

Environmental Justice Council

Meeting #21 • August 21, 2025 • 6:30 pm



LOGISTICS

- Language Interpretation is being offered in: Español, Kreyòl ayisyen, 普通话, Português, Kriolu, Tiếng Việt, and American Sign Language (ASL)
 - To participate in English, click the “Interpretation” icon and select English.
 - Para entrar no canal em português, clique no ícone “Interpretation” e selecione “Portuguese”
 - Si alguien desea interpretación en español, haga clic en “Interpretation” y seleccione “Spanish”
 - Pa partisipa na Kriolu, klika na íkone "Intirpretason" y silisiona "Cape Verdean Creole"
 - Pou rantr nan chanèl kreyòl ayisyen an, klike sou ikòn “Interpretation” an epi chwazi “Haitian Creole”
 - 要以普通话参加会议，请单击口语图标并选择 “Chinese”。
 - Để vào kênh bằng tiếng Việt, hãy nhấp vào biểu tượng “Interpretation” và chọn “Vietnamese”.

- Please speak slowly.
- All attendees must select a language channel, even if viewing the presentation in English.



- If you would like a translated version of the slides, please go to the EJC website at: <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/environmental-justice-council-ejc-meetings>

THIS MEETING IS BEING RECORDED



Environmental Justice Council

Meeting #21

Thursday, August 21, 2025, 6:30 pm

In Person location: North Adams, MA

Drury High School

1130 Church St, North Adams, MA 01247



Logistics and Agenda

Logistics

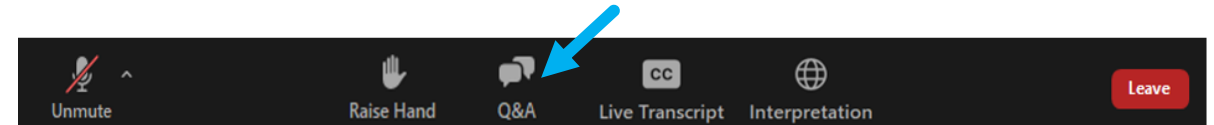
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- ➔ For a translated version of the slides, please go to the EJC website at: <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/environmental-justice-council-ejc-meetings>
- ➔ All lines will be muted during the presentations.
- ➔ The line will be open for oral comments after the presentations.
- ➔ If you have a clarifying question or a logistical or technical issue during the presentations, please type it into the Q&A box.



- ➔ Contact the ERG webinar lead **Kecil John** at meetings@erg.com with any technical issues or questions.



THIS MEETING IS BEING RECORDED

Agenda

▪ Overview of Meeting, Logistics and Agenda
▪ Roll Call and Approval of Prior EJC Meeting Minutes
▪ Questions and Comments from the Public
▪ Mass Ready Act (Env Bond Bill)
▪ Questions and Comments from the Public
▪ Response to Comments (when appropriate)
▪ Next Steps and Adjourn



Approval of June 12, 2025, Meeting Minutes & Roll Call: EJ Council Members

- Kalila Barnett
- Madeline Fraser Cook
- Melissa Harding-Ferretti
- Cheryll Holley
- Caroline Hon
- Lydia Lowe
- Marcos Luna
- Peter Maathey
- María Belén Power
- Sofia Owen
- Jen Salinetti
- Patricia Spence
- Ari Zorn
- Miles Gresham

Public Comments and Questions

*Please limit each comment to two minutes to
allow time for others to speak*

Mass Ready Act (Env Bond Bill)



Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of
Energy and Environmental Affairs

Mass Ready:
An Act to Build Resilience
for Massachusetts Communities

Environmental Justice Council

August 21, 2025





Mass Ready Act – An Overview

- Introduction
- Context & Strategic Foundations
- Key Themes
- Overview of Investments
- Policy Highlights
- Status & Next Steps

Mass Ready: Strengthening and Protecting our Communities

- **Communities, families and farmers** across our state are experiencing increasing severe weather:
 - 2023 saw historic floods and heatwaves
 - 2024 saw unprecedented wildfires
 - 2025 flash flooding continues
 - Thousands of homes, farms and businesses are put at risk, many destroyed
- **Threats are only growing more severe** → we must help ready communities for the future
 - Every \$1 invested generates \$13 return in avoided costs
- **Mass Ready Act is our key to increase investments** in climate resilience, environmental infrastructure, outdoor recreation, food security, and clean water
 - Bond Bills are generally passed by the Legislature every five years with the last Environmental Bond Bill passed in 2018 with \$2.1 billion in authorization for EEA agencies
 - The Mass Ready Act will provide five years of Bond Authorization (not appropriated funding)



Washed out road in Leominster, CBS Boston September 2023



Culvert upgrade as part of the 2022 Pepperell project.



