

## CHIP Network Presents: The 2022 Franklin County Health Rankings

For links to the presentation and other resources: <https://frcog.org/event/chip-county-health-rankings-release-2022/>

### Legislators' Comments + Actions You Can Take

On May 6, 2022 we asked the legislators who joined us to speak about efforts at the state level to address the health needs and priorities identified in our region's annual health rankings.

- What has happened or is in progress in the current (192<sup>nd</sup>) legislative session?
- What can we look forward to when the next session begins in January 2023?
- How can we help?

**Senator Jo Comerford** <[jo.comerford@masenate.gov](mailto:jo.comerford@masenate.gov)> spoke about the [Statewide Accelerated Public Health for Every Community Act](#), also known as SAPHE 2.0, which is poised to transform the local public health system in Massachusetts.

Background: <https://mapublichealth.org/saphe2-0/>

Status and text of this bill: <https://malegislature.gov/Bills/192/H4328>

**Take Action:** This bill is now with the House Ways and Means Committee. For it to move forward, HWMC must send it to the floor for a vote in the House. Contact the chair, Aaron Michlewitz and ask for action on this.

<https://malegislature.gov/Committees/Detail/H34/192/Members>

The Massachusetts Public Health Association and the SAPHE 2.0 Coalition are planning a rally on the steps of the Statehouse next week on May 26!

**Senator Adam Hinds** <[adam.hinds@masenate.gov](mailto:adam.hinds@masenate.gov)> spoke about the work of the Rural Schools Commission established by the Acts of 2019, which held several hearings in 2021 and whose work has already led to significant changes in state funding for many rural school districts.

Background: [The Recorder - Chairs say launch of Rural Schools Commission ‘a big win’ for region](#)

Videos of the hearings are available here:

<https://malegislature.gov/Commissions/Detail/510/Hearings>

**Representative Natalie Blais** <[natalie.blais@mahouse.gov](mailto:natalie.blais@mahouse.gov)> spoke about the 65% increase in dental reimbursement rates for Community Health Centers (CHCs) announced by the Baker administration at the end of June 2021. This increase fulfills the goals of Bill H.1250, which Rep. Blais filed with Senator Comerford to expand access to dental care at CHCs across the Commonwealth.

**Take Action:** Rep Blais also reported that unfortunately Regional Transit Authorities were not level-funded in the FY23 House budget, despite advocacy from the RTA Caucus. There is an opportunity to address this through amendments to the Senate budget, which is being debated this week.

Background: [FY23-SWM-RTA-Budget-Factsheet-.pdf \(mapublichealth.org\)](#)

The Bill this relates to in the current session is S.2277 “An Act to increase regional transit accessibility in the Commonwealth”

Status and text of this bill: <https://malegislature.gov/Bills/192/S2277>

To move it forward into law, the Senate Ways and Means Committee needs to hold a hearing and send it to the floor for a vote. Contact the Chair, Michael Rodrigues, and ask for action on this bill. [Senate Committee on Ways and Means \(malegislature.gov\)](#)

Rep Blais also spoke about H3262, a bill she’s filed to incentivize the purchase of E-Bikes. Background: [Fact Sheet on H3262](#)

Status and text of this bill: [Bill H.3262 \(malegislature.gov\)](#)

**Representative Susannah Whipps** <[Susannah.Whipps@mahouse.gov](mailto:Susannah.Whipps@mahouse.gov)> spoke about the expansion of telehealth in MA in recent years, and said she would be advocating for licensed, out-of-state mental health counselors to be allowed to

provide services through MassHealth. She noted that increased access and options for mental health services benefits employers and employees.

Rep Whipps also spoke about the “cliff effect”, which is the focus of bills the CHIP Legislative Agenda is following in the current legislative session.

Status and text of the bills: <https://malegislature.gov/Bills/192/S119>

“An Act concerning public assistance for working families and the creation of a pilot program to address the impacts of the cliff effect” had a hearing and was reported favorably out of its committee. It is now with the Senate Ways and Means Committee, which will determine whether to move it forward to the floor for a vote. Contact the Chair, Michael Rodrigues, and ask for action on this bill.

[Senate Committee on Ways and Means \(malegislature.gov\)](https://malegislature.gov/committees/senate-ways-and-means)

**Representative Paul Mark** <[paul.mark@mahouse.gov](mailto:paul.mark@mahouse.gov)> noted that the climate change bills passed by the House and Senate in this session were quite different, and now need to be resolved in a Conference Committee.

For more history, links to the text of the bills, and conference committee members’ names: [Bill H.4524 \(malegislature.gov\)](https://malegislature.gov/bills/192/H4524)

For background, here’s an article that describes some of the differences and the process that led to this point: <https://www.boston.com/news/local-news/2022/04/15/following-the-house-mass-senate-passes-version-of-climate-bill/>

Rep Mark hopes for legislative action related to “green financing” in the upcoming session.