote that “Americans believe in self-interest rightly understood”], that it's based on the idea of personal responsibility rightly understood. It requires that individuals have coverage but then it puts in place, as you said, a series of measures that are aimed to ensure broad risk pooling and the availability of low-cost health plans, particularly for lower-wage work-



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ers. This is the aspiration. Whether that aspiration will be realized in Massachusetts remains to be seen. I think it's an innovative model but not one whose full effects we can judge yet, certainly, and also not one that can be easily exported to many other states. Massachusetts [already] had a substantially lower share of the population uninsured, compared with states like California and Texas and with the nation as a whole. Massachusetts also had strikingly higher rates of employer coverage than in other states: Almost 70 percent of non-elderly Massachusetts residents have employer-based coverage, compared with about 63 percent nationwide. And only about 29 percent of Massachusetts residents are below 250 percent of the federal poverty line, compared with almost 40 percent nationwide. So I think that this approach —

CW: Would be a more expensive proposition elsewhere.

HACKER: Yes, this approach would be much more expensive in other states than it will likely prove to be in Massachusetts. But the really serious question is: Will we be able to provide health security over the long term with an approach like this? The Massachusetts experiment is based on the idea

that the government will subsidize private health insurance that people can obtain through a new statewide risk pool. And while I think that the risk-pooling aspect is extremely innovative and promising, I worry about the affordability of coverage over the long term. The subsidies mean that, if there are no measures to rein in costs, then the state could be on the hook, if you will, for rapidly increasing premiums

'We will be facing more risk than our parents did.'

down the road. And Massachusetts has the highest health costs in the nation, so this is not an idle concern. I believe that responsibility should be emphasized in any proposal for universal health insurance—the responsibility of individuals to obtain coverage and the responsibility of individuals to take care of themselves and use resources judiciously. But with that responsibility comes an obligation on the part of government to ensure that people have access to affordable coverage and that [the plan] pools risk broadly. My greatest fear is that a responsibility-oriented agenda will lead toward a further fragmentation of our insurance system, where individuals are increasingly on their own. That's why



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I argue that we should try to shore up employment-based health insurance where it works well and then create a new public insurance pool for the rest of the population, precisely because that has the best chance of preserving a broad risk pool in American health insurance.

CW: Let's turn to solutions, on both the personal level and the policy level. It seems, going forward, that achieving and maintaining a middle-class standard of living is going to involve managing more risk. What can individuals do to protect themselves from the vicissitudes of the modern economy? And what can their employers do, even if they can't play the sort of paternalistic role of corporations past?

HACKER: There will be no perfect solution to these problems, but a movement toward greater security will require a new social contract that entails new responsibilities and obligations for individuals, employers, and government. It will be a team effort, if you will. For individuals, there's no question that we will be facing more risk than our parents did, or than we did in the past. When I speak about the book, I often point out that if you take a roomful of average people, one in five people in that room will, in the next year, start a job, change a job, lose a job, or all three of those. And I also point out that the chance that an individual will experience a large drop in family income has increased dramatically as well. So it's important not to see the possibility of large economic losses as something that happens to other people. It's something that can happen to all of us. And if that is the case, we have to plan around these worst-case scenarios as best we can. [Research shows that] we are all highly loss-averse—that is, we dislike losing things far more than we take pleasure in gaining new things. But we can turn that loss aversion to our own advantage by creating what I call a sunny day fund. Whenever we have unexpected gains, put that money away in a special account to use for dealing with economic shocks. I call it a sunny day fund, rather than a rainy day fund, because the idea is to use the upside to protect against the downside.

The other thing I stress is that a lot of the work-related benefits we get that rely on us putting aside money—say in a 401(k) or a flexible spending account—are a nice way of planning for our immediate future as well as for our retirement. If you think about it, when you [regularly contribute to] a 401(k), you're basically building some flexibility into your budget. If, for example, you find you need additional income in the short term you can always stop putting money away for the long term. And, of course, in the worst-case scenario, almost all of these accounts can be tapped early, with a penalty, and that's something you should do if the alternative is much worse than having a slightly lower income in retirement.

Finally, I put a lot of emphasis in the book on insur-

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ance, and although I talk mostly about public insurance, people should also think about their private insurance options. It's amazing how many different kinds of insurance most of us have—homeowner's insurance, auto insurance, health insurance, and on and on. But there are two types of insurance that are important for families that many Americans fail to consider carefully enough. One is, of course, life insurance. Term life insurance is probably the best deal in insurance and something you should have if you have a family. Second is disability insurance, which can be a relatively inexpensive benefit, especially when purchased through employment. But it's extremely helpful, particularly for those people who fall between the cracks of our federal disability insurance program.

That leads to the last recommendation. Many people aren't aware that they're eligible for public insurance. I may be burned at a conservative stake for suggesting this, but I don't think there's any shame for middle-class Americans to take advantage of public insurance options when they're available. If, for example, you're an older worker displaced by trade, you're eligible for trade adjustment assistance and wage insurance benefits. Very few workers

eligible for those benefits take them up. If you're a lower-middle-income worker, you may be eligible in some states for Medicaid coverage or coverage for your children through the State Children's Health Insurance Program. Again, millions of people eligible for these programs don't take them up. It's important enough for your family to have some kind of health insurance coverage for you to overcome the reluctance you might have to taking

Government can 'spread risks across generations.'

public benefits.

You asked what role there is for employers. I don't believe that we can just let corporate America shift all the obligations onto government. In some areas that's what corporations want more than anything else. They would like to drop retiree health benefits and have government pick up the tab. They would be quite happy if they never had to provide another defined-benefit pension payment in their existence. But I think it's important to make sure that corporations honor the obligations they've made in the past, and that when those obligations

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are not consistent with the economic viability of firms, the government works out a fair agreement that protects the security of workers. The other side of it, going forward, is that any proposal for universal health insurance—or expanded private retirement benefits, or maternity benefits through state unemployment insurance programs, or improved unemployment insurance benefits—will have to require some contributions from employers. And employers should be provided with the assurance that the contributions they make will remain modest and won't be as risky as the current private benefit contributions that they're making.

CW: Finally, what role is there for government and public policy? In particular, are solutions to economic uncertainty for individuals the kind of thing that only the federal government can play a role in, or are there things that could and should be done on the state level?

HACKER: I think the role for governments, including state governments, is huge, because, as David Moss of Harvard Business School puts it, government is the ultimate risk manager. That's because government has unique abilities that the private sector doesn't have. Government can require participation in programs of risk protection. Government can pool risks very broadly. Government can borrow against the future. It can spread risks across generations. It can even try to reduce those risks through far-sighted economic management and planning. If there's any message that comes out of this book, it's that we should not let our understandable and reasonable skepticism toward government blind us to the ability of well-designed and far-sighted government policies to make Americans dramatically better off when it comes to economic risk.

We see that most clearly in the very creation of the middle class in the United States with the GI Bill and the creation of a broad-based subsidized mortgage system after World War II. With the investment in middle-class families and their security, government really changed the face of the nation and created a prosperous economy that also encouraged Americans to be civically active and to feel connected to each other and to the nation as a whole. In an era in which we are facing both more economic risk and more environmental and security risks in general, government is going to have to play a powerful and important role in helping Americans look toward the future with confidence rather than fear.

State governments will be on the front lines in many of these decisions. The states have run a number of programs that provide economic security, including unemployment insurance and workers' compensation and Medicaid. I expect that they will continue to have an important role in providing those benefits. Many states could vastly improve



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their unemployment insurance benefits and in doing so make the business climate in the state actually stronger. Unemployment insurance is, in many states, based on an extremely regressive and cramped tax structure that means that low-wage employers and their workers are facing substantial charges to pay for unemployment insurance, even though those workers and their employers are the least likely to benefit from unemployment insurance. The other area where states could make real headway is in thinking about how to create new insurance markets within states, such as through a clearinghouse that would provide individuals with information and ratings to be able to judge private insurance, or through re-insurance pools that would allow insurers to offer new forms of protection that are more risky than the ones they now have.

