



FY2027 Green Budget Priority Amendments

Protecting the Commonwealth's natural resources, while meeting our climate goals and delivering clean air and water to communities and businesses, requires state agencies that are well-resourced and well-staffed. The Green Budget Coalition advocates for robust, sustainable state funding for climate and conservation work to meet the scope and scale of our environmental challenges and make Massachusetts a healthy, thriving place to live, work, and visit.

The Green Budget covers the state agencies within the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA), the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center (MassCEC), and the Clean Water Trust. Currently, less than 1% of the state's operating budget is spent on energy and environmental programs. Many departments still receive less funding and maintain lower staff levels than before the Great Recession. In FY26, these items received a \$7.7 million total decrease in funding, or 1.4%, while the overall budget grew by 5.6% compared to FY25. The proposed SWM budget further deepens these cuts, recommending a **\$25 million overall cut** to EEA line items. This proposed funding reduction will have significant impacts on the Commonwealth's ability to protect the environment, support cities and towns, and meet our climate goals.

To mitigate potential staff losses and preserve core agency functions, the Green Budget Coalition respectfully requests support of the following priority amendments:

#370, Department of Environmental Protection (filed by Sen. Becca Rausch)

The staff and programs administered by MassDEP are essential to protecting our clean air, water, and land, ensuring that critical work to build housing and upgrade our infrastructure moves quickly without sacrificing environmental protections. The proposed SWM budget includes a \$3.4 (6.3%) million reduction to the DEP administrative item that would cut an estimated 30 full-time positions from the Department's staff. This amendment would restore FY26 level funding and ensure that DEP can maintain staff capacity to manage ongoing programs like PFAS testing, air quality monitoring, and wetlands permitting statewide.

#323, DCR State Parks and Recreation Operations (filed by Sen. Jamie Eldridge)

DCR is facing one of the most significant cuts of all the environmental agencies, with a proposed \$9.5 (8.0%) million reduction to the State Parks and Recreation operating line item. The funding level proposed by SWM would require DCR to cut at least 22 full-time staff. This would drop the agency's total down to 1,031, over 200 staff below the agency's staffing peak of 1,271 in 2008. Cuts to DCR of this scale would, in essence, erode all of the progress made during the last two fiscal years and slow the agency's ability to reduce its billion-dollar deferred maintenance backlog. Together with Sen. Brownsberger's amendment #315, these amendments would restore critical parks funding in the face of reductions.

#336, Office of Environmental Justice and Equity (filed by Sen. Lydia Edwards)

As the Commonwealth looks to advance ambitious development goals and new siting and permitting reforms go into effect for clean energy infrastructure, it is more important than ever that historically overburdened communities receive the support and guidance they need to build support for beneficial projects and address past environmental harms. The state's EJ Office has already faced significant budget reductions in recent years, and the SWM budget proposes a funding level of \$4,000,000, which would represent a 36% cut from FY26. This amendment would restore level funding to the office.



#370, Department of Environmental Protection

Filed by Sen. Becca Rausch
FY27 Green Budget Priority

Request: Fund the Department of Environmental Protection administrative line item (2200-0100) at \$53,729,646 (level funding with FY26)

Overview

- MassDEP has a broad set of critical responsibilities for public health and safety, including ensuring clean air and water, watershed planning and permitting, the safe management of toxics, enforcing environmental laws, reducing solid waste, the timely cleanup of hazardous waste sites and spills, and the preservation of wetlands and coastal resources.
- MassDEP was one of the hardest-hit state agencies by staff cuts and early retirements and has still not returned to pre-2008 staffing levels. At the same time, the Department has new statutory obligations that include:
 - The integration of environmental justice principles and cumulative impact analysis into [air quality permitting](#);
 - Implementation of the recommendations of the [PFAS Interagency Task Force](#); and
 - Management of the state's [Low-Emission Vehicles](#) program, including the awarding of local grants for electric vehicle charging infrastructure.
- The administrative line item is the primary funding source supporting MassDEP's permitting, compliance, enforcement, and disbursement of funding for the state's water resources. This includes approving and modifying drinking water, stormwater, and sewage infrastructure projects to build new housing, attract new businesses, and allow for continued economic growth.
- MassDEP is also the central hub of the state's air quality permitting and [monitoring network](#). Federal budget cuts have created significant uncertainty around the state's ability to continue monitoring pollution, conduct analysis of air quality impacts for proposed construction projects, and provide technical support for communities.

Examples of Need

- The SWM budget recommendation provides insufficient funding for current staffing levels, which would require reducing total MassDEP staff by an estimated 30 full-time positions. This would result in the lowest staffing levels in four fiscal years, losing critical support for core agency functions, particularly those requiring scientific and technical expertise.
- MassDEP manages statewide vehicle emissions programs and provides technical support for municipalities looking to convert vehicle fleets to zero-emission alternatives or increase deployment of EV infrastructure. With continued uncertainty around the state's Advanced Clean Trucks and Advanced Clean Cars rules, state support will be more important than ever in providing the guidance and support communities and private fleet operators need to navigate this rapidly-changing regulatory environment.
- In the face of federal threats to clean water standards, empowering MassDEP staff to continue enforcing strong public health standards for PFAS contamination will be more essential than ever before. Hundreds of public water systems across the Commonwealth already have identified PFAS levels that exceed safe levels, and municipalities look to state and federal agencies for monitoring support and technical assistance.



