



**Office of
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For Immediate Release

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**Representative Kane supports passage of
\$40.4 billion House budget for Fiscal Year 2018**

Lead co-sponsor of successful amendment to create an
Educational Unfunded Mandate Task Force

BOSTON – State Representative Hannah Kane, R-Shrewsbury, joined with her colleagues in the House of Representatives this week to approve a \$40.4 billion state budget for Fiscal Year 2018. The budget was engrossed on a vote of 159-1 on April 25.

For the third year in a row, the House budget significantly reduces the use of non-recurring revenue sources to achieve balance, relying on just \$110 million in one-time revenues. It also calls for the deposit of \$100 million into the state's Stabilization Fund, which will bring the account balance to \$1.4 billion.

Cities and towns will see a \$164 million increase in local aid under the House spending plan. This represents a 2.7 percent increase over current funding levels.

During the House budget debate, Representative Kane was able to secure funding for several important local initiatives, including \$25,000 for a substance abuse treatment clinic for veterans that has been established at Veterans Inc. in Shrewsbury. Representative Kane also served as a lead co-sponsor for an amendment that increased the cap for the purchase of equipment for Municipal Light Plant (MLP) contracts from \$25,000 to \$50,000 which re-aligns it with the current cap for towns and cities and locally benefits SELCO. Representative Kane also co-sponsored an amendment that was adopted that makes organ donation registration easier and more accessible.

“The House budget takes a fiscally responsible approach to spending while reaffirming the state’s commitment to our cities and towns,” said Representative Kane. “Not only does it increase local aid, but it also takes steps to begin addressing the longstanding concerns associated with unfunded state mandates, which has long been a priority issue for me.”

Representative Kane was a lead co-sponsor of the adopted Republican led amendment to create a special task force to review all unfunded state education mandates and reporting requirements imposed on local school districts. The task force will be asked to provide recommendations for easing the cost burden on cities and towns by streamlining, consolidating or eliminating these mandates.

The House budget funds Chapter 70 education aid at \$4.734 billion while providing for a guaranteed statewide minimum increase of \$30 per pupil. The proposed Chapter 70 appropriation represents a \$106 million increase over current spending levels and is \$15 million higher than the Governor’s proposal filed in January. The

budget also allocates \$281 million for Special Education Circuit Breaker reimbursements, an increase of \$4 million over the current year.

The FY18 budget makes unprecedented investments to improve Massachusetts' early education and care system, with a focus on supporting the EEC workforce and providing access to high-quality learning opportunities to ensure children are better prepared for academic success. The budget provides \$20 million for the early educator rate reserve and \$4 million for quality programming and workforce training. The House also builds on its notable commitment to behavioral health by doubling funding for Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation grant to help early detection and prevention efforts.

Unrestricted general government aid, which is made available to communities for a wide range of municipal spending purposes, is increased by \$40 million in the House budget to a total of \$1.061 billion.

Under the House budget plan, Shrewsbury will receive \$19,706,038 in Chapter 70 education aid and \$2,782,874 in unrestricted state aid in Fiscal Year 2018. Westborough will receive \$7,839,474 in Chapter 70 education aid and \$1,157,670 in unrestricted state aid for Fiscal Year 2018.

Since FY12, the Legislature has increased funding for substance addiction services to unprecedented levels and passed two landmark bills to help address this public health epidemic. This year's budget makes notable investments related to behavioral health and addiction, including almost \$132 million for the Bureau of Substance Abuse Services (BSAS). The budget also proposes changing the name of BSAS to the **Bureau of Substance Addiction Services** in recognition that addiction is a health issue and should be treated as such. Additional provisions include:

- \$1 million for new substance addiction beds;
- Funds to open two new recovery centers for family supports;
- \$1 million that will allow for the purchase of 15,000 new doses of Narcan and \$1 million for extended release naltrexone;

The budget also creates a tax credit for businesses that hire veterans. Eligible businesses would receive \$2,000 per year for the first two years of a veteran's employment. This provision enhances the Commonwealth's reputation as a national leader in providing benefits to military personnel, veterans and their families.

The budget now moves to the Senate, which is expected to release its own spending proposal in mid-May.

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