However, there are areas where federal protection is essential and unavoidable. Health care is truly a national problem, and although I think the federal government could encourage the states to come up with their own solutions within a national framework, we won't deal with this problem until there's a serious commitment at the national level to provide broad funding and lay out a far-sighted vision that can then be implemented either at the federal or state level. I also think that the federal government is ultimately going to be the place where retirement security is insured. Old age insurance, which is now known as Social Security, was the only federal program created by the Social Security Act, in part because the designers of the program recognized that, in an economy where people moved from state to state, planning for something as vital as retirement required a national solution. Our federal tax code spends over \$100 billion a year to subsidize private retirement spending. The only way we're going to provide a secure retirement guarantee to workers through the private sector is redirecting those subsidies and attaching new requirements to them that ensure that workers have access to a retirement-savings vehicle regardless of whether the employer offers them and a retirement-savings vehicle they can transform into a guaranteed income when they retire.

Finally, I've developed a proposal that I call universal insurance, which is essentially a stop-loss insurance program for Americans, allowing them to insure themselves against catastrophic drops in their incomes or catastrophic health costs. This, again, should be a federal effort because our economy as a whole has become more uncertain nationwide due to the whims of global economic change, the nationwide shift from manufacturing to services, and other broad-based changes in our economy. There's no reason a citizen of Mississippi shouldn't have access to the same basic economic protections as a citizen of Massachusetts. We are truly all in this together, and our solutions, our big solutions, should reflect that. **CW**



Traffic jam

Meeting transportation needs could mean a higher gas tax and more tolls, not fewer **BY CHARLES D. CHIEPPO**

GOV. PATRICK FACES a transportation challenge that could make the Big Dig look like a piece of cake. Massachusetts could have a shortfall in highway and transit funding of \$13 billion to \$17 billion over the next 20 years—potentially exceeding the \$15 billion price tag of the Central Artery/Tunnel Project.

Closing the gap will require Patrick to disappoint, if not take on, some of the most powerful backers of his gubernatorial campaign, most notably labor and environmental advocates. Even worse, he will have to risk alienating the voters who elected him, by asking them to pay more to use the roads.

It will also mean changing his tune: After attacking then-Lt. Gov. Kerry Healey for Romney administration fee hikes during the gubernatorial campaign, Gov. Patrick will have to make the case for higher transportation user fees. That means a gas tax increase in the short run, and not only preserving the existing tolls on the Massachusetts Turnpike, which Patrick has seemed inclined to do, but considering whether to make more use of tolls in the future.

In 2004, the Legislature created the Transportation Finance Commission (TFC) as part of a restructuring of state transportation agencies. The 13-member commission was charged with developing a comprehensive plan for financing transportation projects over the next two decades. What they found is a problem, and a big one. The commission has identified a 20-year roadway-funding shortfall of about \$9 billion, and the transit finance picture looks no better. The MBTA, which provides more than 90 percent of all transit rides in the Commonwealth, is broke. Although the T accounts for just over 12 percent of overall commuter trips in Greater Boston, the transit authority faces a 20-year shortfall of \$4 billion to \$8 billion.

Massachusetts's transportation problems are hardly unique. The Federal Highway Trust Fund will be unable to meet its obligations by 2009, if not sooner, and by one estimate the 20-year national highway and transit funding gap is \$1 trillion. When Congress passed a transportation reauthorization bill in 2005, it created not one but two commissions to study the transportation financing problem. The funding gaps become even more sobering when you realize that each of them—state and federal, highway and transit—is simply for maintaining the current system, and assumes that not a single new highway or rail line will be built.

Closing these gaps will be a daunting task, a fact that explains why the TFC, which was expected to publish an initial report by the end of 2004 and another at the end of 2005, had not released recommendations before the end of 2006. What's clear, however, is that the time has come to think hard about what we pay for road and transit services, and how we pay for them.

PAYING AT PUMP AND BOOTH

Transportation is unique among government services delivered to the public at large in the degree to which it relies on user fees. Transit riders pay fares and drivers pay both a state and federal tax on gasoline—essentially a user fee, since the gas you use roughly correlates to how much you drive, and non-drivers don't pay at all—the proceeds of which fund highways. Tolls are a more direct fee for use of a particular road, but in Massachusetts only the Turnpike and a few tunnels and bridges charge them.

These fees have never been enough, however. The MBTA receives more than \$700 million each

year in revenue from the Commonwealth (one penny of the state's 5-cent sales tax), along with assessments from communities that benefit from T service. And in addition to spending a minimum of \$450 million a year on roads and bridges from gas tax and other revenue, the state sends municipalities at least \$120 million in annual aid for road and bridge repair.

Without changes, the revenue shortfall from transportation user fees will only get worse. Massachusetts's 23.5-cent-per-gallon gas tax hasn't been raised since 1991, and the federal government's 18.4-cent levy hasn't gone up since 1993. Although the Commonwealth's gas tax receipts rose from \$521 million in 1991 to \$686 million in 2005, inflation has eroded its buying power by about 30 percent during that time. Also, the introduction of hybrid vehicles and other improvements in fuel-efficiency, while positive developments, allow motorists to drive more and put more wear and tear on the roads—without paying more.

Tolls, especially the traditional variety, have their own shortcomings. Last October, a Massachusetts Turnpike Task Force headed by former Romney administration-and-finance chief Eric Kriss found that it costs almost 30 cents to manually collect a dollar in tolls on the turnpike. And tolls have aroused bitter resentment from the minority of

commuters unlucky enough to be dependent on the Pike, who see themselves as singled out for fees other travelers don't have to pay.

But the shortfall between user fees and transportation costs has also come about because the demand for mobility has never been greater. Even after 15 years in which slow-growing Massachusetts has been home to both the most costly roadway project in American history and the nation's fastest-expanding transit system, calls for road improvements and transit expansion are constant. (And not just in Massachusetts: Since 1980, national vehicle miles traveled have increased by 90 percent, while total lane miles of highway have increased by just 2 percent.) Although MBTA ridership has been falling since 2001 and is now down to 1999 levels, the T is operating a vastly larger network of rapid transit and commuter rail lines due to recent expansion, the debt for which still weighs heavily on the T's budget. Despite three fare hikes in the past seven years, fares cover only a fraction of operating costs.

High costs make the problem worse, particularly at quasi-independent transportation agencies like the Turnpike Authority and the MBTA, which offer employees even richer wage and benefit packages than the state does. The Turnpike Task Force revealed that average toll taker



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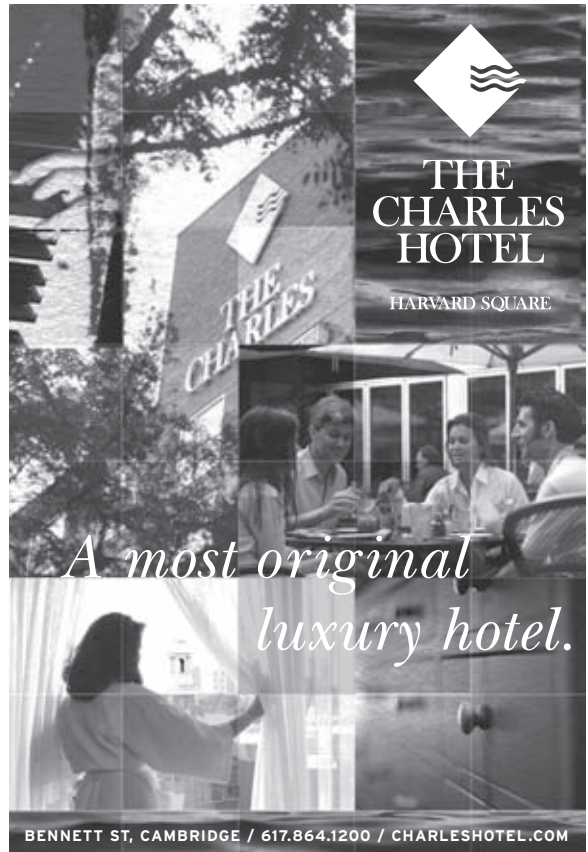
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Other labor-related costs on the Pike are less systematic but more nefarious. Workers' compensation claims average \$3,280 per collector, making toll duty "one of the most hazardous jobs in the state economy," according to the report. Theft is also a problem. One toll taker was stealing at the rate of \$750 per week before being fired. That comes to about \$30,000 annually (and would presumably be more if not for those six weeks of vacation).

