

# How to make the State House work for YOU: Lobbying 101

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The Nature  
Conservancy



MASSACHUSETTS  
Rivers Alliance

## Who's your legislator?

Familiarize yourself with the following:

- Your current state representative and senator (both for your hometown and where you work)
- The current Speaker of the House
- The current Senate President
- The current House Ways and Means Chair
- The current Senate Ways and Means Chair
- The stages of a bill becoming law

Find your legislator here:

<https://malegislature.gov/Search/FindMyLegislator>

See Leadership here:

<https://malegislature.gov/Legislators/Leadership>

# 501(c)3s, don't be afraid to engage...

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## ✓ You can...

- Direct contact (in person, letter, digital) to support/oppose legislation
- Testify/provide testimony
- Educate/conduct requested studies
- Treat all candidates equally

## ✗ You cannot...

- Endorse candidates
- Engage in campaign activity
- Exceed lobbying thresholds\*



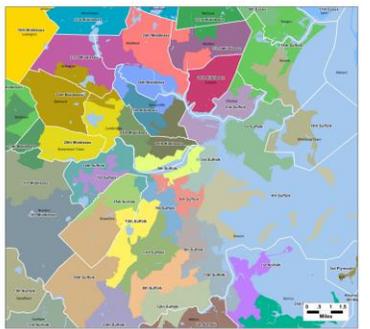
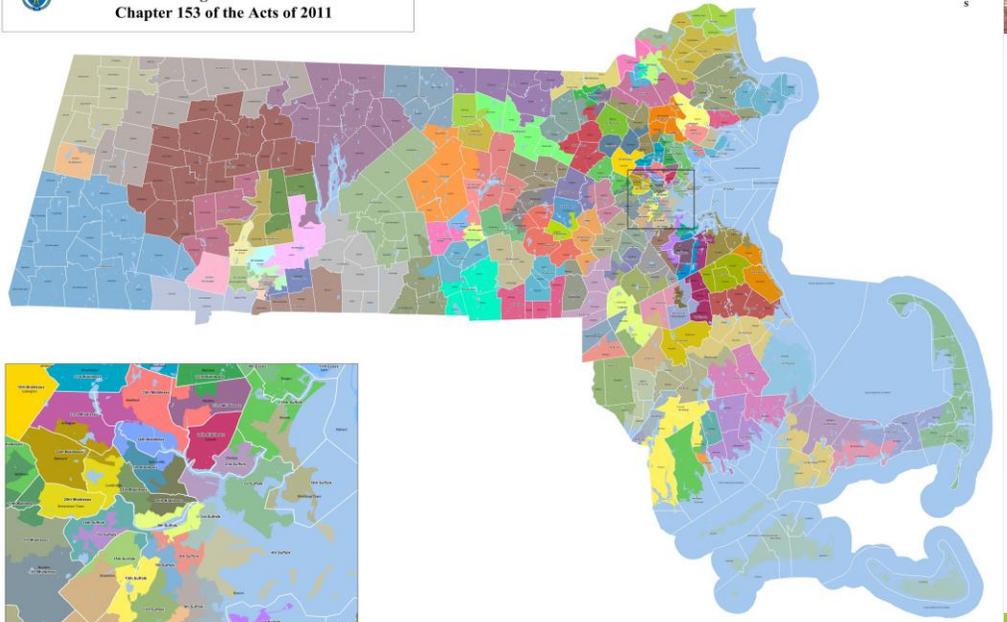
\*See Lobbying Disclosure Act if you have questions

# The Legislature





Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
House Legislative Districts  
Chapter 153 of the Acts of 2011



MA  
Legislature

Two year session

House  
(160  
members)

Senate  
(40 members)

~37,000  
constituents

~160,000  
constituents

~5,000-7,000 bills introduced  
<10% become law

# Legislator Roles

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- Representative of constituents (individuals)
- Delegate of communities (municipalities)
- Allocation of Resources
- Leader
- Policy expert





# The Legislative Process

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# Engage throughout the process...

