

HOUSE No. 852

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:
Martha M. Walz

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the passage of the accompanying bill:
An Act to protect groundwater levels.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:
Martha M. Walz	8th Suffolk
Byron Rushing	9th Suffolk
Michael J. Moran	18th Suffolk

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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In the Year Two Thousand and Nine
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AN ACT TO PROTECT GROUNDWATER LEVELS.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

SECTION 1. Section 2 of chapter 21A of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2006 Official Edition, is hereby amended by inserting after clause (30) the following:

(31) participate in a City/State Groundwater Working Group as described in a memorandum of understanding, as it may be amended from time to time, entered into as of the fifteenth day of September 2005 by the office, certain state authorities, the city of Boston, certain city of Boston agencies and commissions, and the Boston Groundwater Trust.

SECTION 2. Section 8 of chapter 21A of the General Laws is hereby amended by inserting, after the first paragraph, the following paragraph:

The department of environmental protection shall be vested with all the powers and duties which relate to groundwater supply and groundwater protection necessary to implement the provisions of chapter 21 O, including the promulgation of all necessary and appropriate regulations. The department of environmental protection shall, in its sole discretion, charge an existing bureau with responsibility to implement the provisions of chapter 21 O or create a new bureau for that purpose.

SECTION 3. Massachusetts Groundwater Protection Act

The General Laws are hereby amended by inserting after chapter 21 N the following chapter:

CHAPTER 21 O

MASSACHUSETTS GROUNDWATER PROTECTION ACT.

- (a) Short Title. This chapter shall be known and may be cited as the "Massachusetts Groundwater Protection Act".
- (b) Purpose. The purpose of the Massachusetts Groundwater Protection Act is to protect structures supported by wooden pilings from damage due to lowered groundwater.
- (c) Definitions. As used in this chapter, the following words shall, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise, have the following meanings:

"Act", the Massachusetts Groundwater Protection Act.

"Basement", an enclosed structure underneath a building, the floor of which is, in whole or in part, below the adjacent ground surface.

"Board", the Groundwater Protection Board established pursuant to subsection (j) of this chapter.

"Bureau Representative", an official from the Department charged with investigating potential causes of groundwater drawdown problem upon petition to the Board.

"City/State Groundwater Working Group", the state and other authorities, agencies, and departments that are signatories to the Memorandum of Understanding dated September 15, 2005, and who have been active participants in the quarterly meetings held subsequently, and also including subsequent signatories.

"Covered Community", shall have the meaning set forth in section (e)(1) of this chapter.

"Department", the Department of Environmental Protection.

"Groundwater", all water beneath the surface of the ground, whether wholly or partly within the commonwealth.

"Impacted Area", an area within a Covered Community where buildings or other structures are known or suspected to be supported by wooden pilings.

"Infrastructure Owner or Operator", any person who owns, operates or maintains Underground Infrastructure located within the commonwealth.

"Local Agency", the entity within a Covered Community designated to carry out the applicable provisions of this chapter, including any department, board, commission, division, authority, or other entity within a city or town, or any agency or political subdivision thereof.

"Monitoring Well", an excavation, pipe, or underground structure designed and installed for the purpose of measuring groundwater levels.

"Other Building Owner", any person who owns a building within the commonwealth and is not classified as a "Residential Building Owner" as defined by this chapter.

"Owner or Operator", any Residential Building Owner, Other Building Owner, or Underground Infrastructure Owner or Operator.

"Person", any agency or political subdivision of government, any public or private corporation or authority, any natural person, individual, trust, firm, joint stock company, partnership, association or other entity, and any officer, employee, or agent of such person.

"Residential Building Owner", any person who owns a residential dwelling. A condominium association shall be considered a Residential Building Owner for the purpose of this chapter.

"Recharge" or "Recharging", the replacement of groundwater through the use of a Recharge Well or other underground structure or system designed, constructed, and installed for the purpose of conveying water into the ground.

"Recharge Well", an excavation, perforated pipe, or porous underground structure, such as a drywell or leaching pit, trench, or gallery, designed and installed for the purpose of Recharging groundwater.