A gas tax does little to alter the behavior of drivers.

For its part, the TFC seems to be zeroing in on MBTA health and pension benefits. Unlike most state retirees, who don't qualify for benefits until age 55, T employees can retire after 23 years and begin to collect immediately. The employee contribution toward pensions is 4 percent of salary, compared with about 10 percent for most state employees hired in the last decade. MBTA pension costs grew from \$27.5 million in fiscal 2005 to \$40.7 million in 2006 and are expected to rise to \$48.6 million this fiscal year. Among the retiree benefits is health care funded entirely by the MBTA. The result is T employees retiring in their mid 40s with health insurance covered by taxpayers for the rest of their lives. (State retirees pay 10 percent to 15 percent of the cost of health insurance, depending on their retirement date.) This year, the T will pay nearly \$65 million in retiree health care, about as much as it pays for active employees.

TAX VS. TOLL

Transportation and budget experts had been aware of some, if not all, of these funding and cost problems for some time, but they burst into public view in October, when two contradictory proposals made headlines. One was leaked from the TFC, which indicated that it would recommend a 9-cent-per-gallon increase in the gas tax and the reinstatement of Pike tolls in western Massachusetts and West Newton that had been suspended in the 1990s. The other was the Kriss task force report, which called for removing tolls on the Pike west of Route 128 immediately, and on the rest of the highway later, leaving only those at the airport tunnels.

Currently, the fate of both proposals remains uncertain. In the midst of the campaign, all four gubernatorial candidates, including Patrick, rejected the gas tax increase; after the gas-tax leak, even the TFC seemed to back off, twice putting off scheduled votes on recommendations. Meanwhile, the Massachusetts Turnpike Authority board, which is dominated by Romney appointees, gave initial approval to the toll removal plan, but then seemed to slow down. Since the election, Patrick has been noncommittal about transportation funding overall, though openly skeptical of the toll takedown scheme.

The two plans—one to raise taxes and generate more revenue, the other to stem transaction losses and eliminate overpriced jobs by taking down tolls—are seemingly at odds. But they are both evidence of a transportation funding system that is inadequate, inefficient, and unfair. Even

Kriss (for whom I worked in the Romney administration), who recommended the tolls be taken down, acknowledges that more money is needed for transportation. The task force's mission was

"to review the efficacy of tolls, not lay out funding alternatives," he explains. But, he adds, "as a private citizen, I support raising the gas tax," saying that it creates an incentive for fuel efficiency and alternative energy use, costs very little to collect, and provides much-needed funding. He would even support making the tax a percentage of the price of gas, to prevent inflation from eating away at the revenue it generates.

The idea of replacing the turnpike tolls with a higher (though it would have to be much higher) gas tax has some appeal. It would end a historical inequity visited upon MetroWest commuters and spread costs over the users of all roadways, not just the Pike, in the most efficient manner possible. But it would also nearly eliminate the one form of transportation user fee that, thanks to advances in technology, could be more valuable in the future than it has been in the past.

As a user fee, the gas tax has its limits, because, short of setting it so high that the cost of driving becomes prohibitive, it does little to alter behavior. That's a problem because transportation experts are now recognizing that how much people drive is not as important as when they drive.

Few highways (apart from some Los Angeles freeways and the pre-Big Dig Central Artery) are crowded all the time. It is during the peak periods, during morning and evening commutes, that traffic clogs. Building more and wider roads to accommodate peak traffic volumes would be prohibitively expensive, and in most densely built metropolitan areas impractical. More toll-free highways would, in any case, simply entice more motorists onto the road, jamming them all over again.

Providers of goods like electricity, cell phones, and water all use variable pricing to effectively deal with the peaking problem, charging more to discourage use during the hours of highest demand. Since it can't be varied by the time of day it is used, the gas tax doesn't do anything to manage roadway use. But tolls can, since a higher charge can be imposed at peak hours.

Moreover, electronic tolling—of which the current Fast Lane program is just a primitive start—will, over time, make toll collection not only less costly, but less of a traffic chokepoint. Overhead devices that communicate with vehicle transponders can collect tolls without vehicles even slowing down, as they do on Florida's SR 417 and on parts of the Garden State Parkway in New Jersey. Manual toll collection could not be eliminated overnight; the number of drivers without the necessary transponders has remained stubbornly at around 45 percent in Massachusetts (though as low as 30 percent elsewhere). Places like Ontario, New York, and Texas have attacked that problem by taking license plate photos and then billing drivers without transponders at higher toll rates, providing an incentive to get the devices. Ultimately, when transponders come standard on new vehicles in the future, tolls could be used

on many more roads without impeding traffic flow.

It would also be unwise to abandon tolls altogether at a time when their utility is being demonstrated in the so-called concession model of road construction and management. The City of Chicago granted a 99-year lease on its 7.8-mile Skyway toll road to a private consortium in

Higher toll rates could be imposed at peak hours.

return for a \$1.82 billion cash payment. The lease requires the Cintra-Macquarie consortium to invest \$70 million in road modernization, including installation of electronic toll technology, and grants it the right to raise tolls at a rate linked to local inflation plus a premium. Indiana recently granted a similar 75-year lease for its Indiana Toll Road for \$3.85 billion from the concessionaire. Not surprisingly, New Jersey is exploring a similar deal for both its turnpike and parkway.

These arrangements are not without potential potholes: Indiana is putting its Toll Road windfall to work in a 10-year state transportation improvement program, but other than paying off Skyway bonds, Chicago is pocketing its

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funds, thereby undermining the idea of toll as user fee and risking continued underinvestment in transportation infrastructure. But at their best, concession contracts can finance improvements up front and use tolls to reward private contractors for operating and maintaining roadways for years.

MAKING CHOICES

In all the discussion of transportation finance thus far, the question most studiously avoided has been: What to build, and what not to build? "We haven't addressed the basic questions of what we're trying to accomplish and why," says Northeastern University professor Joseph Giglio, author of *Mobility: America's Transportation Mess and How to Fix It* and a TFC member until he resigned in October 2006.

Last fall, the Pioneer Institute, a market-oriented think tank (where I was once a staff member and am currently a senior fellow), published a report saying that the commission was putting the cart before the horse. That is, it ought to determine the Commonwealth's transportation needs before deciding how to fund them. Author Steve Poftak recommended using common planning criteria across transportation modes, assigning higher priority to projects that promise economic growth, and basing cost estimates on life-cycle rather than construction costs to counteract the inclination to build new projects instead of maintaining what's already built.

In the past, the relative effectiveness of various constituencies at pushing their agendas has played the pre-eminent role in project selection. Most notably, transit and environmental advocates were able to require the Commonwealth to commit to 14 new transit projects as a condition of granting environmental permits for the Big Dig (see "Dug In," *CW*, Spring '05). Eleven of those projects have been built, and a subsequent lawsuit brought by the Conservation Law Foundation, settled in November, will force the Commonwealth to build at least one more.

With fare revenue already covering only about one-third of operating costs, Big Dig-related projects plunged the MBTA into a financial death spiral by saddling it with about \$3 billion in construction costs and tens of millions in additional operating expense. As a result, the T is carrying more debt than any other American transit agency and spends about as much on debt service each year as it collects in fares. Precarious finances forced the recent fare increases, though fares are still about average when compared with other major transit agencies. The MBTA now has a \$2.7 billion maintenance backlog, which has diminished service quality, resulting in flat or falling ridership. (The TFC is likely to recommend boosting the T's annual investment in maintenance from \$470 to \$570 million.)



