



Leadership is our business

Associated Industries of Massachusetts

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August 3, 2009

President Therese Murray
Speaker Robert A. DeLeo
Members of the General Court
State House
Boston, Massachusetts 02133

Dear President Murray, Speaker DeLeo and Members of the General Court:

On behalf of Associated Industries of Massachusetts, (AIM) representing nearly 6,500 employers who employ nearly one out of every five workers in Massachusetts, I extend to you our continued support for reform of state and municipal government. Regionalization of services is a major feature of reform, and we applaud you for your recent action to create a regionalization advisory commission through legislation now pending before the Governor and though a modest line-item in the recently passed supplemental budget.

Earlier in the session, AIM supported both transportation and pension reforms. More recently, we launched the Mass Reform First campaign to focus on municipal reform - which is critical. AIM believes that fiscal responsibility and effective government start at the local level. So does economic recovery. That's why AIM believes that the priority for Massachusetts is smart municipal reform. We encourage you to visit our site, www.massreformfirst.org, and join our Facebook and Twitter communities to learn more.

As you know firsthand from recent budget deliberations the Commonwealth's budget and fiscal situation is grave and in dire need of comprehensive reform - not a quick fix. We are a high-cost state with high health care costs, energy costs, labor costs, and housing costs. As taxes and fees rise and vital public services deteriorate, cities and towns turn to the state - which faces the same issues. These are concerns for every family, and for the business community that pays nearly half of local taxes. Municipal reform aligns with AIM's legislative agenda, which asserts that a vibrant, private-sector economy alone creates opportunity that binds the social, governmental and economic foundations of the Bay State.

As business managers, families and citizens we know about making painful decisions. Throughout the Commonwealth there are countless examples of employers making hard steps to prevent layoffs, by instituting salary reduction plans, furloughs and pay freezes, modifying retirement plans, curtailing expansion plans, and deferring critical expenditures to focus on core priorities. The Commonwealth must enable municipal governments to do the same, especially during a recession. What is at issue here is the credibility of government - and not just within the business community.

AIM believes that the Legislature and the Administration should continue to build on the reform agenda. During this particularly difficult time in the Commonwealth, you will be called upon to exercise wisdom and judgment as you work with your colleagues to move Massachusetts through the many fiscal and public policy challenges. Please be assured that AIM and our members are prepared to assist you and your colleagues.

Associated Industries of Massachusetts stands ready, as it has for 94 years, to work with you and the members of the administration to improve the economic climate of the Commonwealth and, thereby, the lives of the citizens of our state.

Please consider AIM as a resource for any business related public policy issues that may come before your office and feel free to contact me personally if we can be of any assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John R. Regan". The signature is fluid and elegant, with a large initial "J" and a long, sweeping underline.

John R. Regan
Executive Vice President – Government Affairs