"State Agency/Agencies", entities or instrumentalities of state government, including but not limited to all departments, boards, commissions, divisions, authorities, or other such organizations established by the Commonwealth.

"Sump Pump", a mechanism that discharges local groundwater to a sewer or other conveyance.

"Underground Infrastructure", any subsurface installation other than a Residential Building or Other Building, such as piping and conduits, tunnels, depressed roadways, railways, walkways, and Basements, including those owned, operated or maintained by public entities or private parties.

"Wooden pilings", tree trunks or other wooden supports driven into soil to provide a base upon which buildings or other structures are constructed.

(d) Powers and Duties of the Department.

- (1) Within 90 days from the effective date of this chapter, the Department shall develop and implement a plan for the staffing, equipping and funding of its program under this chapter.
- (2) The Department shall develop and adopt regulations to effectively plan and manage groundwater and for the administration of this chapter as necessary and proper to ensure an adequate supply of groundwater for the purpose of sustaining and protecting existing and new structures supported by wooden pilings within the commonwealth.
 - (i) Such regulations shall be designed to protect the natural supply of groundwater and maintain stable groundwater levels to protect structures that now depend on sufficient groundwater levels for structural support; to assure comprehensive and systematic planning and management of water withdrawals impacting groundwater levels in Impacted Areas throughout the commonwealth; and to remedy damage resulting from exposure caused by lowered groundwater to buildings and other structures supported by wooden pilings.

- (ii) The Department shall establish a mechanism for monitoring groundwater levels impacted by leaking Underground Infrastructure, Basements, and other sources of groundwater drawdown.
- (3) The Department shall promulgate final regulations within 180 days of the effective date of this chapter establishing the criteria, standards and procedures to be followed in making the applicability determinations consistent with the provisions of subsection (e)(1).
- (4) Within 180 days of the effective date of this chapter, the Department shall adopt, and thereafter from time to time may amend, standards and regulations on the enforcement of the provisions of this chapter.
- (5) The Department shall have the authority to require State Agencies and Local Agencies to: provide requested information from building permits and other historical records, in consultation with local transportation departments, historical research organizations, and historical preservation groups; conduct field monitoring, testing and inspections in order to identify reporting limits; administer and enforce the Department's regulations adopted pursuant to this chapter; report instances of noncompliance; and assess and collect permit fees, and fines for noncompliance and nonpayment of fees and permit fees authorized by this chapter.
- (6) The Department shall coordinate with and provide oversight of Local Agencies to effectuate the obligations imposed upon Local Agencies under this Act, and shall monitor Local Agencies' compliance with all applicable provisions, including oversight of Local Agencies and their responsibilities under this chapter to regulate the use of sump pumps and the administration of construction permits involving groundwater removal.
- (7) As may be necessary from time to time to carry out the purposes of this chapter, the Department may acquire real property, or any interest therein, by purchase, gift or lease, or by eminent domain under the provisions of chapter seventy-nine, and may conduct construction for the purpose of Recharging local groundwater.
- (8) The Department shall coordinate with and oversee the establishment by Local Agencies of fees that shall be imposed upon any Person who pumps or otherwise removes groundwater within a Covered Community in connection with activities including, but not limited to, construction, excavation, renovation, operation or other groundwater removal.
- (9) The Department shall promulgate regulations governing the issuance of groundwater removal permits for any construction, excavation, renovation, operation or other groundwater removal activities being conducted within an Impacted Area. Said regulations shall set forth the criteria, standards and procedures for issuing groundwater removal permits and shall establish a

schedule for groundwater removal fees. Upon the effective date of the Department's regulations, no groundwater shall be removed from any groundwater source within an Impacted Area a groundwater removal permit obtained from the Department. Said regulations shall further provide, at a minimum, that:

- (i) The permitting program established shall be administered by the Local Agency designated by each Covered Community pursuant to subsection (e) of this chapter;
 - (ii) Any Person who pumps or otherwise removes groundwater in connection with any construction, excavation, renovation, operational, or other activities within the boundaries of an Impacted Area shall be subject to the permitting program; the failure of any Person who is subject to the permitting program to comply with the requirement to obtain a permit shall subject said Person to enforcement pursuant to subsection (e)(5); each Local Agency shall provide notice to all property owners within Impacted Areas of the measures they will need to undertake to comply;
 - (iii) Each permit issued pursuant to this subsection shall require as a condition to the permit the Recharge of groundwater being removed to the maximum extent feasible;
 - (iv) Each permit holder shall pay a groundwater removal fee established by the applicable Local Agency; in the event that groundwater is directed into a local Recharge Well, groundwater removal fees shall not be assessed or collected, but said Person shall remain subject to the permitting program and the requirement to obtain a permit; and
 - (v) The uniform system of groundwater removal fees established by the Department pursuant to this section shall be linearly proportional to the volumes of groundwater removed, which shall be monitored and recorded using a utility meter.
- (10) The Department is empowered to require from time to time reports, studies, and analyses by Local Authorities on whether this Act should be amended to address other means of maintaining groundwater sufficiency, including, but not limited to, Recharge from sidewalks, parking areas, and roof drains.
- (11) The Department shall establish and administer various funds as set forth herein.
- (i) The Department is hereby authorized to establish a Groundwater Protection Fund.
 - (ii) The Department is hereby authorized to establish a Groundwater Protection Loan Fund.

- (iii) The Department is hereby authorized to establish a Groundwater Protection Remedial Fund, which shall have a funding source separate from and independent of the Groundwater Protection Fund.
- (iv) All fees, fines, and other monies collected pursuant to this chapter shall be placed into the Groundwater Protection Fund.
- (v) Within 180 days from the effective date of this chapter, the Department shall establish rules for disbursement of the funds from the Groundwater Protection Fund, which shall include provisions for the periodic disbursement in equal portions to: (i) the Department for its administrative costs in carrying out the provisions of this chapter; (ii) Local Agencies within Covered Communities for carrying out their administrative and enforcement responsibilities pursuant to the provisions of this chapter; and (iii) the Groundwater Protection Loan Fund.
- (vi) Within 180 days from the effective date of this chapter, the Department shall develop rules for the disbursement of low-cost loans from the Groundwater Protection Loan Fund to private property owners which apply for such monies to install a Recharge Well (or wells).
- (vii) Within 180 days from the effective date of this chapter, the Department shall promulgate regulations for the funding and administration of the Groundwater Protection Remedial Fund.

(e) Duties and Obligations of Covered Communities.

(1) Applicability

- (i) The requirements of this section shall apply to all cities and towns that determine, consistent with the provisions of this chapter, that buildings or other structures located within their duly constituted boundaries are supported by wooden pilings that are structurally dependent on coverage by groundwater. These cities and towns shall be designated as Covered Communities.
- (ii) All cities and towns shall make the applicability determination required under this subsection and report to the Department within one year of the effective date of this chapter. Such determination shall be made by majority vote of the city council or town meeting.
- (iii) Any legal resident of said city or town shall have the right to petition the Groundwater Protection Board for review of the applicability determination made by a city or town pursuant to the provisions of this section if such city or town determined that buildings or other structures located within its duly constituted boundaries are not

supported by wooden pilings that are structurally dependent on coverage by groundwater..

- (iv) A Local Agency within each Covered Community shall be charged with the responsibility of complying with the applicable requirements of this chapter.
- (v) The permitting program shall provide for an exception for emergency water removal, including the use of sump pumps, caused by extreme weather events. A permit shall not be required and fees shall not apply for fourteen days following the extreme weather event.

(2) Impacted Areas

- (i) Each Covered Community shall identify Impacted Areas where buildings or other structures are known or suspected to be supported by wooden pilings and are therefore potentially subject to damage due to lowered groundwater.
- (ii) Each Covered Community shall monitor the local levels of groundwater in Impacted Areas. Monitoring may be accomplished using new or existing Monitoring Wells or other techniques to monitor local levels of groundwater.
- (iii) Each Covered Community shall publish and update at least quarter-annually a map showing groundwater levels in Impacted Areas.