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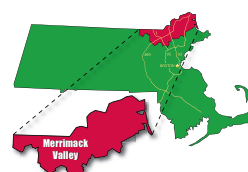
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Despite the near-death experience triggered by the Big Dig mitigation requirements, advocates are pushing for still more transit expansion—commuter rail to Fall River and New Bedford, and extending the Blue Line to Lynn at one end and to Charles Station at the other (the Red-Blue Connector). During the Romney administration, the state vowed to fund the capital costs of future transit expansion, but the MBTA can't afford to maintain the lines it has now.

Resisting the pressure to expand would be a political challenge for Gov. Patrick on several fronts. First, it would require standing up to his supporters in the environmental community, many of whom think every transit project is worthwhile, no matter the cost. Second, it would prove awkward for Lt. Gov. Tim Murray, who made expanding commuter rail service the centerpiece of his primary campaign. Finally, it means choosing maintenance over ribbon cutting, hardly a natural choice for any public official. But the transportation funding problem will never be solved if we keep adding to the system before we fund the upkeep of what we've got.

BUCKLING UP

There are good reasons to charge users—drivers and transit riders—for a substantial portion of the cost of transportation. Unpriced highways, which give the false impression that roads are free, result in unbridled demand that the Commonwealth cannot afford to meet. Endless expansion of transit provides an illusion of better service but a reality of deteriorating quality (while maintenance investments improve service and bring riders back on board, making even higher fares a good value).

There seems to be no question that, for all of us, the cost of getting around will be going up. Both gas tax increases and electronic tolling are fair mechanisms to finance roadways, and for the foreseeable future, they each need to play a part. In the short run, the gas tax is the most efficient way to increase transportation funding on a broad basis, and will likely have to be raised. While resistance to raising the gas tax has been strong both in Massachusetts and on the federal level, there are indications that drivers are willing to pay more for better roads. Voters in Washington state, for example, recently rejected an effort to roll back a gas tax increase. Several bonding



On Florida's SR 417, drivers with transponders pay tolls without even slowing down.

initiatives for new transportation infrastructure have also been approved. But in the long run, tolling will become an increasingly important tool for managing demand, and possibly for financing road projects in new ways. It's a tool Massachusetts should think about using more, not less.

In financing any government service, cost is a factor as well. During its meetings, the transportation finance commission struggled with how to provide more resources to road and transit systems reeling from underinvestment without eliminating incentives for efficiency, which can often disappear with the arrival of new money. Transportation investments will not produce results if they are simply absorbed by rising labor costs.

The TFC estimates the MBTA would save \$14 million by making retiree health benefits consistent with the rest of state government, and realize additional savings by bringing pension benefits in line with industry standards. What makes such changes particularly difficult is that the T's pension and health care benefits are subject to collective bargaining rather than set by statute (as they are for other state employees). So far, the Legislature has shown no appetite for addressing the issue.

Thus the transportation finance dilemma falls into Gov. Patrick's lap. Will he be willing to challenge various constituencies—motorists, environmentalists, transit activists, labor unions—to solve the conundrum of insufficient funding and unrealistic expectations? If not, the condition of our transportation infrastructure, and our economic competitiveness, will suffer for a long time to come. **CW**

Charles D. Chieppo is former policy director for the Executive Office of Administration and Finance.



Getting smart

As Patrick seeks to build on the Romney example, he should study the experience of smart growth elsewhere **BY DAVID LUBEROFF**

PORTLAND OR MARYLAND? Sticks or carrots? That's the choice that the new administration needs to make as it translates candidate Deval Patrick's stated support for smart growth into Gov. Patrick's smart-growth policies.

Specifically, should Massachusetts follow Oregon's "big stick" approach of forcing localities to follow state guidelines when deciding where growth should and should not occur? Or should the Commonwealth follow former Maryland Gov. Parris Glendening's approach of using carrots, notably state capital spending, to encourage desired development patterns—while rarely, if ever, using the stick of forcing localities to comply with state mandates concerning growth?

Facing the same choice four years ago, the Romney administration chose a modified form of Maryland's approach, creating a super-cabinet agency, the Office for Commonwealth Development, to oversee the actions of state agencies responsible for transportation, housing, environment, and energy in a way that would encourage compact development in existing city and town centers and steer development away from pristine countryside. From the outset, Romney, a pro-business Republican who took office during an economic downturn, made it clear that he wanted to use Maryland's carrots, not Oregon's sticks, to achieve his goals.

During the fall campaign, Democratic nominee Deval Patrick lauded smart growth as "the best idea to come out of the Romney administration," but, like many smart-growth advocates, he also asserted it was an idea that his predecessor "never executed very much."

Now that's he's governor, Patrick can improve on Romney's record. But before he does so, he might want to review the extensive literature on

the smart-growth policies of Oregon, Maryland, and several other locales. Such a review would, I believe, raise questions not only about the choice of Oregon versus Maryland but also about what smart-growth policies can actually accomplish. That's because the literature suggests that while the Portland approach is likely to achieve more of smart growth's core goals, it requires policies that are so politically controversial that they are not likely to be feasible in Massachusetts. In contrast, while the Maryland approach is more feasible politically, it's not clear that it would significantly affect land-use patterns here—nor does an initial assessment of Romney's Maryland-like smart-growth policies suggest anything different.

Such conclusions don't mean that smart growth isn't a worthy goal. Rather, they suggest that we should be realistic about what plausible, politically acceptable smart-growth policies are likely to achieve. And they suggest that smart growth may represent not the development nirvana its proponents purport it to be (meeting housing, transportation, and land conservation needs all at the same time) but rather a set of policies whose unintended consequences, particularly in housing costs, could make the cure as bad as the disease.

DRAWING THE LINE IN OREGON

While exact definitions of smart growth vary, virtually all start from the assertion that, for a variety of reasons, we should stop, or at least slow the pace of, sprawling development on the suburban/rural edges of major metropolitan areas. To do so without stopping economic growth, we should at the same time encourage higher-density development in existing, built-up areas—particularly



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urban areas but also historic town centers and other places well served by public transit.

The state of Oregon has been trying to accomplish many of these goals since 1973, when it passed a landmark and still largely unique state law to guide and control growth. Under the law, local governments set a firm boundary dividing the areas where they will accommodate expected growth over the next two decades from largely agricultural areas where new development will not be allowed. In Greater Portland, these boundaries govern growth in a 400-square-mile area that encompasses 26 cities and towns and is home to 1.3 million people. Moreover, state agencies are charged with reinforcing these land-use plans by making investments that support desired growth patterns, such as downtown-oriented light-rail lines rather than new roads into undeveloped areas.

In many ways, this approach has worked. Compared with the years before these rules went into effect and with other metropolitan areas in the American west, much less farmland near Portland has been developed. Moreover, in keeping with policies requiring that the large amounts of undeveloped land inside the boundary be rezoned to require six to 10 units of housing per acre, housing densities seem to be increasing.

These trends are the opposite of what is happening in Massachusetts. As MIT's Henry Pollakowski has shown, the median lot size for new single-family homes in Greater Boston grew from 0.76 acres in the early 1990s to 0.91 acres for houses built between 1998 and 2002. Moreover, as groups such as the Massachusetts Audubon Society have noted, farmland and open space in Massachusetts have been converted to residential uses at rates that far exceed the minuscule growth in the state's population.

There are, however, important limits to what Portland has accomplished. According to a 2004 article in the *Journal of the American Planning Association (JAPA)* by Yan Song, a professor of planning at UNC/Chapel Hill, and Gerrit Knaap, director of the University of Maryland's National Center for Smart Growth Research and Education, while most recent new developments in Greater Portland are more pedestrian-friendly than previous developments, the neighborhoods generally do not have the mixed uses favored by many smart-growth advocates.

