

IN THE ARENA ON BEACON HILL

February 11, 2007

by Tom Conroy

It's been a busy first month for me, as I have focused on accomplishing as much as possible in my new role as state representative. Despite the obvious challenges I will face as a freshmen — lack of seniority, new committee assignments, a keen ability to get disoriented in the State House hallways — I will strive to be effective, and promote the interests of you, the citizens of Lincoln, Sudbury, and Wayland.

Here's a glimpse at how I've been serving you during the first month in the district:

Meeting with constituents during office hours and at the State House, listening to issues, concerns, and recommendations on legislation;

- Meeting with boards of selectmen to discuss town initiatives and priorities;
- Meeting with town managers about legislation, local budgets, and state aid;
- Meeting with town commissions to better understand detailed local issues, and how I can help;
- Meeting with the Sudbury Chamber of Commerce;
- Meeting with presidents of small businesses in Wayland;
- Speaking with constituents by phone in response to their questions.

In addition, I've been busy at the State House:

- Voting for the first time, shortly after being sworn in;
- Attending the Governor's swearing in and a special meeting with him in the Senate chamber;
- Meeting with several advocacy groups about legislation and budget line items;
- Meeting with several constituents regarding new or proposed legislation;
- Filing three bills, authoring one;
- Evaluating > 3,000 bills between Jan 10 and Jan 22;
- Cosponsoring > 30 bills;
- Meetings with representatives and senators on protocols, state aid, and other issues;
- Attending caucus meetings;
- Meeting with head of the School Building Assistance Program about the new application and approval process for state assistance;
- Meeting at the Massachusetts Housing offices about Wayland's Nike site 40B development.

Unfortunately, amidst these activities, there was a formal House session on a day when I was out of town on previously scheduled business. As a result, I missed votes on that day. I apologize for missing those votes, which involved internal House of Representative rules and procedures. Voting matters, and I look forward to voting on hundreds of bills and amendments during the year. I want you to know that I am in the process of scaling back my previous professional commitments in order to provide greater flexibility to fulfill all my duties as state representative. The process has gone much slower than I have wanted, but I'm confident that the right balance will be reached in the near future.

Meanwhile, I was also proactive in areas that are particularly important to Lincoln, Sudbury, and Wayland, and I will continue to push ahead on them. The following chart outlines the action I took, as well as action voters might consider taking, and the next steps that folks can keep an eye in the future. I hope this kind

of chart is useful, and enhances voters' understanding of the legislative process. Let me know by email Rep.ThomasConroy@hou.state.ma.us or stop by during office hours, which I'll hold on the 16th of each month.

In conclusion, I've been productive, but equally important, I've been listening and learning. I'm watching and noticing how my more experienced colleagues in the State House manage their time, and evaluate bills, and speak in public. And I am also listening and learning while I meet or speak daily with constituents from our three towns. And I am continually delighted and proud to find so many experts among you in so many areas of public policy. Hearing from you, discussing important topics with you, learning from you — that's what will make me a better state representative. So I encourage you to keep contacting me, keep sending me information, keep providing me feedback so that I can continue to serve you to the best of my abilities.

Tom Conroy is the newly elected state representative for Lincoln, Sudbury, and Wayland.

Issue	What I've Done	What You Can Do	Next Steps
<p>LS High School Tragedy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attended community meetings • Learned more about Asberger's syndrome and autism spectrum • Discussed the tragedy at school committee meeting • Availed myself to local officials in event I can be of service (e.g. state funds for enhanced school safety) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn more about Asberger's • Support the students and their needs • Contribute ideas to reduce teen violence, enhance safety, and maintain a positive learning environment in our schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At school: C to as much n • Legal proces investigation, • Community: will appoint a
<p>Increased state aid for our towns</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-sponsored legislation to increase state aid to our towns • Met with state officials who calculate the Chapter 70 formula and discussed funding levels for Lincoln, Sudbury, and Wayland • Discussed state aid with Suburban Coalition chairs (Rep. Eldridge and Rep. Peisch) • Stressed importance of increasing state aid with 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact me and the Governor's office by email or letter about your support for increased state aid • Support efforts in your own workplace to keep jobs in Massachusetts, which will increase corporate and income tax revenues • Send me creative ideas for the Commonwealth to raise non-tax revenues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governo in Februar budget to which wil funding p • House of led by the & Means DeLeo, w budget in detailing taking Ho consider

Increase funding and retain broad eligibility for the **Dept of Public Health's (DPH) Early Intervention Program**, which helps challenged infants overcome developmental delays

House Ways and Means
Chairman DeLeo

- Testified on behalf of increased funding at a DPH hearing
- Helped convince the Governor to make a supplemental appeal for increased funding and to retain broad eligibility for the program
- Remained fiscally responsible: ensured that increased funding for the program did not increase overall state spending (allowed federal funding cap to be raised)

- Learn how this social service program offers preventative care now and saves millions of taxpayer dollars in the future
- Provide neighborly support to families with children in the EI program, because fees for the program have risen dramatically, and having challenged children is already stressful for parents.

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Increased state aid for our towns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-sponsored legislation to increase state aid to our towns • Met with state officials who calculate the Chapter 70 formula and discussed funding levels for Lincoln, Sudbury, and Wayland • Discussed state aid with Suburban Coalition chairs (Rep. Eldridge and Rep. Peisch) • Stressed importance of increasing state aid with House Ways and Means Chairman DeLeo 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact me and the Governor's office by email or letter about your support for increased state aid • Support efforts in your own workplace to keep jobs in Massachusetts, which will increase corporate and income tax revenues • Send me creative ideas for the Commonwealth to raise non-tax revenues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governor Patrick will present in February his House 1 budget to the legislature, which will detail his state aid funding proposal for towns • House of Representatives, led by the Speaker and Ways & Means Committee Chair DeLeo, will create its own budget in March-April detailing state aid for towns, taking House 1 into consideration
Increase funding and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Testified on behalf 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn how this 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • House of

<p>retain broad eligibility for the Dept of Public Health's (DPH) Early Intervention Program, which helps challenged infants overcome developmental delays</p>	<p>of increased funding at a DPH hearing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helped convince the Governor to make a supplemental appeal for increased funding and to retain broad eligibility for the program • Remained fiscally responsible: ensured that increased funding for the program did not increase overall state spending (allowed federal funding cap to be raised) 	<p>social service program offers preventative care now and saves millions of taxpayer dollars in the future</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide neighborly support to families with children in the EI program, because fees for the program have risen dramatically, and having challenged children is already stressful for parents. 	<p>Representatives will react to the Governor's FY07 supplemental funding request by approving or denying it or amending it</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senate will approve, deny, or amend House action • If House and Senate versions differ, a conference will ensue to rectify differences, and then both bodies will vote on it
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