Massachusetts Voter Opinion – April 2025

MA Voters concern that climate change will impact them personally is growing

Degree of Impact	2018	2025	Change
A great deal	22%	41%	+19%
A moderate amount	32%	20%	-12%
Great deal/Moderate amount	54%	61%	+7%
Only a little	22%	13%	-9%
Not at all	21%	22%	+1%

Poll information courtesy of The Nature Conservancy



Massachusetts Voter Opinion – April 2025

Massachusetts voters value investing new funding in water, forests, salt marshes and working farms that can improve water and air quality and reduce climate impacts

Priority for Funding	% Extremely/ Very Important
Protecting drinking water sources	91%
Reducing water pollution in our rivers, lakes, streams and coast	82%
Protecting forests that clean drinking water and reduce air pollution	80%
Protecting salt marshes and wetlands that soak up flooding	79%
Protecting working farms	78%
Providing local food supplies from farms, orchards and fisheries	74%
Protecting forests that provide wildlife habitat	74%
Protecting salt marshes and wetlands that provide fish and wildlife habitat	73%
Protecting wildlife habitat	73%
Supporting our seafood industry by protecting marine habitats	72%
Reducing air pollution	70%
Restoring free-flowing rivers to improve fish and wildlife habitat	66%
Providing opportunities for outdoor recreation	62%
Preparing communities for the impacts of extreme weather, heat, sea-level rise and flooding	60%

We've Planned the Work, now Let's Work the Plans

Initiatives Forming our Foundation



<input type="checkbox"/>	Climate Chief's Recommendations	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	ResilientMass Plan	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Farmland Action Plan	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Healthy Soils Action Plan	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Resilient Coasts Initiative	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Forests as Climate Solutions	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Department of Fish and Game Strategic Plan	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Biodiversity Goals, Executive Order	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Department of Environmental Protection 2030 Solid Waste Master Plan	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Clean Energy and Climate Action Plan	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Local Food Action Plan	<input type="checkbox"/>



Key Results the MassReady Act will advance...

- **Priority coastal infrastructure is resilient to** vulnerabilities
- **Critical** parkways and culverts are reconstructed to be resilient
- High Hazard - Poor Condition **Dams are repaired.** Unnecessary dams are removed.
- **Urban Canopy increases** by 5% in Environmental Justice areas, improving public health
- **30% of MA is Conserved** by 2030
- Residents live **within ½ mile** of accessible green spaces
- **Shared use paths** grow by 20 miles/year
- **Parks are** in a good state of repair (50% up from 31%)
- **Urban agriculture** is supported in EJ communities
- **Outdoor recreation economy** expands by 10%
- All residents have access **to clean, cool waterways**
- Healthy habitats are protected and **restored, capturing carbon**
- **0% loss of productive farmland**
- Marine and terrestrial **food systems are sustainable and productive**
- Solid waste is **reduced by 30%**
- **Drinking water infrastructure** is safe, secure and sufficient
- **Biodiversity** increases and has room to roam
- **PFAS levels** in water/soils reduced

Mass Ready Act Key Themes

Unlocking Our Capacity to:

- ***Strengthen Our Infrastructure***
 - Upgrade Parkways, Dams, Culverts, Drinking and Wastewater Systems
 - Rebuild Coastal and Inland Infrastructure for Resilience
 - Utilize Nature to Prepare for Extreme Weather
- ***Invest in Local Economies***
 - Support Agriculture, Rural Communities, and Healthy Food Systems
 - Accelerate Community Resilience with MVP, Tree Planting and more
- ***Protect Water and Nature***
 - Conserve Habitat for Plants and Animals
 - Invest in Parks, Open Spaces, Beaches, and Waterways





Mass Ready Act is a \$3 B historic investment in our environment and infrastructure

The **Mass Ready Act**, a comprehensive package of spending, policy, and programmatic actions, is the **largest environmental investment in MA history and prioritizes** resiliency, food security, clean environment and public health for MA families, children and communities.

Strengthen Our Infrastructure

Inland & Coastal Flooding

Preparing communities and our agencies for sea level rise and extreme flooding events

- ResilientCoasts implementation, incl district projects
- Dam Safety for communities and at our agencies
- Culverts
- Agency-owned coastal and flood control structures

Clean Air, Water, & Land

Ensuring all residents have access to clean air, water, and land

- Water Infrastructure, including State Revolving Fund and PFAS mitigation
- Superfund match and emergency response
- Nitrogen reduction
- Air and water quality monitoring

Invest in Local Economies

Climate Readiness & Environmental Justice

Preparing to withstand, rapidly recover from, and adapt to natural hazard events; net-zero by 2050; equitable access

- Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness
- ResilientMass Plan
- Outdoor Recreation accessibility grants
- EJ infrastructure