#323, DCR State Parks and Recreation Operations

Filed by Sen. Jamie Eldridge
FY27 Green Budget Priority

Request: Fund Department of Conservation and Recreation State Parks and Recreation line item (2810-0100) at \$113,820,049 (level funding with FY26)

Overview

- DCR is responsible for the stewardship, management, and safety of our parks, beaches, forests, pools, skating rinks, and campgrounds including:
 - Nearly half a million acres of land across over 250 properties and nearly 2,000 miles of trails;
 - Habitat for 291 state-listed rare species, including 8 species found only on DCR land; and
 - Forests that protect drinking water supplies to support millions of residents.
- DCR properties are a cornerstone of the state's [\\$13 billion outdoor recreation economy](#), and Massachusetts [has the fastest-growing outdoor recreation economy](#). According to the most recent data from the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA), the outdoor recreation economy supports over 100,000 jobs each year.
- Aligning conservation actions with state's 2030 and 2050 emissions targets was a central recommendation of the DCR Special Commission. As the primary steward of public lands, DCR has a valuable role to play in meeting emissions targets, and while the state agency is a participant in ongoing work around Natural and Working Lands, it does not have a comprehensive standalone plan for its role in meeting the state's climate goals.
- In 2025, DCR's Flood Hazard Management Program assisted 306 Massachusetts cities and towns with updating floodplain bylaws, reviewing development proposals, providing training and workshops, producing flood maps, conducting National Flood Insurance Program audits, and addressing general floodplain development matters.

Examples of Need

- The SWM budget proposal, if adopted, would require DCR to cut at least 22 full-time staff. This would drop the agency's total down to 1,031, which is still over 200 staff below the peak pre-recession level of 1,271. Cuts to DCR of this scale would, in essence, erode all of the progress made during the Healey-Driscoll Administration and slow the agency's ability to reduce its billion-dollar deferred maintenance backlog.
- DCR estimates that 981 of the 3,996 building facilities it owns are located in EJ communities, roughly 25% of its total assets. One of the four core components of the Department's [EJ strategy](#) is to "prioritize and evaluate investments and allocation of resources to serve EJ populations."
- DCR's Forest Fire Control Team participates with all municipal fire departments to prevent, detect and suppress wildfires throughout Massachusetts. 2025 was a historic fire season, when an unprecedented 662 wildfires broke out across the state, a problem that will only worsen as a result of climate impacts.



#336, Office of Environmental Justice and Equity

Filed by Sen. Lydia Edwards
FY27 Green Budget Priority

Request: Fund Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs Environmental Justice line item (2000-0102) at \$6,229,234 (level funding with FY26)

Overview

- The Executive Office of Environmental Justice and Equity (OEJE) is responsible for ensuring all EEA agencies embed equity and environmental justice principals into their policies, and public engagement practices so that all Massachusetts residents, especially those historically left out of decision-making, are protected from environmental harms and are a part of building a healthier, more just future.
- With Environmental Justice (EJ) provisions included in recent climate and energy legislation, it is critical to provide adequate funding for staff to carry out the responsibilities detailed in the law including working across EEA and with other agencies going forward.
- The Environmental Justice line item was created in FY23 to specifically carve out funding for EJ programs and staff which had previously been funded through the EEA Climate adaptation line item. The 2024 clean energy bill, *An Act promoting a clean energy grid, advancing equity and protecting ratepayers*, formally established the OEJE into statute.
- As of 2022, EJ populations have been identified in 187 communities across Massachusetts. To learn more about EJ populations in your communities you can use [this searchable map](#).
- In 2025, OEJE released a draft version of its [MassEnvironScreen Tool](#). This tool is used to identify and prioritize the most environmentally vulnerable or burdened communities across the Commonwealth.

Examples of Need

- OEJE has already faced significant budget reductions in recent years, and the SWM budget proposes a funding level of \$4,000,000, which would represent a 36% cut from FY26. Should this budget go into effect as drafted, the FY27 budget for the EJ office would be less than half of what it was just two fiscal years prior.
- The 2024 clean energy bill advances ambitious development goals and new siting and permitting reforms for clean energy infrastructure. It is more important than ever that historically overburdened communities receive the support and guidance they need to build support for beneficial projects and address past environmental harms
- Level funding can ensure that OEJE can support the provision of language services for public comment notices and forums, translation of key documents, and direct outreach to EJ populations, particularly important in growing immigrant communities.
- Technical support and policy guidance for cumulative impact analysis work will help developers, communities, and impacted residents understand the full implications – past, present, and future – of proposed energy projects as well as other construction projects with air quality impacts.