Despite its touted accomplishments, the city of Portland has only about 1,766 housing units per square mile, or less than three units per acre; the densest community in the region is Johnson City, which has almost 5,000 units per square mile (about eight units per acre); and only one other community, King City, has more than 3,000 housing units per square mile. In contrast, Somerville has almost 8,000 units per square mile (more than 12 per acre); Cambridge almost 7,000; and Chelsea and Boston more than 5,000. Nine other communities in Greater Boston have

more than 3,000 units per square mile.

In a similar vein, despite the investments in several new light-rail lines, there is no community in Oregon where more than 20 percent of residents take transit to work. Only in Portland do more than 10 percent of workers commute by public transit. Here in the Bay State, more than 30 percent of Boston's residents use transit to get to work, as do more than 20 percent of residents in Brookline, Cam-

Sharply limiting growth can cause a political backlash.

bridge, Chelsea, Malden, Quincy, Somerville, Quincy, Revere, and Winthrop, along with more than 10 percent of residents in another 18 Greater Boston cities and towns.

Even more serious are questions about the effect of Portland's growth controls on the cost of housing, which rose dramatically in Portland in the 1990s and the early part of this decade. Many economists believe that much of the rise was due to the fact that Portland's growth policies reduced the supply of developable land, particularly inexpensive outlying land but also land for single-family homes within the growth boundary. In a 2005 JAPA article

titled "Smart Growth, Why We Discuss It More Than We Do It," Anthony Downs, a well-known urban and transportation economist at the Washington, DC-based Brookings Institution, observed that "this is why some analysts have concluded that smart growth and affordable housing are inconsistent goals."

Others, however, contend that Portland offset most of the problem by requiring denser development within the urban growth boundary. Increases in Portland housing prices beyond those in other metropolitan areas, defenders say, were due to the fact that smart growth made Portland a more attractive place to live.

But even if this were true, Downs responded, it means that affordable housing is possible under smart-growth schemes "only under unusual measures," such as state policies mandating that communities accept denser development than they might desire and that those developments include at least some subsidized housing. The history of Chapter 40B, Massachusetts's landmark affordable housing act, shows that these policies are often bitterly controversial, and that opponents may never stop trying to repeal them.

Finally, Portland-style systems have political consequences as well. Sharply demarcating where growth can and

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cannot occur creates economic winners and losers, and that sets the stage for political backlash. In *This Land: The Battle Over Sprawl and the Future of America*, Anthony Flint, a former *Boston Globe* reporter who later worked for the Office for Commonwealth Development, reported that some land just outside Portland's urban growth boundary was one-tenth the value of land on the other side of the road. Owners of such land became the public face of a 2004 campaign that saw Oregon's voters overwhelmingly approve a referendum requiring localities to provide compensation for lost value due to land regulations, or else allow owners to develop their land as they pleased. Given the cost of compensation, most localities have chosen to let development proceed, leaving Oregon's growth-control system badly wounded. Explaining why the measure passed even in liberal strongholds that strongly voted against George W. Bush in the same election, Flint noted that "most Oregonians didn't think [the measure] had anything to do with sprawl or farmland being destroyed. They thought it was about government bureaucrats screwing people over."

The lesson for the Patrick administration is that "sticks," like those used in Oregon, can be powerful tools. But they can also be so powerful that they ultimately lead voters to rebel against the entire smart-growth system.

OFFERING CARROTS IN MARYLAND

Portland, of course, has always been unique. Over the past three decades, several other states have flirted with systems that required localities to comply with statewide land-use goals. But none implemented a system as strict as Oregon's. Rather, most states followed a course most fully implemented by Maryland in the 1990s.

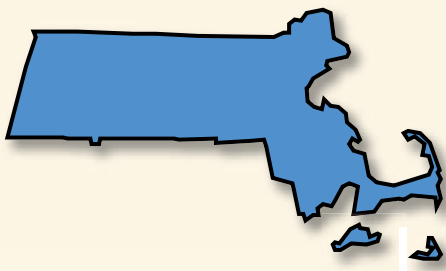
In 1991, concerns about sprawl and the pollution of Chesapeake Bay led the state to consider an Oregon-style system. But those concerns were not sufficient to overcome the many forces that supported the existing system, which gave local governments and counties control over land uses in the state. Recognizing this political reality, Parris Glendening, who was elected governor in 1994, chose to rely on incentives rather than mandates.

"Regulations, Glendening believed, created more enemies than friends," wrote John Frece, who was the Maryland program's spokesman for six years, in "20 Lessons from Maryland's Smart Growth Initiative," a 2005 article in *The Vermont Journal of Environmental Law*. "Intuitively and politically, he knew that an incentive-based program would have a softer landing in the legislature and with the public-at-large."

Under Glendening, Maryland sought to influence de-

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velopment decisions by “where the state spent its money,” explained Frece. “To this end, the Governor and his staff restricted almost every growth-related financial or technical assistance program the state offered to [targeted growth areas]: housing assistance programs, job creation tax credits, brownfield cleanup assistance, historic preservation tax credits, business expansion loans, park improvement funds, highway improvement funds, and the location and placement of state offices.” In addition, the state provided grants to enable local governments and private land trusts to buy development rights for land in rural areas where the state wanted to discourage growth. Such policies brought Glendening accolades, including an award from the Innovations in American Government Program, a program at Harvard’s Kennedy School of Government funded by the Ford Foundation.

But Maryland’s policies seem to have had only modest impacts. A report published by the University of Maryland’s National Smart Growth Center (authored by Frece, Knaap, Jungyul Sohn, and Elisabeth Holler) cites state data showing that while 76 percent of all new housing units built in Maryland in 2000 were within areas targeted for growth, that figure was only one percentage point higher than in 1997, the year before the law passed, and was much less than the almost 90 percent figure recorded in the 1950s and 1960s. Moreover, they added, low-density development outside of targeted areas was consuming about 75 percent of all the land being used for new development in the state. They added, “though this study does not prove that housing markets and development trends in Maryland have been adversely affected by [state] land use policies, there is evidence to suggest that state and local constraints on development are contributing to problems of housing affordability and deflecting growth to outlying areas. The result could be more, not less, urban sprawl.”

The findings from Maryland are particularly noteworthy because the Romney administration followed an approach here that might be described as “Maryland light.” As in Maryland, the state’s Commonwealth Capital program tried to direct capital spending to targeted areas. The Office for Commonwealth Development also tried to use its regulatory powers to ensure that 40B projects met smart-growth standards. And while it did not initiate the effort, OCD supported the Commonwealth Housing Task Force’s successful efforts to pass state laws (known as 40R and 40S) encouraging communities to develop denser, mixed-income housing in historic centers by offering financial incentives to create smart-growth zoning districts; the legislation even included subsidies to cover the marginal school costs incurred for the additional children who would be living in those districts.

Taken as a whole, however, these measures amounted to less than what Maryland did under Glendening. Although

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it's too soon to assess the impact of the newer smart-growth incentives, sprawl is continuing apace. In the *Greater Boston Housing Report Card, 2005-2006*, Northeastern University's Bonnie Heudorfer and Barry Bluestone report that between 2000 and 2004 (the last year that data was available), the population of Boston's outer suburbs grew by about 5 percent while the population of the region's inner core fell by almost 1 percent. They also found that while employment fell throughout the region between 2001 and 2006, the declines were particularly steep in the urban core.

RIDING THE RAILS

Oregon also offers important lessons about transit and transit-oriented development, two important parts of the smart-growth agenda and ones extolled by both Patrick and Romney before him. The idea of transit allowing people to move about without traveling in air-polluting cars and allowing development to be dense without resulting in traffic gridlock is an attractive one. But the reality is less comforting.

