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## **Massachusetts Legislature Passes 2016 State Budget**

**BOSTON – Representative Todd M. Smola (R-Warren, Ranking Member, Committee on Ways & Means)** joined his colleagues in the Massachusetts House of Representatives to approve the fiscal 2016 state budget. The \$38.14B spending bill increases education funding as well as the Earned Income Tax Credit for working families and individuals. Representative Smola was part of the six member conference committee responsible for working out differences between budget proposals submitted by the House and Senate earlier in the year.

“It was a pleasure to serve as a member of the budget conference committee,” said Representative Smola. “An agreement like this doesn’t happen without some flexibility and it was clear throughout the process that we had a number of challenges to address. The focus was to get the finances of our commonwealth back in order after running a significant deficit in 2015. I believe this is a sound budget that increases financial support to worthy programs without raising taxes.”

The budget includes an increase to local aid and regional school transportation and prioritizes funding for substance abuse. It also addresses meaningful reforms at the MBTA by including a 3-year suspension of the Pacheco law, which has created a financial hardship for the agency. Significant investments were made to the Department of Developmental Service, which will allow services for more than 1,000 new families. The budget also keeps the state on track to roll the income tax back to 5%.

“The people of Massachusetts spoke loud and clear regarding the income tax,” added Smola. “The increase of the state income tax many years ago was intended to be a temporary measure. I’m proud to say that we were able to halt the effort to freeze the rollback. This is a huge victory for taxpayers who find themselves working more and taking home less.”

The budget passed the House of Representatives and the Senate and is now before the Governor for final approval.

For additional information please contact Representative Smola at [Todd.Smola@mahouse.gov](mailto:Todd.Smola@mahouse.gov) or (617)722-2100.

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