- Know your legislators! (get in the door early with new legislators to educate on your issues)
- Consistent interactions (Local events, meetings, office hours)
- Legislative breakfasts/briefings
- Recognition of key legislators
- Media (Social, organizational, local, public)
- Asks - opportunities for leadership (Leading bills, co-sponsorship, budget earmarks)

Track a bill here:

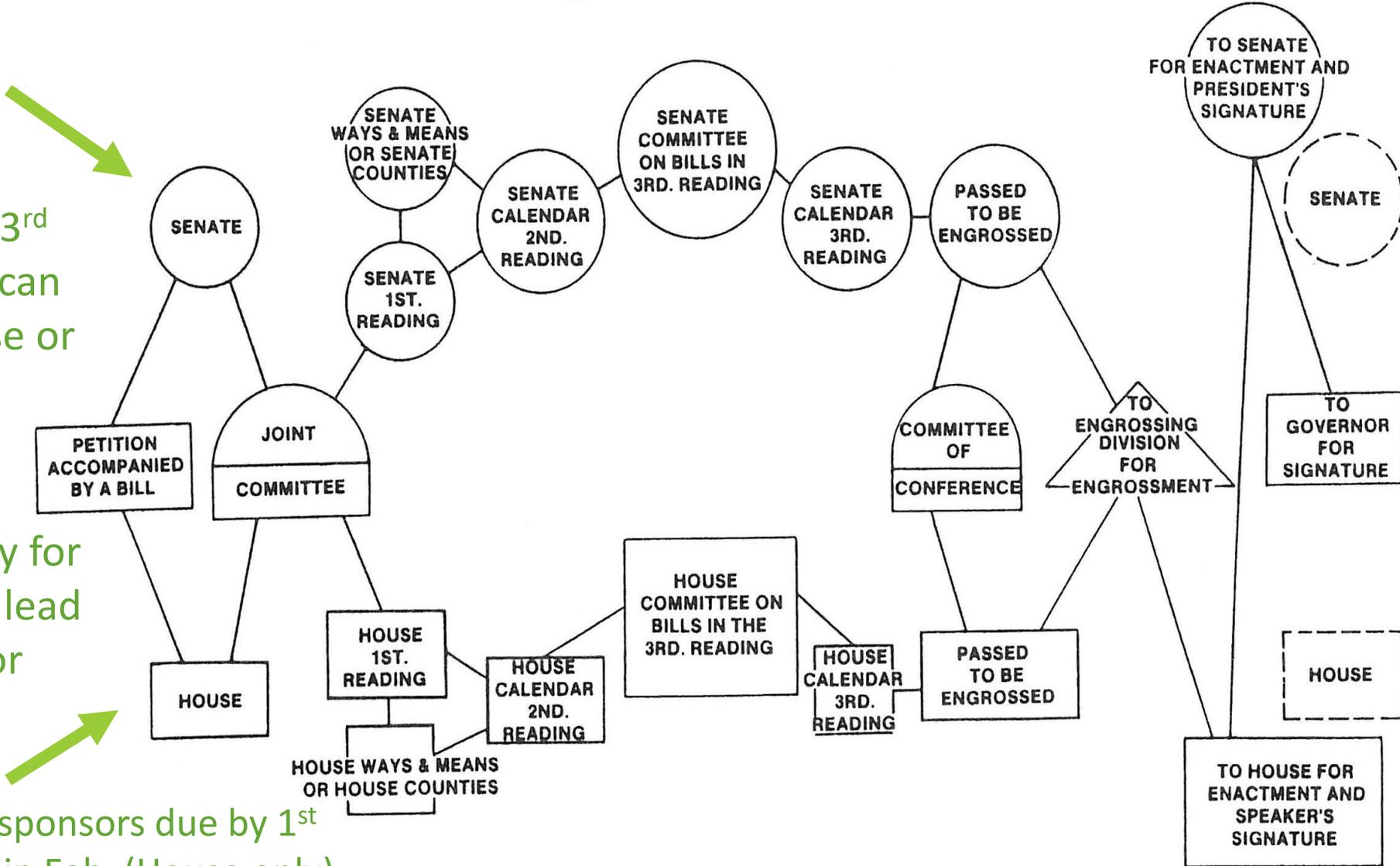
<https://malegislature.gov/Bills/Search>