In his *JAPA* article, Downs observed that "building additional public transit facilities almost never reduces traffic congestion in a region once that congestion has reached the point of serious slowdowns during major rush hours." As evidence, he cited, of all places, Portland, which doubled its light-rail system in the 1990s but saw traffic congestion get worse than ever before. "Why? First, a high percentage of new light-rail riders shifted from buses rather than private vehicles. Second, population growth in the region overcame any slight improvements in traffic congestion caused by the added light-rail facilities."

Even Worcester, which Lt. Gov. Tim Murray, the city's former mayor, touted in the campaign as a smart-growth success story, offers a sobering tale. According to Murray, the return of commuter rail in the 1990s helped reinvigorate Worcester. But according to the US Census, the city's population fell from 165,759 residents in 1990 (before rail) to 154,389 residents in 2000 (after the line had opened). Moreover, the share of the city's residents using transit to get to work fell from 5.8 percent in 1990 to 4.5 percent in 2000.

The census data do suggest that rail may have had some small, but concentrated, impacts in the three-square-mile census tract that includes the city's downtown railroad station. Between 1990 and 2000, the population of that area increased (from 2,300 to 2,474 people), and the area became home to more working-aged adults, fewer elderly people, and about the same number of children. However, the share of the tract's residents using transit to get to work fell from 5.8 percent to 4.5 percent in the same time period. Moreover, MBTA data show that the number of people taking the train from Worcester hasn't really changed

in the past six years and instead has fluctuated between 800 and 950 weekday morning boardings.

The problem may be that the combination of local land-use policies and transit agency inertia has stymied efforts to build developments that take full advantage of rail lines. Twenty years after the San Francisco's Bay Area Rapid Transit system went into operation, for example, there was virtually no increase in the density near BART stations built to serve existing residential areas and very

gross acre" in developments within walking distance of transit stops increases transit's commute share from 20.4 percent to 24.1 percent for a typical Bay Area rail station. They added that when the areas also feature pedestrian-friendly designs, this figure rises to 27.6 percent. Elsewhere, however, the report notes that while increased densities produce more transit riders, the vast majority of people living and working near rail stations still commute by car. In other words, denser, transit-oriented development is likely to worsen traffic congestion, even as it increases transit usage.

While this study suggests that smart-growth advocates may have overstated the potential impacts of transit and ignored the trade-offs that come with transit-oriented development, other analyses suggest they have missed two other factors that shape land use: education and crime. As Edward Glaeser, a professor of economics at Harvard who also directs the Rappaport Institute, has noted, "aside from climate, education may be the most powerful predictor of urban growth." While Glaeser focused on college graduates, he also asserted that improving K-12 education is important because "individual cities and towns with high dropout rates benefit less when their broader metropoli-

Smart growth may conflict with affordable housing.

little new residential development near BART stations built in less developed areas, according to a study done by Robert Cervero and John Landis, both professors of city and regional planning at University of California–Berkeley and both supporters of transit-oriented development.

What more could we expect from aggressive efforts to spur development near transit stations? In a detailed study for the National Transit Cooperative Research Program in 2004, Cervero and his colleagues found that the "doubling of mean residential densities from 10 to 20 units per

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CONSIDERED OPINION

tan area grows." Similarly, scholars such as Julie Berren Cullen and Steven Levitt have found strong causal links between violent crime and city depopulation.

SMART SMART GROWTH

Taken as a whole, the findings reviewed here suggest four important lessons for the new Patrick administration.

First, while state policies can modify growth patterns, they probably cannot dramatically alter them. Indeed, the more ambitious the attempts to control growth, the more likely they will have unexpected impacts and invite a political backlash that could undermine the entire program, and even the governor himself. Therefore, Patrick should seriously consider whether it's worth the political effort to launch a Maryland-like initiative at a time when so many other problems are vying for his attention.

Second, despite advocates' claims to the contrary, serious smart-growth policies can impinge on other agendas, most notably efforts to make housing more affordable. Given the state's still-high housing prices, the Patrick administration has to ensure that its smart-growth policies do not exacerbate the housing affordability problems that have contributed to the state's recent economic woes.

Third, not all policies associated with the smart-growth ideal, particularly extensive investments in rail transit, are likely to be effective, and even some that appear to produce results, such as true transit-oriented development, may do so at higher-than-expected costs. That's particularly important because the new administration has to decide how to allocate a limited pot of money among an almost unlimited set of demands for new spending, such as education, the state's new health care law, and community policing.

Fourth, traditional efforts to encourage smart growth are likely to fail unless they include both sound capital investments and effective programs to improve education and reduce crime in older urban areas. The administration, therefore, should consider a broad-based approach that funds programs only if careful analyses show they are actually likely to achieve desired goals.

These approaches might be politically unappealing, particularly because some are likely to pit the administration against some of its strongest supporters. But the new governor says he is committed to a new way of governing. Imagine the message Gov. Patrick could send by making it clear that his administration's policies are going to be based on a prudent combination of important core values, political savvy, and critical analyses showing that the planned policies really are likely to address the problem at hand. Now that would be something new. **CW**

David Luberoft is executive director of Harvard University's Rappaport Institute for Greater Boston.

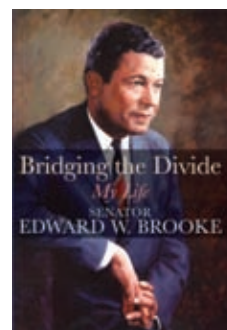
Path breaker, but no trendsetter

Bridging the Divide: My Life

By Sen. Edward W. Brooke

New Brunswick, Rutgers University Press, 320 pages

REVIEWED BY FRANCIS J. CONNOLLY



THE ELECTION OF a charismatic African-American to statewide office continues to raise eyebrows in many places, most especially here in Massachusetts. Deval Patrick's march to the Corner Office drew national attention last year, and rightly so, as he won the governorship of a state where just 30 years ago, state troopers in riot gear were escorting black kids through the metal detectors at Charlestown High.

Patrick's victory has been hailed as a sign that Massachusetts has, in some fundamental way, changed—that the Commonwealth's painful history of racial strife has given way to a new era, one in which an accomplished black man could be elected governor after a campaign in which neither he nor his opponents made more than passing mention of his race.

That's a consummation devoutly to be wished, and Patrick's resolutely positive approach offers the hope of a real change in the state's political culture. But even as he looks to the future, the new governor might want to glance back at the past as well—at another charismatic African-American politician whose arrival seemed to herald a new era in state politics, one that never quite came to pass.

Few Americans have lived a life as full as Ed Brooke's. The former senator, now 87 years old, saw combat in World War II and came home to fight his own political wars in Massachusetts and Washington. He has been at turns a crusading reformer, an icon of the civil-rights and anti-war movements, the subject of withering personal scandal, and, in his ninth decade, a cancer survivor.

Late in the winter of his years, Ed Brooke has finally set down the story of that full life. In *Bridging the Divide: My Life*, Brooke recounts, in unadorned prose, the details of a most extraordinary career.

As Massachusetts attorney general, US senator, and high-powered lawyer-lobbyist, Brooke was a player in most of the dramas that defined Ameri-

can politics, from Kennedy through Reagan. He was a major figure in the crusade for civil rights, a cautious critic of the Vietnam War, and an outspoken proponent of abortion rights. He served on the Kerner Commission on race relations, and years later on the panel that recommended reparations for Japanese-Americans interned during World War II. After leaving office he would eventually be investigated (and exonerated) during the years-long probe of influence peddling at the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development.

At times Brooke's life story has an almost *Zelig*-like quality, with famous names popping their heads in and out for cameo appearances. In the early '60s, for instance, Brooke bumped up against Albert DeSalvo while investigating the Boston Strangler case; years later he happened to be the commencement speaker at Wellesley College, getting the chance to be lambasted by a student orator who would go on to be known as Hillary Rodham Clinton.

Brooke's personal life was often chaotic. The very public dissolution of his first marriage, amid charges of financial misdealing and bitter denunciations by Brooke's wife and daughters, played a key role in his 1978 defeat at the hands of an obscure congressman from Lowell named Paul Tsongas.

