



June was a busy month on Beacon Hill as the Legislature winds down their two year session. The June FY15 budget was passed by the legislature and is currently on the Governor's desk. Governor Patrick also signed into law a three step increase in the minimum wage to \$11 per hour by 2017. Under the law, minimum wage will rise to \$9 per hour on January 1, 2015.

Governor Patrick is preparing to step down, but has so far refused to endorse a Democratic successor before the September primary. That primary will consist of three candidates, State Treasurer Steve Grossman, Attorney General Martha Coakley; and former Medicare director Donald Berwick.

The Democratic State Convention earlier this month gave their endorsement to Steve Grossman, although Martha Coakley remains the frontrunner. While Massachusetts is a very blue state, the GOP has their best chance in years to take the Governor's office in November, and candidate Charlie Baker has been topping even the Democratic candidates in fundraising lately. He will face businessman Mark Fisher in the primary, but is heavily favored to win. Two independent candidates have emerged as well, Jeffrey McCormick and Evan Falchuk, who are both entrepreneurs. In another statewide race, three candidates will take part in the democratic primary for State Treasurer, Deborah Goldberg, State Representative Thomas Conroy and State Senator Barry Finegold, to eventually face Republican contender Mike Heffernan. Maura Healy and Warren Tolman are both vying to replace Martha Coakley as Attorney General, with Attorney John Miller as the only Republican candidate.

Bills of particular interest to MVMA have also seen some movement this month. In a big win for MVMA, Senator Bruce Tarr's "PAWS" bill was redrafted to include the language that we suggested to the Judiciary Committee regarding mandatory reporting. The bill, now included in H 4244, received a favorable report from the Judiciary Committee on June 30. The bill now heads to House Ways & Means.

Representative Lewis' and Senator Hedlund's bills on farm animal cruelty and confinement (S 741 and H 1456) were redrafted in the Judiciary Committee and given a new bill number and title: S 2232 An act to ensure continued humane animal care in Massachusetts. For further information, visit [www.malegislature.gov/Bills/188/Senate/S2232/History](http://www.malegislature.gov/Bills/188/Senate/S2232/History). The redrafted language prohibits the confinement of farm animals in a way that does not allow them to turn around freely, lie down, stand up, and fully extend their limbs. The bill allows for a number of exemptions to the rule, such as during medical research, examination, transportation, exhibitions, slaughter, and pigs giving birth. This new bill was given a favorable report by the Committee and sent to Senate Ways and Means. Representative Kulik's bill, HB 4008, which would establish a livestock care and standards board to deal with this issue, remains in House Committee on Ways & Means. MVMA supports this bill and its current language.

A number of other bills that MVMA is following were given extension orders until June 30, 2014. The following bills were all sent to study, meaning that they are highly unlikely to resurface during this legislative session:

- HB 1262 An Act increasing penalties for cruelty to animals (Rep Coakley-Rivera)
- HB 1363 An Act relative to dog training areas in the Commonwealth (Rep Gobi)
- HB 1416 An Act establishing a public registry of animal abusers (Rep Kafka)
- HB 1578 An act relative to stolen animals (former Rep Reinstein)
- HB 1594 An Act relative to the repeal of certain archaic laws concerning animals (Rep Rushing)