# Law Making in Massachusetts

Bills filed by 3<sup>rd</sup> Fri. in Jan. – can start in House or Senate

\*Opportunity for members to lead or co-sponsor bills

Co-sponsors due by 1<sup>st</sup> Fri. in Feb. (House only)



Track a bill here:

<https://malegislature.gov/Bills/Search>

# Law Making in Massachusetts



Finance-related bills start in House

# What can happen to a bill in committee?

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## Subject-area committees review legislation

### Bill to advance:

- Favorably
- Amend the bill or redraft
- Discharge to another committee

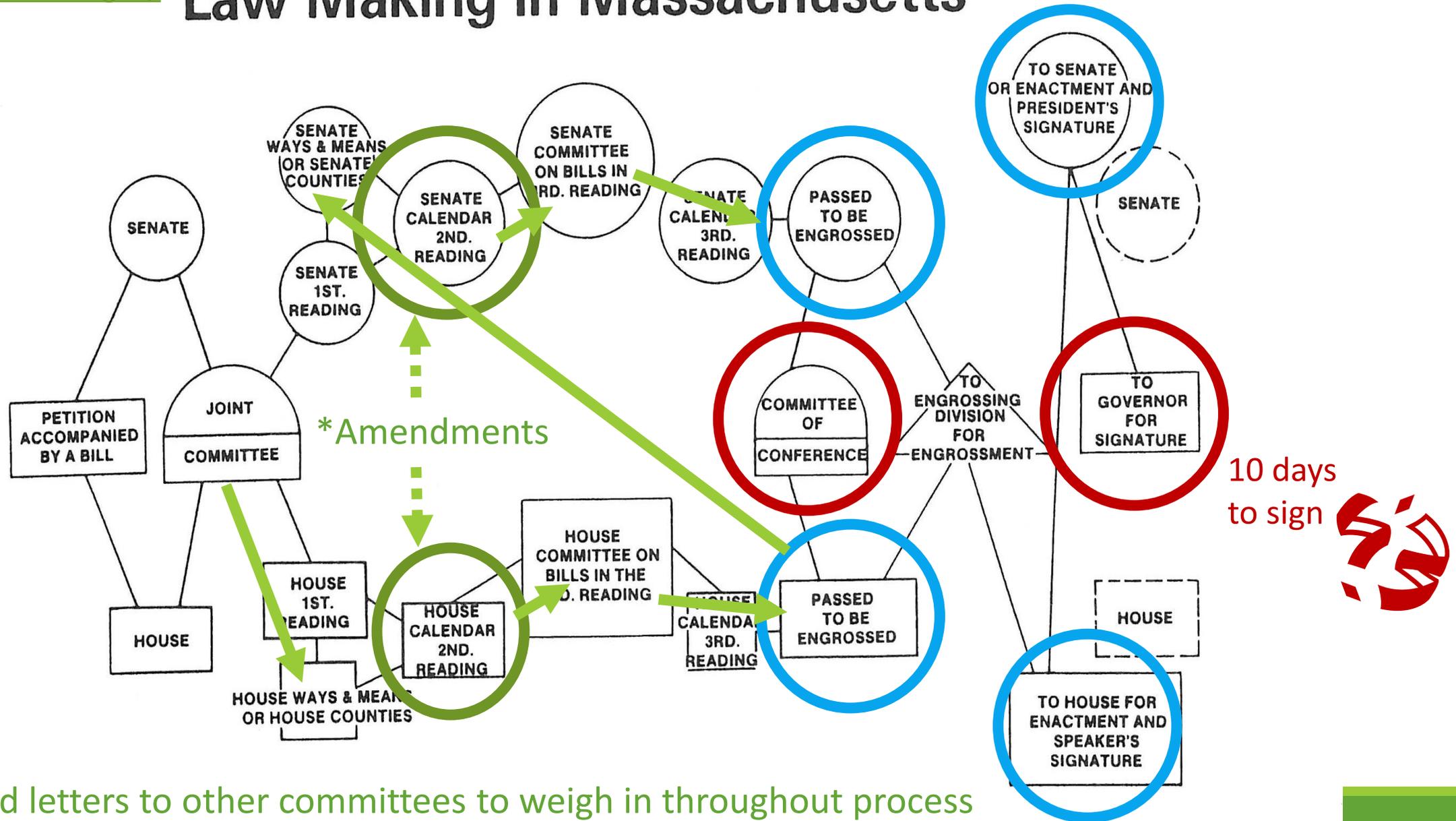
### Bill dead:

- Unfavorably or Ought NOT to pass
- Study order

Track a bill here:

<https://malegislature.gov/Bills/Search>

# Law Making in Massachusetts



10 days to sign



\* You can send letters to other committees to weigh in throughout process

# Important Players for Legislation

THE 191ST GENERAL COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

Bills & Laws Budget Legislators Hearings & Events Committees & Commissions State House

LEADERSHIP

Search the Legislature...

### SENATE



**Karen E. Spilka**  
President of the Senate  
Ashland (D)

The President of the Senate is elected by the members of the body to lead the Senate and set the agenda and priorities for the session. Once elected, the President of the Senate sets the session calendar of legislation to be considered, presides over sessions, interprets rules, answers Parliamentary questions and inquiries, and preserves order and decorum of the Chamber.

### HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES



**Robert A. DeLeo**  
Speaker of the House  
Winthrop (D)

The House of Representatives is led by the Speaker of the House, who is elected by House members at the beginning of the first year of each two-year session of the General Court. The Speaker appoints a leadership team comprised of the Speaker pro Tempore, the Majority Floor Leader, Assistant Majority Floor Leader, and Second Assistant Majority Floor Leader. The Speaker's appointments are subject to ratification of a majority party caucus vote. The Speaker similarly appoints House committee chairpersons.

- House Speaker Robert DeLeo
- Senate President Karen Spilka
- House Ways & Means Chair
- Senate Ways & Means Chair
- Minority Leaders and Asst. Leaders
- Environment Committee Chairs and Vice-Chairs (House and Senate)