But Brooke found personal redemption in his later years. A second marriage brought him decades of happiness and a son. He enjoyed years of financial success, saw the New Chardon Street courthouse in Boston named in his honor, and achieved reconciliation with his daughters. Then, in his mid 80s, Brooke was diagnosed with male breast cancer, a condition that disproportionately affects African-American men.

Through it all Brooke has been the consummate survivor, overcoming the setbacks and always moving doggedly ahead. His writing reflects that resolutely moderate personal style. *Bridging the Divide* is a straightforward chronicle of events, presented in lawyerly prose. There are few rhetorical

flourishes and little analysis of broad historical trends. If the reader sometimes yearns for something more, some personal introspection or an effort to connect the dots in a broad and sprawling life—well, that’s evidently not a book that Ed Brooke wanted to write.

FOUR DECADES AGO, Edward William Brooke III seemed to be the embodiment of the American Dream. Grandson of a slave, he was born to a middle-class family in Washington, DC. After college he shipped out and fought the Good War in Europe, brought home an Italian war bride, moved to Boston and went to law school on the GI Bill, and built a modest law practice. Like many other veterans he was drawn to politics—following his father’s footsteps he became a Republican, honoring the party of Lincoln—and soon found himself running and losing a couple of races for state representative.

But Brooke persevered. He lost again in 1960, when a young Kevin White beat him for Secretary of State, but in 1962 he won election as attorney general—the first African-American to win statewide office in the Bay State, and the first in the nation to be elected attorney general.

Brooke had run as a reformer, but he was no political naïf. Blessed with a shrewd sense of self-promotion, he spearheaded the investigation into the Boston Common parking garage scandal, and grabbed still more headlines by taking over the investigation of the Boston Strangler murders. Brooke was reelected easily in 1964 and then, in 1966, he won a landmark race for the US Senate, becoming the first black senator since Reconstruction.

In the Senate Brooke was a media star, the nation’s most prominent black office-holder at the height of the civil-rights movement. He was also one of the last of the Rockefeller Republicans, an outspoken social liberal whose positions on abortion, affirmative action, and a host of other issues put him squarely at odds with the emerging conservative leadership of his own party.

These days he is no fan of the current Republican administration, at least so far as its foreign policy goes. While his words are, as ever, courtly and measured, his condemnation of the Iraq war, in *Bridging the Divide*, is unmistakable: “I fear that those who gave us today’s war did not learn the lesson of yesterday’s.... Do we want to ‘stay the course’ when the course is legally and morally wrong?”

In the final analysis, Brooke seems never to have been fully comfortable with the party he chose: “I have always been puzzled by the Republican candidates who approach politics as a ‘duty,’” he writes. “There was then, and perhaps still is, an overlay of grimness in Republican politics that scares away potential supporters.”

For all that, though, Brooke never considered leaving the

GOP. That, after all, would be a radical step—and if his career proves one thing, it is that Ed Brooke is no radical.

BROOKE WAS ALWAYS conscious of his position, both personally and politically. His public image was one of old-school decorum: A fastidious dresser himself, he insisted on a dress code for his staff that, among other things, forbade women from wearing slacks. On a substantive level, he understood that his success could help pave the way for a future generation of African-American candidates: “I also knew that if I was nominated and elected, it would encourage other African Americans to seek state and national offices and not restrict themselves to local elections or to predominantly black constituencies.”

And yet, at least in his adopted home state, Brooke’s political success did not spawn a new generation of black candidates for major posts. It took four decades for another African-American to win statewide office here, and Deval Patrick’s election owes more to the legacy of Bill Clinton than to the legacy of Ed Brooke.

In the final analysis, Brooke’s impact on Massachusetts politics has been less than people might have expected when he first headed to the Senate, 40 years ago. Partly that’s because the political landscape changed so dramatically. As Massachusetts became virtually a one-party state,

Brooke prospered as a ‘member of the club.’

and as national Republicans embarked on a Southern Strategy that essentially wrote off the black vote, there was little room for future Ed Brookes to make their way.

But it’s also a reflection of the man himself. Brooke, throughout his extraordinary career, has been a creature of the middle, a canny moderate schooled in the art of compromise and conciliation. As a senator he wielded his greatest influence in conference committees, where negotiation and deal-making are the order of the day. Brooke prospered in the Senate because he could, in the end, blend in and become a “member of the club,” as he titled the chapter on his first years in that most exclusive body.

The ability to fit in made Brooke an effective senator, but not an inspirational national figure. Members of the club may, as Ed Brooke has done, live full lives and claim a significant place in history. But they cannot change the political culture that created them. In the end, Ed Brooke helped bridge the divide between two worlds, but he could not lead a new generation across to the other side. **CW**

Francis J. Connolly is a senior analyst at Kiley & Co., a public opinion research firm in Boston.

Cold case

A labor leader murdered while waiting to meet with the governor may get his tribute 100 years later **BY JAMES V. HARRIGAN**

A CENTURY AGO, it was a little easier to gain access to the Commonwealth's chief executive than it is today. Most appointments were scheduled in advance, but sometimes people just showed up in the lobby of the governor's office, hoping he would see them.

That's how it was on December 5, 1907, when three men sat beneath the portrait of Abraham Lincoln—where the portrait of William Weld now hangs—waiting to meet with Gov. Curtis Guild.

The three were representatives of organized labor: Dennis Driscoll, 39, of Roxbury, former president of the local horseshoer's union; Arthur Huddell, 39, of Chelsea, a steam engineer and longtime labor activist; and Edward Cohen, 49, of Lynn, the most powerful labor leader in Massachusetts. As president of the state chapter of the American Federation of Labor, Cohen was friendly with political leaders on both sides of the aisle. Born in England, the father of six sons and two daughters, he was a cigar-maker, a trade he shared with Samuel Gompers, the national president of the AF of L (as it was typically referred to).

Cohen and the others wanted to talk to the governor about a serious and sensitive matter. They were seeking a pardon for A.M. Kennedy, a union man imprisoned for murder in Essex County, a crime the labor leaders believed he committed while insane. Little did they know they would soon be victims of a similar crime, during one of the strangest and most tragic events to take place in the Massachusetts State House—an event that may finally be rescued from obscurity 100 years later, thanks to a modern-day labor man.

ACCORDING TO NEWS accounts, John Steele, 38, left his mother's house in Everett that morning and headed into Boston “on an intention of visiting some newspaper offices.” Although he had no background in journalism, Steele told his mother he hoped to “secure a position as a reporter.” With his thick mustache and prematurely gray hair, his mother thought of him as “a very intellectual looking man...a great reader and very studious...a walking

encyclopedia.”

But Steele was also a deeply troubled man. He had been committed thrice to state insane asylums following his release from the Army. Just three weeks earlier he had signed himself out of Danvers State Hospital, where he'd been confined voluntarily, in order to spend Thanksgiving with his family.

Upon arriving in Boston, Steele decided he needed a gun. At a sporting goods store, he bought a revolver and cartridges. After a quick lesson in the pistol's operation from a clerk, he headed to Boston Common to test the weapon, but seeing signs prohibiting the use of firearms, he then set out for South Boston. On the causeway to Castle Island, Steele grabbed a small piece of wood from a trash pile.

With the fort at his back, he aimed toward the harbor and fired a few rounds. Then he held the piece of wood close to the barrel and fired again. Though the wood was blown from his hand, Steele came to believe that the bullet bounced off, and that the gun was defective. Heading back to the store where he bought it, Steele stopped off at a gun shop owned by Ivor Johnson.

“They cheated me on this revolver,” he told Johnson. “It's a bum gun and I mean to get my money back.” Johnson inspected the revolver and handed it back, saying it appeared to be fully operational. But Steele continued on to the sporting goods store and demanded his money back. When the clerk refused, Steele declared he would go to the State House and see what the governor had to say about it.