(3) Certification Program. Each Covered Community shall keep a record of the certifications to be made by property owners at the time of sale of each property sold within the boundaries of an Impacted Area as required by section (f).

(4) Construction Permits. Using regulations developed by the Department, each Covered Community shall review applications for and grant safe-limit, limited-duration groundwater removal permits for construction projects.

(5) Enforcement. Each Covered Community is hereby authorized to collect fees pursuant to this chapter, and is hereby authorized to adopt bylaws or ordinances providing for enforcement and penalties against Residential Building Owners, Other Building Owners, and Owners and Operators of Underground Infrastructure that are consistent with the Department's regulations issued pursuant to this chapter.

(f) Sump Pump Removal Program.

(1) Twelve months from the effective date of this chapter, the following requirements shall apply to all Residential Building Owners within an

Impacted Area and shall be met prior to the closing of a sale of any parcel of property located within the boundaries of an Impacted Area.

- (i) Each Residential Building Owner within an Impacted Area shall ascertain whether a sump pump is present on such property. In the event that no sump pump exists, the owner shall certify that fact according to the procedures set forth below. In the event that a sump pump does exist, the property shall be subject to a groundwater removal fee, unless said owner has permanently disconnected the sump pump from the sewer or other conveyance and re-directed the flow to a Recharge Well, or taken other measures to eliminate the need for a sump pump. If the sump pump has not been disconnected, said owner must install a utility meter to monitor and record the volume of groundwater removed, and said owner must pay the groundwater removal fee established pursuant to section (d). The owner shall certify that (i) the sump pump has been permanently disconnected or (ii) said owner has installed a utility meter and made application to the Local Agency subjecting the property to payment of groundwater removal fees. The owner shall sign and record the certification document at the Registry of Deeds.
 - (ii) The owner shall submit a copy of the registered certification document to the Department and the Local Agency.
 - (iii) This subsection shall be implemented and administered by the Local Agency designated by each Covered Community pursuant to this chapter.
- (2) The following requirements shall apply to all Other Building Owners and to Infrastructure Owners and Operators controlling property within an Impacted Area:
- (i) Twelve months from the effective date of this chapter, all such owners or operators must ascertain whether groundwater is being removed from their property. In the event that groundwater is not being removed, the owner shall certify that fact according to the procedures set forth below. In the event that groundwater is being removed, the property shall achieve full compliance with subsections (ii) and (iii) below within 12 months of the date of the effective date of this chapter;
 - (ii) Within 12 months of the effective date of this chapter, all such owners or operators must either: (1) have permanently disconnected their sump pumps or other groundwater conveyances from the sewer or other pipes or conduits that transport groundwater off their property; (2) have installed a utility meter (or meters) to monitor and record the volumes pumped and pay fees in accordance with the fee schedule

established pursuant to this chapter; or (3) have installed and connected the sump pumps or other conveyances to a groundwater Recharge Well (or wells) of sufficient capacity to return the anticipated volume of pumped (or otherwise removed) groundwater to below the ground surface of potentially impacted property. Groundwater removal fees shall not be charged for groundwater pumped or otherwise removed from the property if the water is discharged into a Recharge Well (or wells) heretofore or thereafter;

- (iii) The owner shall certify that: (i) any and all sump pumps or other groundwater conveyances have been disconnected; (ii) said owner or operator has installed a utility meter (or meters) and has applied to the Local Agency for a groundwater removal permit; or (iii) a groundwater Recharge Well (or wells) of sufficient capacity has been installed and connected to all sump pumps or other groundwater conveyances. The owner shall sign and record said certification document at the Registry of Deeds.
- (iv) This subsection shall be implemented and administered by the Local Agency designated by each Covered Community pursuant to this chapter.

(g) Duties of Owners and Operators of Underground Infrastructure to Inspect and Repair.

