

SUZANNE M. BUMP, ESQ.
AUDITOR

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

AUDITOR OF THE COMMONWEALTH

STATE HOUSE, BOSTON 02133

TEL (617) 727-2075
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December 15, 2022

Robert Cutler
President, Massachusetts Town Clerks Association
Town of Foxborough
40 South Street,
Foxborough, MA 02035

Dear Mr. Cutler:

I want to thank you for your letter of December 9, 2022 regarding additional costs associated with fulfilling the mandate related to early voting and vote-by-mail. As you know, when the original mandate determination was issued in February 2017¹, it was in response to the expenses incurred in the first general election with early voting. Since that time, the nature of the mandate has changed, first in response to COVID-19 era special legislation and most recently the enactment of the VOTES Act. Based on the 2022 election cycle, vote-by-mail is the predominate form of early voting and I recognize the significant impact on the associated expenses.

Based on your information regarding additional expenses for vote-by-mail including labels and postage meter supplies I am exercising my authority under M.G.L. Chapter 11 Section 6B to update the February 2017 mandate determination. Accordingly, the Division of Local Mandates will make appropriate arrangements to collect information in the upcoming cost certification regarding early voting to include expenses related to vote-by-mail and postage meter supplies. Given the information provided by Foxborough and Easton, we estimate that the items will add over \$400,000 to the statewide total of reimbursable costs.

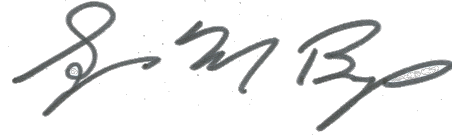
1

Suzanne M. Bump, Auditor of the Commonwealth. 2017. "Financial Impact of Early Voting in the City of Woburn and the Town of Oxford." February 14. <https://www.mass.gov/decision/financial-impact-of-early-voting-in-the-city-of-woburn-and-the-town-of-oxford>.

Robert Cutler, MTCA
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I appreciate the work that the Clerks and Election Officials do to help with the smooth operation of our elections. Thank you for bringing these matters to our attention.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S M Bump', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Suzanne M. Bump
Auditor of the Commonwealth

cc Danielle Sicard, Clerk, Town of Easton
William Galvin, Secretary of the Commonwealth
Representative Aaron Michlewitz, House Chair, Joint Committee on Ways & Means
Senator Michael Rodrigues, Senate Chair, Joint Committee on Ways & Means
Representative Daniel Ryan, House Chair, Joint Committee on Election Laws
Senator Barry Finegold, Senate Chair, Joint Committee on Election Laws
Representative Carol Doherty
Senator Walter Timilty
Senator Michael Brady
Representative Jay Barrows
Senator Paul Feeney