

February 9, 2007

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives:

As provided in Article LXXXVII of the Amendments to the Constitution, I submit for your consideration, "An Act Reorganizing The Governor's Cabinet And Certain Agencies Of The Executive Department."

This Article 87 plan will bring together agencies that operate in related spheres, thereby enhancing the efficiency and responsiveness of governmental agencies and tying responsibility and authority to accountability. This legislation modernizes those Executive agencies responsible for the Commonwealth's energy, environmental, telecommunications, labor, and economic policies to maximize the promise and synergy of these vital government services.

Specifically, this bill focuses on the structure of the cabinet and makes several changes. First it establishes an Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development, which will include the Department of Housing and Community Development. Second, this bill establishes an Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development, which will include the Department of Labor, the Department of Workforce Development, as well as the MCAD. Further, it creates an Executive Office of Energy and Environment, which brings together the Division of Energy Resources and the Department of Public Utilities, including the energy-related functions of the former Department of Telecommunications and Energy. This plan reduces the number of commissioners from five to three.

This plan also creates a new agency called the Department of Telecommunications and Cable, to be housed in the Office of Consumer Affairs and Business Regulation, within the new Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development. It places the Department of Telecommunications and Cable under the direction of a single commissioner appointed by the Governor. Finally, this bill amends the composition of the Energy Facilities Siting Board, an agency to be housed in the Department of Public Utilities. With this new governmental organization, the Executive branch will become more accountable and efficient, and our agencies will better maximize their expertise and make Massachusetts a national model for environmental, energy and communications policies.

Accordingly, I urge your favorable consideration of this plan to simplify our systems and to increase the efficiency and accountability of our government for the people of the Commonwealth.

Respectfully submitted,
Deval L. Patrick