- (1) Each Infrastructure Owner or Operator shall inspect their Underground Infrastructure within all Impacted Areas for leaks or discharge no less frequently than every five years. Said Owner or Operator shall report to the Department the results of that inspection and the condition of that Underground Infrastructure within 30 days of each inspection using a form to be established by the Department.
 - (2) Each Infrastructure Owner or Operator within an Impacted Area shall commence and diligently pursue the necessary repairs to any existing groundwater leaks within 45 days of discovery; and continuously thereafter monitor, repair, and maintain all Underground Infrastructure owned or operated within an Impacted Area in accordance with this Act. The Department may issue extensions to Infrastructure Owners or Operators upon a showing of good cause.
 - (3) Infrastructure Owners or Operators shall pay any fines and penalties imposed by the Department wherever said Owner or Operator fails to timely comply with the inspection, reporting, and repair provisions in this subsection.
- (h) Enforcement. The Department may issue such orders as may be reasonably necessary to aid in the enforcement of the provisions of this chapter. The orders shall include, but shall not be limited to, orders requiring property Owners or Operators to cease

any activity which is in violation of the provisions of this chapter and the standards and regulations established pursuant thereto.

- (1) Penalties. If the Department finds that any Owner or Operator is not in compliance with any order issued pursuant to this section, it shall assess a civil administrative penalty on such Owner or Operator. In determining the amount of the civil penalty, the Department shall consider the willfulness of the violation, its effect on the groundwater levels, the cost of restoration and repair of properties damaged by the violation, the cost to adequately Recharge groundwater levels, and the cost to the commonwealth of enforcing the provisions of this chapter against such Owner or Operator.
 - (2) Injunction. In addition to collecting any civil penalties recoverable pursuant to this chapter, or in the event that money damages are inadequate, the Department may request the attorney general to bring an action in the superior court to restrain, prevent or enjoin any conduct by any Owner or Operator that is prohibited by this chapter, or to compel action to comply immediately and fully with any order issued by the Department. Except in cases of emergency where a court has determined that immediate abatement of the unlawful conduct is required to protect the public or private interest, the court may in its discretion fix a reasonable time during which the Owner or Operator responsible for the unlawful conduct shall abate and correct the violation. The expense of the proceeding shall be recoverable from the violator in such manner as may now or hereafter be provided by law.
 - (3) Knowing Violation. It shall be unlawful for any Owner or Operator to knowingly: (i) violate or assist in the violation of any of the provisions of this chapter or of any rules and regulations adopted hereunder; (ii) fail to comply with any order issued by the Department; or (iii) upon receipt of an order pursuant to this section, continue to construct or modify any underground structure in Impacted Areas. Any Owner or Operator who engages in such knowing unlawful conduct shall, for each separate offense, pay a fine of not less than \$1,000 dollars, nor more than \$10,000 dollars or shall be subject to a civil penalty not to exceed \$25,000 dollars per day for each day such offense occurs or continues, in addition to any costs to remedy harm caused. Each day of violation of any provision of this chapter or of any regulation adopted or order issued hereunder shall constitute a separate offense.
- (i) Access. For the purpose of determining compliance with this chapter or any regulations adopted thereunder, the duly authorized agents and employees of the Department and Local Agencies may at all reasonable times, upon obtaining a court order allowing the Department access or upon obtaining the voluntary consent of the Residential Building Owner, Other Building Owner, and Infrastructure Owner or Operator, enter and examine any Building or Underground Infrastructure potentially causing groundwater removal. The owner or operator with the authority or control over the Building or Underground Infrastructure, upon presentation of proper identification and purpose for inspection by the agents or employees of the Local

Agency or Department, shall give such agents and employees free and unrestricted entry and access. Such agents and employees are authorized to conduct any inspection, monitoring or sampling necessary for the administration or enforcement of this chapter. Notwithstanding the foregoing, when there is an actual or threatened risk to the integrity of nearby surface or subsurface structures, the Local Agency and Department is authorized to enter and examine any Building or Underground Infrastructure as necessary for the administration or enforcement of this chapter. In such cases, the Local Agency and Department is authorized to seek immediate injunctive action from a court of competent jurisdiction to halt any activity imminently jeopardizing the structural integrity of the Building or Underground Infrastructure itself, or nearby surface or subsurface structures.

