

Representative Mark Falzone

Representing the People of Lynn, Lynnfield, Saugus, and Wakefield

The Beacon: Issue 6, July 8, 2010 – Criminal Justice and Other Updates

Dear Neighbor,

Thank you for continuing to read my email newsletter! This month I would like to share with you recent accomplishments, as well as updates on a few important issues. Read below for information on our criminal justice system, savings on prescription drugs, transparency in our State Government, and improvements to our local Breakheart Reservation.

These last few months have been filled with activity, both on Beacon Hill in general and for me personally. Here in the Massachusetts House of Representatives we have passed legislation enabling casino gambling in the Commonwealth, have made some tough choices in crafting our version of the State's budget for Fiscal Year 2011, and have passed several good pieces of legislation which I will discuss further in this issue. I have enjoyed seeing many of you around the district in these last few months at your homes, little league opening parades, Memorial Day services, Independence Day celebrations, awareness walks, picket lines, meetings, and birthday and retirement celebrations. Also, I officially kicked off my campaign for re-election as State Representative with a lively and standing room only crowd at the Saugus Elks Lodge, and am excited to continue speaking and working with my constituents. Finally, on a personal note, I was fortunate enough to marry my new bride, Robin Hamilton, and to be surrounded by the love and support of our family and friends.

If you would like more frequent updates, or would like to get further involved, I would like to invite you to follow me on Facebook by "liking" my Friends of Mark Falzone page at www.facebook.com/FOSRMF. Here you will find timely news stories, updates about events, and photos of happenings around the district, and also have the chance to make connections with others in our community.

Our Criminal Justice System

Criminal Justice goes far beyond incarceration programs and correctional facilities. Many of us do not know about the important programs in place to reduce recidivism and prevent crimes from occurring, programs which perform some of the most crucial functions in ensuring the well-being of the residents of Massachusetts. To explore and raise awareness of these



The Beacon:

The Beacon is a bi-monthly newsletter written by Representative Mark Falzone. It will focus on current events and issues relevant to the 9th Essex District.

If you would like to suggest a topic for a future newsletter, please reply to this email with the word SUGGEST in the title.

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The State House
Room 527A
Boston, MA 02133

programs I recently hosted Sheriff Frank Cousins and District Attorney Jonathan Blodgett on my Cable Television show, *The Beacon*, and was impressed by the dedication and scope of their work.

In every county in Massachusetts, the local sheriff's office oversees programs to reduce crime and keep people out of jail, including rehabilitation services geared toward keeping recidivism rates low by redirecting the lives of inmates during their time in incarceration. These programs help prevent the expenses of incarceration and recidivism, which cost the State huge sums (coming to approximately \$28,000 per person, to use the example of Essex county). With so many tough choices to make in this year's budget, the need to find savings in every part of our system only becomes more crucial. For more information on this and other significant programs run by the Sheriff's office, you can view Sheriff Cousin's episode online at www.falzone.org/beacon.html, along with other back-episodes.

In addition, Jonathan Blodgett takes on an impressive number of issues through his work as a District Attorney. He runs programs to combat gun violence, gang violence, and domestic violence, targets scam artists, and prevents auto-insurance fraud. He was a champion of anti-bullying programs long before the recent tragedies brought the issue into the public eye, holding school safety and anti-bullying conferences, and establishing effective peer-to-peer programs. For more information you can watch this episode online, or on your local cable access station.

- Lynn: Thursdays at 5:30 PM, Comcast Channels 3 and 16 and Verizon Channels 36 and 38
- Lynnfield: Thursdays at 7 PM, Verizon Channel 29 and Comcast Channel 8
- Saugus: Thursdays at 11 AM, Channel 8
- Wakefield: Fridays at 7 PM and Sundays at 6:30 PM, Comcast Channel 16, Verizon Channel 42, and RCN Channel 13.

Savings on Prescription Drugs in New Legislation

Especially in these difficult economic times, it is crucial that we look for money-saving programs in areas which most impact the citizens of our Commonwealth. One area that has recently received a lot of attention is the high cost of prescription drugs, an expense which can be particularly damaging to families and seniors living on fixed incomes. I was pleased to join my colleagues in the Massachusetts House of Representatives in passing a bill that will allow consumers to take advantage of significant discounts on prescription drugs.

In District Office Hours:

Saugus Senior Center
66 Central Street
Fridays
8:30am-10am

Wakefield Senior Center
30 Converse Street
Fridays
10:15am-11:15am

Lynnfield Senior Center
525 Salem Street
Fridays
11:30am-12:30pm

Just drop in: No
appointment needed!

Massachusetts is currently the only state which does not allow its residents to take advantage of coupons offered by drug companies to lower the cost of prescription drugs, instead focusing on promoting the use of identical, lower-cost generic versions. However, when generic drugs are not available or a physician determines a name brand drug is necessary for treatment, these coupons can be an important tool to keep costs down. By enabling the use of coupons in this situation, this legislation would mean savings for consumers – it could reduce co-payments by \$10 to \$20 or more every month – and would hopefully eliminate some of the barriers that prevent patients from taking their medications as prescribed.

State Government Transparency in State Budget

To increase openness and accessibility, the House of Representatives and Senate have recently adopted measures to facilitate public access to the budget process. An online searchable database of government expenditures, which was established separately in the Fiscal Year 2011 House and Senate Budget proposals, will be made available to the general public to increase visibility of state spending. Massachusetts will join 32 other states that provide an online database with in depth detail on government expenditures.

I strongly believe that taxpayers should be fully informed of how their elected officials are handling their money and was proud to be a sponsor of these amendments in the House. Beyond access to spending items, an absolutely crucial feature of this new database will be to lay open information about the many tax credits our state offers to individuals and businesses. By viewing how these monies are being spent we can measure how effective these programs are, potentially leading to great savings and even greater efficiency.

Security Improvements to Breakheart Reservation

We, as a community, are constantly looking for ways to increase safety and ensure the well-being of our residents in the district. In a recent effort to further improve safety, security cameras were installed at the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) run Breakheart Reservation in Saugus. At my request, along with DCR Commissioner Richard Sullivan, Friends of Breakheart Chairman Ed Murray, and many others, we have worked to arrange for the installation of these security cameras, which will provide 24-hour surveillance of the parking lot and entrance area. It is our hope that these cameras will help to deter break-in's in the reservation parking lot, which has been a problem on occasion in the past. I am pleased to see this project being implemented, and I am

confident that the new security cameras will allow Breakheart Reservation to continue to be a safe and secure place.

Contact Me:

Please also feel free contact my office with any questions or concerns. I can be reached by calling 617-722-2020, emailing Rep.MarkFalzone@state.ma.us, or by sending a letter to:

Representative Mark Falzone
The State House, Room 527A
Boston, MA 02133

Additionally, every Friday morning I hold office hours in the district where anyone can come, without an appointment, to meet with me, my Chief of Staff Bob Smith, or another of my aides. These hours are:

8:30 – 10 AM: Saugus Senior Center at 466 Central Street
10:15 – 11:15 AM: Wakefield Senior Center at 30 Converse Street
11:30 AM – 12:30 PM: Lynnfield Senior Center at 525 Salem Street

If you would like to discuss any issue, or if you are having a problem that you would like assistance with, I encourage you to stop by.

Sincerely,

Mark Falzone
State Representative
Representing the people of Lynn, Lynnfield, Saugus, and Wakefield

If you would like to be removed from this list, please reply to this email with the word REMOVE in the title. If you would like to suggest a future topic for the newsletter, or ask a specific question, please reply to this email with the word SUGGEST in the title.

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