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Massachusetts General Court

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Representative Gordon Supports Bill to Waive MCAS Requirements, Help Vulnerable Residents Amid COVID-19 Public Health Crisis**

**BOSTON (4/14/20)** – Representative Ken Gordon supported legislation passed by the House of Representatives that provides MCAS testing and budgetary flexibility to school districts and supports those experiencing homelessness in the Commonwealth. The bill was later passed by the Senate and signed into law by the Governor on Friday, April 11.

This latest COVID-19 relief package addresses disruptions caused by the closure of K-12 schools due to COVID-19 by waiving the MCAS requirements for the 2019-2020 academic year and allowing the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) to modify or waive competency determination requirements related to high school graduation.

"I'm particularly pleased that the Legislature took this critical step to allow our teachers and students to focus on active learning rather than test preparation. This is another example of the Legislature's commitment to supporting our communities throughout this difficult time" said Rep. Gordon.

In order to comply with measures under the newly implemented Student Opportunity Act, the legislation also requires the DESE Commissioner to extend the deadlines for school districts to submit their three-year plans to address educational disparities in student subgroups. This deadline will be extended to May 15, 2020, or later, as determined by the Commissioner. The legislation also provides budgetary flexibility for regional schools as they deal with the impact of COVID-19.

Additionally, the Legislature reaffirmed its commitment to protecting vulnerable populations, as the legislation repurposes existing homelessness program funds that can't be provided due to the COVID-19 outbreak. The legislation redirects funding to address immediate and critical homelessness needs resulting from the public health emergency.

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Representative Gordon will continue to provide updates on the State's efforts to combat COVID-19 as information becomes available. Rep. Gordon encourages constituents to visit [repkengordon.org/covid-19](http://repkengordon.org/covid-19) or his Facebook page at [facebook.com/StateRepKenGordon](https://facebook.com/StateRepKenGordon) for the latest updates and access to his virtual office hour sessions. While he and staff are working remotely, Rep. Gordon's office can always be reached at (617) 722-2575 or [Kenneth.Gordon@mahouse.gov](mailto:Kenneth.Gordon@mahouse.gov).

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