

MASSACHUSETTS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES REFORM FACT SHEET

RULES REFORM

The House began in February by changing the Speaker's term to a maximum of four terms. House rules were changed to provide for more debate and more transparency. For the first time, it also mandated ethics training for members.

ETHICS AND CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

In March, the House tackled the first comprehensive ethics reform legislation in 15 years. That bill gives strong powers of enforcement to the Secretary of State and Ethics Commission, and increases the penalties for those who violate our lobbying laws. It also provides for stricter requirements on lobbyists themselves and targets anyone who gives a gift to influence or attempts to influence a public official.

This bill also includes serious campaign finance reforms. It increases the frequency candidates public office have to file disclosure reports to twice in a non-election year and require sub-vendor reporting. These campaign finance reform provisions go farther than other competing ethics reform plans.

TRANSPORTATION REFORM

In April, the House passed a historic bill that will eliminate the Massachusetts Turnpike Authority. This bill changes the old "23 and out" pension policy for MBTA workers and places them under the auspices of the GIC for health insurance purposes. These changes will lead to real savings.

This plan was offered without the \$.19 gas tax increase proposed by the administration, which was offered in the absence of meaningful reforms.

PENSION REFORM

The House addressed those pension outrages that particularly anger the public. This bill removes the so-called "one-day, one year" rule that allows elected officials to serve one day in a calendar year and gain a full year of creditable service as well as the so-called "king for a day" rule that allows for increased

benefits for some employees who go out on accidental disability retirement to receive increased benefits if they did so while filling in for a supervisor.

This plan targets the most outrageous pension excesses. It focuses on real as opposed to phony reforms, which could end up resulting in ballooning costs as prior administrations attempted in the area of transportation. The goal of the House pension reform plan was attainable reform that will last the test of time, not on aspirational goals likely to be stricken down by courts in a year or two.