Secure Farmers & Food Systems

Updating infrastructure to build strong agricultural economy and a secure food system

- Food Security Infrastructure Grants (FSIG)
- Implementing Farmland Action Plan
- Grants for climate resilience enhancements

Protect Water and Nature

Parks & Parkways Infrastructure

Ensuring all residents have access to safe facilities and infrastructure to access to the outdoors

- Parkways
- Rinks and Pools
- Parks
- Beaches
- Vehicles & vessels
- Trails
- Boat Ramps
- Facilities
- Maintenance
- Fish Hatchery

Land Conservation & Biodiversity Stewardship

Meeting land conservation goals of 40% by 2050, tree planting, and implementing biodiversity goals

- Community and agency land conservation
- Tree planting, incl Greening the Gateways and Cooling Corridors
- Implementing forthcoming biodiversity goals

Mass Ready Act: by theme

Strengthen Our Infrastructure

- \$587 million to enhance parks, trails, beaches, and historic sites.
- \$177 million to support transportation infrastructure, including parkways, trails, roads, and pedestrian bridges.
- \$90 million to modernize DFG infrastructure, i.e. boat ramps and fish hatcheries, and support our commercial fisheries and ecological restoration projects.
- \$642 million to build more inland and coastal flood-resilient infrastructure



Mass Ready Act: by theme

Invest in Local Economies

- \$315 million to support the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) program.
- \$125 million for the Food Security Infrastructure Grant Program (FSIG).
- \$68 million to protect farmland, foster food security, and sustain agricultural economic viability.
- \$73 million to support ResilientMass state hazard mitigation and adaptation plan, equitable outdoor access and EJ programs.

Buy Fresh. Buy Local.





Mass Ready Act: by theme

Protect Water and Nature

- \$385 million to support clean and drinking water projects through the state's revolving funds, including matching federal grants.
- \$340.5 million for land conservation and acquisition keeping us on track to double the pace of conservation.
- \$120 million to support capital projects addressing PFAS contamination in public water supplies and private wells.
- \$20 million is dedicated to the implementation of the state's forthcoming Biodiversity Goals.





Noteworthy Policy Proposals

TITLE	<i>Brief Summary</i>
<u>Resilience Revolving Fund</u>	Create Resilience Revolving Fund to make loans for resilience projects to municipalities, water and wastewater districts, and tribal governments. To be housed at Clean Water Trust, with program management by EEA.
<u>Flood Disclosure</u>	Modeled on existing MA lead disclosure statute, requires home sellers and lessors to provide disclosure detailing knowledge of prior flooding damage.
<u>Equip BBRS to Address Resilience and Housing in Building Code</u>	Establish climate risk, resilient design and housing production seats on Board of Building Regulations and Standards (BBRS) so that BBRS has additional expertise to evaluate and advance climate and housing priorities in base building code.



Noteworthy Policy Proposals

TITLE	<i>Brief Summary</i>
<u>Permit Streamlining for Housing, Nature-Based Solutions and Culverts</u>	Series of proposals to reduce process, triggers, and timelines for housing, nature-based solutions projects, and municipal culvert replacements, under Chapter 91, MEPA and Wetlands Regulations, provided that projects still meet certain conditions and high standards.
<u>Connecticut River Valley Resilience Commission</u>	Establish Commission led by EEA and including MEMA, regional planning agencies, municipalities, water and sewer authorities to develop regional roadmap to address flooding.
<u>Port Sustainability Commission</u>	Port Commission produce a statewide, community-supported strategic vision for the designated port areas of Massachusetts.
<u>Food Policy Council</u>	Expands the MA Food Policy Council membership to include DMF, fishing industry representation and UMass Center for Agriculture, Food and the Environment

Process, Next Steps & Questions

- **Mass Ready Act filed by the Governor (July 24, 2025) ✓**
- **Hearing: Joint Committee on Environment and Natural Resources (July 15, 2025) ✓**
- **Referral to Joint Committee on Bonding Committee, Hearing**
- **Referral to Senate Ways and Means**
- **Senate debate**
- **Referral to House Ways and Means**
- **House Debate**
- **Conference Committee**
- **Conference Bill passage**
- **Governor review, opportunity to line-item veto, and signature**





<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/mass-ready-act>

- **[Strengthening Our Infrastructure](#)**
- **[Investing in Farms and Local Economies](#)**
- **[Protecting Water and Nature](#)**
- **[Housing & Environment Permitting Reform](#)**
- **[Supporting Western and Central Mass](#)**

Public Comments and Questions

*Please limit each comment to two minutes to
allow time for others to speak*



WHAT'S
NEXT?

Next Steps & Adjourn

Information on the EJC and its meetings can be found at

<https://www.mass.gov/orgs/environmental-justice-council-ejc>