(j) Groundwater Protection Board.

- (1) Within 180 days from the effective date of this chapter, the Department shall create a Groundwater Protection Board within the Department to be charged with the authority to resolve disputes arising from any alleged damage caused by lowered groundwater levels in Covered Communities. The Department shall establish rules and procedures to assist the Board in administering its authority, including procedures for conducting adjudicatory proceedings, rules and procedures governing notice, pleadings, motions, discovery, intervention and participation, hearings, enforcement orders, penalties, rulings, and appeals.
- (2) The Board shall consist of 15 members, a majority of whom must have expertise in civil or geotechnical engineering, architecture, or prior experience in studies or investigations concerning groundwater and wooden pilings. Five members of the Board shall be appointed by the governor, five shall be appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives, and five shall be appointed by the president of the senate. Each member shall serve for a term of three years. Members may be reappointed for additional terms without limitation.
- (3) Any Person who owns property supported by wooden pilings in an Impacted Area shall have the right to petition the Board for a determination of responsibility and an apportionment of liability, provided that said Person produces evidence of damage due to the alleged drawdown, including the level at which the allegedly damaged wooden piles were cut off when first installed. In the event that a city or town, in carrying out its obligations pursuant to this chapter, makes an applicability determination that is inconsistent with the criteria set forth in this Act, any Person owning property within said city or town shall have the right to petition the Groundwater Protection Board for review of the applicability determination.
- (4) Upon being petitioned, the Board shall conduct an adjudicatory proceeding pursuant to the regulations promulgated by the Department under this section.

- (5) The Board shall determine the legal rights, duties, and privileges of the parties to the adjudicatory proceeding, by considering the following factors: (i) risk to human health, the environment, or public safety; (ii) risks to the structural integrity of residential, commercial, or publicly owned structures; (iii) severity of the drawdown; and (iv) other factors deemed relevant by the Board or the Department or the Local Agency and as set forth and explained in the regulations to be developed pursuant to this section.
- (6) In reviewing a petition brought under this section, the Board shall:
 - (i) Appoint a Hearing Officer and Bureau Representative to investigate and identify Owners and Operators of Underground Infrastructure that may be liable for contributing to the groundwater drawdown problem;
 - (ii) Direct the Hearing Officer and Bureau Representative to provide adequate public notice as may be required by law and to notify all interested parties that a hearing will take place; and
 - (iii) Conduct a hearing and issue a ruling on the determination of responsibility among Owners and Operators of Basements and Underground Infrastructure causing groundwater removal.
- (7) The Board shall further have the power to:
 - (i) Issue enforcement orders to any Owners or Operators determined to be liable under this chapter to require repairs to the Basement or Underground Infrastructure and the initiation of short-term and long-term remediation measures;
 - (ii) Issue civil penalties consistent with this chapter;
 - (iii) In the case of continued noncompliance with an enforcement order issued by the Board or the Department, the Department is authorized to perform necessary repairs to the Underground Infrastructure and seek reimbursement for the full cost of those repairs from the responsible Owner or Operator;
 - (iv) Institute actions to recover all costs incurred by the Department under this section from any Owner or Operator liable under this chapter;
 - (v) Require the payment of damages to injured parties; and
 - (vi) In the case of an Owner's or Operator's knowing or intentional violation of the provisions of this Act, to bring an action in the Superior Court for the county in which the alleged violation occurred for the assessment of civil penalties pursuant to this chapter.

