

Representative Kate Hogan's  
**Notes from Beacon Hill**

June 15, 2009

*"If anybody ever told me I'd be part owner of General Motors, I wouldn't believe it."*

Bruce Springsteen

Hello everyone. Welcome to the first edition of **Notes from Beacon Hill**. The Beacon Villager has been kind enough to allow me the use of this space to help us keep in touch and to help me keep you informed of events on Beacon Hill. Over the next few weeks, I will discuss our state's economic situation, the impact of the 2010 Massachusetts State Budget on our towns, and the Commonwealth's use of federal stimulus funds.

As many of you know, the national economic downturn has led to our own Massachusetts fiscal crisis. The world economy of the last decade or so--built on unstable and unsecured credit--collapsed in on itself last fall, triggering a liquidity crisis the severity of which not been seen since the early 1930's. We may be past the worst of it in market terms, but joblessness will continue to grow in the near term. The federal government continues to use all means necessary to help businesses stay afloat and their workers employed.

Massachusetts is facing a budget deficit of 3.5 billion dollars; closer to 5 billion dollars accounting for the recession induced increased demand for state services. We've all experienced this downturn in our paychecks, home values, retirements, and other investments. These individual and family related losses accumulate into even larger losses in state tax revenue. Billions of dollars previously used for state programs are gone and many things that we take for granted about government services will be affected by reduced funding--in education, elderly programming, disabled services, small business incentives and infrastructure repair.

The budget passed by the legislature will reflect a state economy that cannot support the same level of government services relied on in the past. After the state budget process ends, on or near July 1<sup>st</sup>, I will sponsor Community Feedback Meetings in each of the four towns of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Middlesex District (Bolton, Hudson, Maynard, and Stow) to discuss the budget's impact on our communities and explore how we might best deal with these impacts.

We New Englanders are a self-reliant people; always have been. We prefer to rely on government as little as possible, but many rely on it every day. I believe these next few years will shine a light on just how important government is and, hopefully, we will also see what government and the people can do together in meeting the challenges of creating a stable 21<sup>st</sup> century economy. The last time this country saw economic conditions similar to these, The Great Depression, it was much worse than at present. As families, communities and, ultimately, a nation, we banded together in the 1930's to help build a new economic reality because that is what Americans do. I have no doubt that we will do it again with perseverance, a little bit of sacrifice and compassion.

*(Kate Hogan represents Bolton, Hudson, Maynard and Stow in the Massachusetts House of Representatives. Contact her at [HYPERLINK "mailto:Rep.katehogan@hou.state.ma.us"](mailto:Rep.katehogan@hou.state.ma.us) [Rep.katehogan@hou.state.ma.us](mailto:Rep.katehogan@hou.state.ma.us) or call 617-722-2060.)*