## SENATE MEMBERS



**Anne M. Gobi**  
Chair



**Walter F. Timilty**  
Vice Chair



**Smitty Pignatelli**  
Chair



**Daniel Cahill**  
Vice Chair

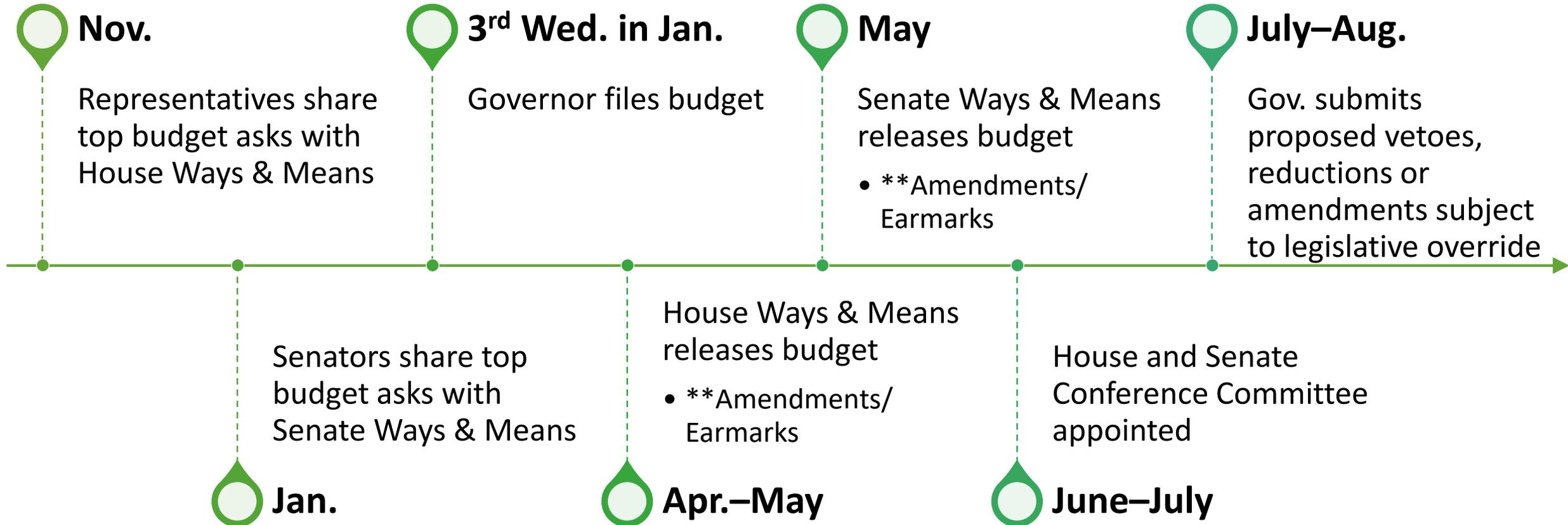
## HOUSE MEMBERS

See Leadership: <https://malegislature.gov/Legislators/Leadership>



# The Budget Process

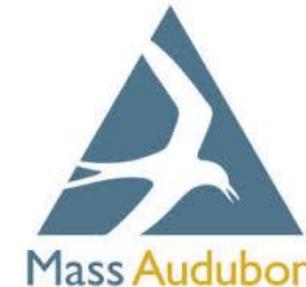
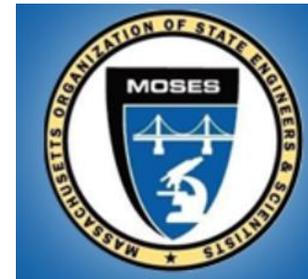
# Budget Timeline – Points of Engagement



# FY21 Green Budget



- Department of Conservation and Recreation – Parks
- Department of Fish and Game – Division of Ecological Restoration
- Department of Fish and Game – Natural Heritage Program
- Department of Environmental Protection – Administration



+ Many other organizations!

# Building a Coalition



# Working as a Coalition

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## Early on:

- Find partners (think outside the box)
- Agree on a unified, basic position
- Be transparent about where priorities overlap/don't
- Determine how to work collectively

## During advocacy:

- Be strategic about who to bring to meetings – the messenger is the message
- Consider talking to opposition so you can anticipate challenges and look for compromises
- Regular and transparent communication
- Be open to new partners, opportunities, and compromises



# Ways to Engage



# We need you!

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Congressional staff who think the following strategies have a lot of influence on a legislator who is undecided on an issue



*Congressional Management Foundation, 2010 Perceptions of Citizen Advocacy on Capitol Hill*

Find out more: [www.fcni.org/congress\\_communication](http://www.fcni.org/congress_communication)

# Opportunities to engage

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- Call or email
- Comment letters (all committees)
- Testimony on bills (joint committees)
- In person visits
- Public regulatory hearings
- Joining a coalition
- Site visits



# Prepare for the visit

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## Know your Legislator

- Identify a success
- Role/ability to help

## Know the Legislation

- Status, prognosis, supporters, opposition
- Define your “ask”

## Build your Team

- Talking points
- Assign roles



# Meeting Agenda – Thank, Update, Ask

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1. Identify yourselves
2. Start with a **'thank you'**
3. Describe the **bill and its support**
4. Make a **clear ask**
5. Provide Information/  
Make yourself available in future



# Your Legislator is Thinking...

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*“How do I move my agenda through the legislative process?”*

- Do I have the information for colleagues?
- Where is it in the process?
- Is there district support? Who supports and opposes?
- Is there support among leadership?
- Do I have to spend political capital?



# Post-Meeting Follow up

- Write a thank you note
- Provide Information
- Repeat your ask
- Consider thanking publically
  - Ex. Letter to the Editor, newsletter, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram
- Look for additional ways to engage



It all applies to the local  
levels, too

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# Current Political Context

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## Challenges

- Covid-19 and economic implications
- New leadership and need for education on our issues
  - Will be new legislators next year, too
- Competing priorities
- Federal rollbacks

## Opportunities

- Focus on climate adaptation and mitigation
- Green budget and various climate funding proposals
- Momentum on Conservation Land Tax Credit; victory with Community Preservation Act

# Questions?

FEEL FREE TO CONTACT US!



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