

State Representative Alice Hanlon Peisch  
14th Norfolk District  
Wellesley Weston Natick

# THE PEISCH POST

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## A Message From Your Representative



Dear Friends,

The Massachusetts Legislature was busy this year. As we begin the second year of the 2005-2006 legislative session, I would like to share with you some of the achievements of the House of Representatives thus far.

It continues to be an honor and a pleasure to serve as the representative for the 14th Norfolk District. Please feel free to contact me with questions, or if I may be of any assistance.

Sincerely,

*Alice Hanlon Peisch*

### CONTACT INFORMATION

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### PLEASE READ!

#### 2002 CAPITAL GAINS TAX UPDATE

- All taxpayers that received a Notice of Intent to Assess will receive a letter from DOR telling them to disregard the notice
- Taxpayers that paid the Notice of Intent to Assess issued in accordance with the Petersen II ruling will receive automatic refunds
- Some taxpayers may be eligible to request an abatement of capital gains paid at the higher rate; taxpayers will have until **June 30, 2006** to file a request for abatement

*To file an immediate request for abatement, go to [www.mass.gov/dor](http://www.mass.gov/dor) and click on Forms and Advice under the press release.*

*Taxpayers with questions regarding the abatement process should contact DOR's Customer Service Bureau at (800)392-6089 or Rep. Peisch at*

*(617) 722-2080.*

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# 2005 In Brief

**Tax Relief for Seniors:** Eligible seniors can currently receive an annual state income tax credit of up to \$840 if their house is valued at \$400,000 or less; New law initiated in the House raises the property value threshold to \$600,000, making tens of thousands of additional seniors across the Commonwealth eligible for tax relief. **Status:** Signed into law.

**Health Care Reform:** Based on months of deliberations in the newly formed Committees on Health Care Financing, Public Health and Mental Health and Substance Abuse the House passed an historic bill to expand coverage to nearly every Massachusetts resident through significant expansion of Medicaid coverage for the poor, requiring individuals to purchase affordable insurance and most employers to contribute to the health care coverage of their employees. **Status:** In conference; attempting to resolve differences between House and Senate versions.

**Energy Efficient Appliances:** Recognizing that efficiency must be part of the solution to state's energy crisis, this legislation encourages the sale of more energy efficient household appliances in an effort to reduce energy consumption and limit immediate threats of brown outs and black outs this winter, as well as cut consumer utility bills by \$1 billion over 25 years. **Status:** Signed into law November 22, 2005.

**H.E.A.T.:** In a proactive response to skyrocketing energy costs and the impact on winter heating bills, this legislation offers tax deductions on home heating bills, tax credits to promote purchase of energy efficient residential items and \$20 million in heating assistance for low-income individuals and families. **Status:** Signed into law.

**OUI Repeat Offenders ("Melanie's Law"):** This bill is the toughest drunk driving law in the Commonwealth's history. It stiffens penalties for repeat offenders and brings state in compliance with federal drunk driving standards. **Status:** Signed into law October 28, 2005.



**Welcome Home Bill:** Passed just in time for Veteran's Day, this bill provides additional benefits and increased pay for service members, veterans and their families as well as education and fee waivers for Massachusetts National Guard members. **Status:** Signed into law November 11, 2005.

**Federal Reimbursement for Children with Autism:** This bill allows Massachusetts to maximize state dollars by leveraging federal funds for critical services, including in-home intervention, provided to children diagnosed with autism; Medicaid waiver reimburses state for 50% of costs associated with treating children with disability more common than all childhood cancers, muscular dystrophy, juvenile diabetes and cystic fibrosis combined. **Status:** Signed into law October 5, 2005.

**Disposition of Surplus Land:** The House passed comprehensive legislation that restructured the process by which the Commonwealth disposes of surplus property; the bill offers municipalities and non-profits the opportunity to purchase the property at a discount and provides incentives for job growth and job creation on state owned parcels. **Status:** Passed by the House; referred to the Senate.

## District News

### WELLESLEY BILL SIGNED INTO LAW

Rep. Peisch announced that legislation authorizing the Town of Wellesley to create the position of Finance Director was signed into law in December. Approved by the June 13, 2005 Special Town Meeting, this legislation provides that the new Finance Director will be appointed by the Executive Director subject to the approval of the Selectman, for a term of up to three years. Rep. Peisch explained, "The passage of this legislation will provide the Town of Wellesley with the flexibility necessary to fulfill all of its duties."

### South Natick Hills

On January 10, 2006, the Housing Appeals Committee denied the motion to confirm the constructive grant of a comprehensive permit to South Natick Hills, LLC. The Housing Appeals Committee dismissed the appeal, allowing the Natick Zoning Board of Appeals to schedule a public hearing on the matter. **"I am pleased that the citizens of Natick will have the opportunity to voice their concerns relative to this project,"** Rep. Peisch said. **"The public hearing process allows the community to work cooperatively to achieve optimal results."**

### PRESERVING HASTINGS, KENDAL GREEN AND SILVER HILL STATIONS

Following the elimination of two scheduled stops at Hastings Station (Trains #454 and #433), Rep. Alice Peisch urged the MBTA to restore the stops. Further, Rep. Peisch has already begun advocating for the maintenance of all existing stations in Weston in response to a proposal to consolidate the Kendal Green, Hastings and Silver Hill stations. **"I believe in encouraging the use of public transportation,"** Peisch explained. **"Clearly, the way to do that is by making it as convenient as possible—not by eliminating and consolidating stops."**

### PEISCH HOSTS WELLESLEY MIDDLE SCHOOL MUSICIANS



*The Grades 7&8 Orchestra, the Grade 8 Song Sisters and the Grade 8 Brooks Brothers pose with Rep. Peisch on the Grand Staircase just before their performance.*

## Public Charities Bill: Down, But Not Out

This January, S. 1074, known as the "Public Charities Bill," was defeated by the House of Representatives. The bill failed for a variety of reasons; many who had originally supported the bill were persuaded by concerns raised by members of a variety of religious denominations that the bill would place an unreasonable burden on small congregations. Others felt it crossed the line that should exist between church and state. In an attempt to address these concerns many who were supportive of the bill filed amendments, including Rep. Alice Peisch. Unfortunately, most of the amendments were ruled out of order by the Clerk and did not come to the floor for a vote. Rep. Peisch's amendment, which would have sent the bill to the Supreme Judicial Court for an opinion on the church/state issue, was defeated.

Rep. Peisch explained, "While the bill as passed by the Senate may have had some flaws, I continue to believe that shedding light on the financial affairs of institutions that receive state subsidies via tax exemptions is desirable. I will continue to work with the many other like-minded legislators to draft a bill that adequately responds to the legitimate concerns raised by some of the critics so that the current situation can be corrected."

### MONTHLY OFFICE HOURS

**First Monday of each month:**

Natick Senior Center, 9:30-10:30 am

**Second Monday of each month:**

Wellesley Free Library, 9-10am

Weston Town Hall, 10:30-11:30am

*Formal sessions are often scheduled with very little notice. To confirm that office hours are in fact being held on a given day, call Rep. Peisch's aide Stephany at (617) 722-2080.*

### STUDENTS!

- Interested in public service?
- Want to learn about the legislative process?

*Consider a summer internship in Rep. Peisch's State House office. For more information, contact Stephany in Rep. Peisch's office at (617) 722-2080.*

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