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STATEHOUSE, BOSTON, 02133-1053

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

August 21, 2020

**CONTACT:**

Kristina Gaffny, Office of Sen. Friedman

[Kristina.Gaffny@masenate.gov](mailto:Kristina.Gaffny@masenate.gov)

(617) 722-1432

Cody Case, Office of Rep. Gordon

[Cody.Case@mahouse.gov](mailto:Cody.Case@mahouse.gov)

(617) 722-2575

**\$1.8 Billion Bond Bill to Strengthen the Commonwealth's  
Information Technology & Infrastructure Becomes Law, Includes \$175,000  
for Burlington Schools**

*Invests in food security, education, public safety accountability*

BOSTON (8/21/2020) -- The Massachusetts Legislature recently passed a bill authorizing up to \$1.8 billion in spending for the improvement of information technology equipment and other capital projects in Massachusetts, including an authorization to support technology infrastructure upgrades at Burlington Public Schools. The legislation also authorizes funding for food security, law enforcement body cameras, and investments in educational technologies in Massachusetts schools. The bill was recently signed into law by the Governor.

“This IT bond bill will allow us to find new ways to invest in underserved communities across the Commonwealth, especially as we continue to confront the COVID-19 pandemic,” said **Senator Cindy F. Friedman (D-Arlington)**. “I’m particularly thrilled that this law authorizes funds I fought for to automate and expedite the sealing of criminal records, which is just one example of how our system can do a better job to remove the stigma of having a criminal record for individuals who are trying to move forward with their lives. Now more than ever, we should be investing in the things that strengthen our communities, support our most vulnerable residents and help people restart their lives rather than penalize them for life.”

The new law includes a \$2.5 million technology investment authorization secured by Friedman to automate the Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) system for sealing criminal records. Under the current system, sealing a criminal record can take months – meanwhile employers, landlords, bankers and others turn people away from employment, housing and financing opportunities based on minor or old incidents that appear on CORIs. This substantial delay is inefficient and continues to disproportionately impact people of color in the Commonwealth.

“I’m proud of the investments that this bill makes across the Commonwealth” said **Representative Ken Gordon (D-Bedford)**. “I’m particularly pleased that this bill includes an authorization for Burlington Public Schools. Senator Friedman and I know that the town needs this support at a time when schools are preparing for an extremely challenging year”.

The new law, which includes \$794 million for state and local general technology and physical infrastructure, also features the following targeted investments:

- \$110 million in public safety infrastructure and equipment;
- \$134 million in statewide economic development grants and reinvestment in disproportionately impacted communities;
- \$80 million in educational IT and infrastructure grants, including \$50 million to assist public schools in facilitating remote learning environments;
- \$10 million to fund technology investments at community health centers;
- \$37 million in food security grants;
- \$25 million in capital improvements for licensed early education and care providers and after school programs to ensure safe reopening during COVID-19; and
- \$30 million in public safety accountability technologies including body cameras and a race and ethnicity data sharing system.

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