- (8) Except as otherwise provided in this subsection, all Owners or Operators determined by the Board to be contributing to or to have contributed to the removal of groundwater in an Impacted Area shall be jointly and severally liable, except as provided in subsections (j)(9) and (j)(10),
 - (i) To the Department for all costs incurred in bringing the Owner or Operator into compliance with the requirements of this chapter; and
 - (ii) To any Person who owns property supported by wooden pilings for damage to said Person's real property incurred or suffered as a result of such removal of groundwater in an Impacted Area.
 - (9) Any Owner or Operator determined to be liable for any costs or damages pursuant to this subsection who establishes by a preponderance of the evidence that only a portion of such costs or damages is attributable to leaking Basement(s) and Underground Infrastructure within that Owner's or Operator's authority or control, shall be required to pay only for such portion.
 - (i) The limitation of natural Recharge by human intervention such as paving and roofing shall not be considered an attributable cause of groundwater removal, pursuant to this subsection.
 - (10) There shall be no liability under this subsection for an Owner or Operator otherwise liable who can establish by a preponderance of the evidence that the drawdown was caused by (i) an act of God or (ii) an act of war.
 - (11) Nothing in this chapter shall preclude citizens of the commonwealth or the attorney general of the commonwealth from bringing a civil action in Superior Court to enforce any provisions of this chapter.
 - (12) In issuing determinations of liability within five years of the effective date of this chapter, any damages determined by the Board pursuant to this section shall be awarded from the Groundwater Protection Remedial Fund.
 - (13) In recognition of the good faith endeavors of the City/State Groundwater Working Group and its members, the liability provisions of this section will become effective against the members of the City/State Groundwater Working Group five years after the effective date of this chapter.
- (k) Miscellaneous.
- (1) All reports submitted to the Department pursuant to this chapter shall be available to and accessible by the public.
 - (2) The Department shall accept and make available and accessible to the public, in addition to the required reports, any information or data submitted by Infrastructure Owners and Operators, Other Building Owners, and Residential

Building Owners regarding leaks or other conditions on their property that may be contributing to groundwater drawdown.

- (3) Nothing in this chapter shall bar any rights of Other Building Owners or Residential Building Owners to recover damages that are available under existing law, including the common law of negligence, nuisance, and property.

SECTION 4. Section 6 of Chapter 62 of the General Laws, as so appearing, is hereby amended by adding the following subsection:

(p) Any owner of residential property located in the commonwealth who is not a dependent of another taxpayer and who occupies said property as his principal residence, shall be allowed a credit equal to 40 per cent of the expenditures for the repair of a private sewer lateral, the installation of an groundwater recharge system, or the inspection or repair of wood pilings used to support the foundation of the property that may be or have been damaged due to groundwater depletion. Said expenditures shall be the actual cost to the taxpayer or \$15,000, whichever is less; provided, however, that said credit shall be available to eligible taxpayers beginning in the tax year in which the work was completed; and provided, further, that said credit shall not exceed \$1,500 in any tax year and any excess credit may be applied over the following five subsequent tax years up to an aggregate maximum of \$6,000. The amount of any such credit shall be reduced by an amount equal to the total grant or subsidy received from any governmental entity, whether directly or indirectly, toward the cost of said expenditures. The Department of Revenue shall promulgate such rules and regulations as are necessary to administer the credit afforded by this subsection, and shall consult with the Department of Environmental Protection in developing such rules, regulations, including defining eligible projects and costs, for said tax credit.

SECTION 5. Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, the secretary of the executive office of energy and environmental affairs, in cooperation with other state and federal agencies, shall prepare a preliminary map of tidelands and landlocked tidelands as both are defined in section 1 of chapter 91 and great ponds. The department of environmental protection and the department of fish and game and other applicable state agencies shall provide information to the secretary in the preparation of the preliminary map. The preliminary map shall depict, where feasible (1) the boundaries of properties lying within and abutting tidelands, landlocked tidelands and great ponds and (2) which tidelands are private tidelands and which are Commonwealth tidelands as both are defined in section 1 of chapter 91.

The secretary shall file a report with the clerks of the senate and house of representatives who shall forward the same to the joint committee on environment, natural resources and agriculture on or before December 31, 2010. The report shall include the preliminary map of tidelands, landlocked tidelands and great ponds and shall detail the necessary resources and timeframe needed to produce a final certified map that shall be filed with applicable registries of deeds.