

THE 562 COALITION

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Broad Coalition Urges Transparency, Inclusion for Gov. Baker's Executive Order Impacting Important State Regulations

75 Organizations Pen Letter to Work Collaboratively, Strengthen Exec Order #562

BOSTON – Leaders from across the Commonwealth's economy representing over 75 organizations today urged Governor Baker to embrace more transparency and stakeholder involvement to ensure his bold executive order on state regulations strengthens, rather than weakens, the state's regulatory framework.

As previously reported by the media, Baker's Executive Order 562 mandates an unprecedented set of criteria for evaluating current regulations that may have unanticipated and long lasting negative consequences. For this reason, signatories outlined a number of suggestions to better assist the administration to promote fairness and transparency in an expedited process.

Representing a broad range of constituencies involved in business, labor, consumer protection, public health, public safety, energy, environmental protection, elder care, housing, poverty and social services issues, organization leaders called for a process that ensures state regulations are equitable, effective and efficient. Massachusetts is a global leader in education, health care, the environment and other areas, with current regulations designed to both promote competition and safeguard our state's residents.

"On behalf of hundreds of thousands of Massachusetts citizens, we all remain committed to ensuring Massachusetts continues to lead on the most pressing issues facing our state, our country, and our world," said George Bachrach, President of the Environmental League of Massachusetts. "We urge the Governor to lead the most transparent and inclusive process, engaging key stakeholders throughout the Commonwealth. These 75 groups representing life in almost every facet of the Commonwealth would like to help and be an active part in that."

In the letter, leaders recommend that each agency form working groups including citizen-stakeholders to participate in reviewing implementation, make public all comments to agencies, clearly determine priority regulations requiring further public review, revise the government website for a more balanced solicitation of comments, and set a timeline of milestones and deadlines for implementation.

"The Governor and his staff should commit to a fair and open process. Our objective is to ensure an inclusive, transparent and constructive dialogue," said Massachusetts Building Trades Council President Francis X. Callahan, Jr. "We look forward to working with Governor Baker to improve implementation of EO 562."

"Executive Order 562 states that regulations 'not exceed federal requirements'. It's inherently problematic and, in our view, illegal," said Mass Audubon Society Director of Public Policy and Government Relations Jack Clarke. "Most regulations are enacted to do just that. Federal standards often merely provide the lowest common denominator. Massachusetts consistently leads the way to better serve its residents and we don't want to see that dismantled."

Governor Charlie Baker signed Executive Order 562 into law on March 31, 2015. It marked the beginning of a year-long regulatory reform review process.

SEE ATTACHED: LETTER TO GOVERNOR BAKER & LIST OF 75 SIGNATORIES