Along the way, he remembered what he'd said to his mother and doubled back to “Newspaper Row” on Washington Street. He entered the offices of the *Boston Daily Globe* and asked for military editor Harry Hartley. Upon learning that Hartley was absent, Steele questioned three other reporters about what caliber revolver the police and Army used and whether various bullets could penetrate a piece of wood. But he departed the *Globe* “appearing to be anything but satisfied with the interview,” leading the reporters to speak of “the peculiarities of the man's inquiries and of his wild appearance.”

On Beacon Hill, Gov. Curtis Guild was occupied

with a delegation from Rhode Island, but he knew that Teddy Cohen and two other labor leaders were waiting to see him. They wouldn't disclose their business, but Guild was unconcerned. Having battled monopolies, supported legislation on behalf of women and children workers, and sought better ventilation of factories and workshops, the Republican was proud of his labor record.

As the three labor chieftains chatted among themselves, Steele walked into the governor's lobby, wearing a black derby. At the back of the outer office were Charles Groves, the governor's secretary, and stenographer C.A. Southworth, to whom Groves was dictating a letter.

Huddell looked up at Steele, then turned back toward Cohen and Driscoll. As the labor leaders continued their conversation in a lower tone, the man in the derby came to

believe they were talking about him. Without a word of warning, Steele reached into his pocket, pulled out the revolver, took aim, and fired.

The bullet buried itself harmlessly in the wall, but the report startled everyone. Groves stopped dictating; he and Southworth hopped over the rope separating the waiting

Without a word of warning, he pulled out the revolver.

area from the rest of the office. Before they could make another move, however, the man in the derby fired a second time, striking Cohen in the temple.

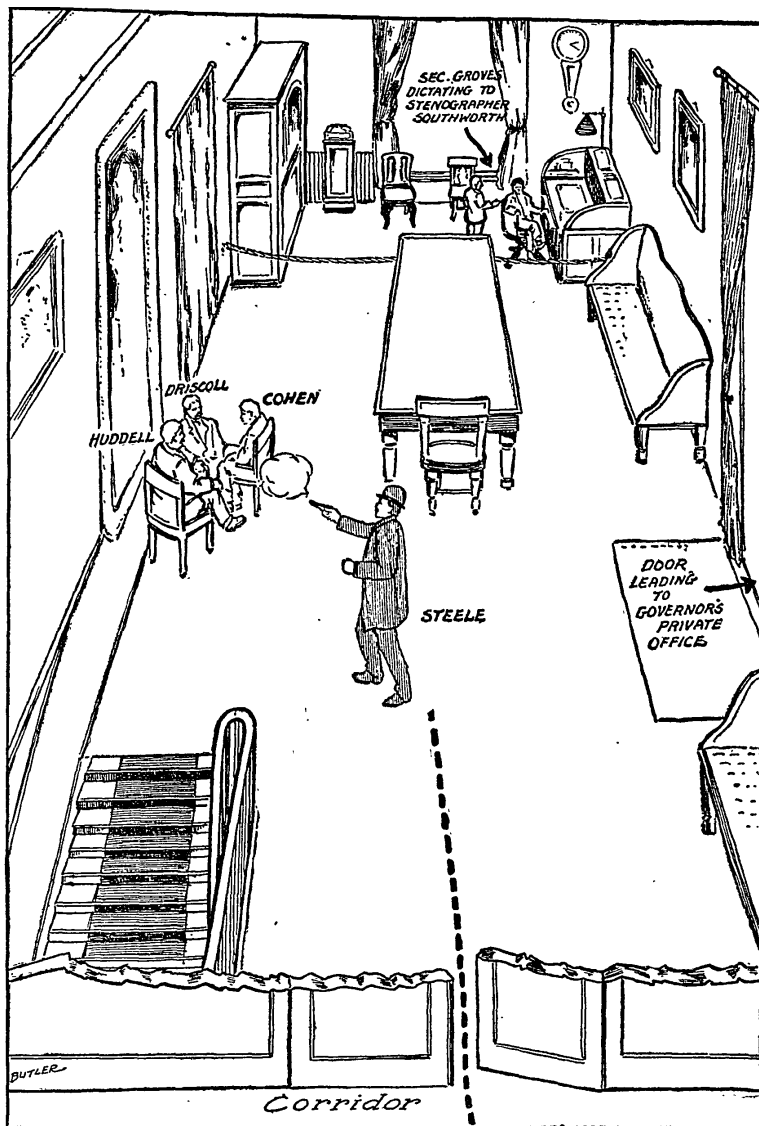
In Huddell's first-person narration of the event, which he gave to the *Globe*, as the union boss "sank to the floor," Huddell lunged at the gunman "and had him by the

wrist...trying to wrench the revolver from his grasp." But Steele got off another shot, striking Driscoll in the head; he fell to the floor next to Cohen.

By this time, Huddell continued, Groves, State Police Chief Jophanus Whitney (who had been in the corridor just outside the lobby) and Gov. Guild himself—the governor rushed out of his private office in response to the first shot—"all [had] a hand on him," and Huddell "tore the revolver from the man before he could fire another shot and in an instant he was floored."

While being led away, the shooter yelled about his missing hat and "a stick of wood" that would show "they fired the first shot," the *Globe* reported. Only after Steele was confined to a cell in the State House basement did the chief realize that he had served with the man in the Spanish-American War. Whitney recalled that, while on guard duty at training camp one night, Steele became delusional and threatened to kill another soldier. The incident led to Steele's court martial, and commitment to an asylum in Washington, DC.

Meanwhile, upstairs, Guild grabbed cushions and towels from his private office and kept the victims comfortable, then hopped into ambulance that took Cohen and Driscoll to Massachusetts General



The *Boston Daily Globe* illustrated the attack by "maniac" Steele, who "unquestionably" meant to kill the governor.

Hospital, inspiring rumors that the governor had been shot, too. Guild stayed at the hospital late into the night, but released a statement saying he was unhurt and likening the day's events to "a Malay running amuck."

Cohen died the next morning, while Driscoll spent more than a year recovering from his wounds. Steele was held on \$100,000 bail, the highest ever set in Boston Municipal Court. The *Globe* reported that Steele at arraignment "had many appearances of a rational man," was well groomed, and "looked around interestedly at the different parts of the courtroom," but the newspapers never failed to refer to him as a "maniac" and were full of stories chronicling his long history of mental illness.

Though indicted for murder by a grand jury, Steele was never tried for the crime. He was deemed criminally insane and committed to Bridgewater State Hospital for the rest of his life.

THE STORY OF Edward Cohen's murder in the governor's lobby was all but forgotten until a few years ago, when Robert Haynes, current president of the Massachusetts AFL-CIO, found a resolution honoring the victims in the records of long-ago state labor conventions. He was

moved to file legislation to honor Cohen with a plaque in the governor's office.

"It's a bit of labor history," says Haynes. "And it's time we honored somebody who died in the line of duty."

The bill was signed by Acting Gov. Jane Swift on January 1, 2003, her final day in office. But no formal signing ceremony was held, and not even Haynes was aware that the tribute to the fallen labor chief had become law. In fact, two years ago, Haynes asked Rep. Steven Walsh of Lynn, where Cohen lived, to refile the bill. Only after a public hearing did they discover it had already been passed.

"I think we lost sight" of the bill, Haynes says with a laugh. But why, four years later, has no plaque been installed?

"I don't think it's political," says Walsh. "Sometimes these [things] move slower than they should."

According to Susan Moir, of the Labor Resources Center at the University of Massachusetts-Boston, the interested parties, which include organized labor, Cohen's relatives, and the Massachusetts Arts Commission, "are just getting rolling on the plaque now." But they are planning on an installation in December, to coincide with the 100th anniversary.

For his part, Haynes thinks the commemoration shouldn't be limited to a plaque inside the governor's office. "It would make a great movie," he says. **CW**



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