

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
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PRESS RELEASE

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SENATOR GOBI SELECTED TO CHAIR ENVIRONMENT AND HIGHER EDUCATION COMMITTEES

**Fifth Consecutive Term as Environmental Chair;
Also named member of the Senate Ways and Means Committee**

(Boston) –**Senator Anne M. Gobi (D-Spencer)** has been selected by Senate President Karen Spilka to Chair the Joint Committee on Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture and the Joint Committee on Higher Education. She has also been selected to serve as a member of the Senate Ways and Means Committee.

“I appreciate the trust the Senate President has placed in me to continue as Chair of ENRA and the new responsibility as Chair of Higher Education,” said Senator Gobi. “Both of these committees offer important areas of investment in our collective futures, environmentally and academically, and I am eager to get to work on issues I feel will become more pressing in the coming years.”

Senator Gobi has been the Chair of the Environment Committee for eight years and remains passionate about the position. She has worked to craft and advance important legislation to protect the Massachusetts environment. Last session she worked with **House Chair Rep. Smitty Pignatelli (D-Lenox)** to develop and pass a \$2.4 billion Environmental Bond Bill that focused on improving climate change resiliency and adaptation; enhancing environmental and natural resource protection; and investing in parks and recreational assets. Senator Gobi has always had passion and respect for the outdoors. She has received awards from the Worcester League of Sportsmen, Mahar Fish and Game Club, and the Massachusetts Nursery and Landscape Association. She is co-founder of the bi-partisan Massachusetts Sportsmen’s Caucus with **Rep. David Vieira (R-Barnstable)** and the lead sponsor of an omnibus Sportsmen’s bill, An Act Relative to Outdoor Heritage.

Senator Gobi is also thrilled to be named Chair of the Joint Committee on Higher Education. A graduate of Worcester State University before pursuing her law degree at the Massachusetts School of Law, the senator is eager to begin work on legislation that may address the growing student debt crisis as well as bills that may offer increased oversight for the financial status of Universities, particularly in the aftermath of the Mount Ida College closure last spring that left professors without jobs for the coming year and thousands without a pathway for degree completion. A member of the Senate Committee on Post Audit and Oversight charged with reporting on the acquisition by UMass last session, Senator Gobi had this to say, “Listening to the testimony of the students, faculty and college and university officials, it was quite clear to me that the students were an afterthought and not enough was done to protect them. I expect further scrutiny and answers to assure for the students as well as the taxpayers.”

In addition to the two Chairmanships, Senator Gobi will also be serving as a member of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means and as the Vice Chair of the Joint Committee on Public Service tasked with considering all matters concerning the salaries, civil service and retirement of public employees, as well as collective bargaining for state employees.

More information on Legislative Committees can be found at <http://www.malegislature.gov/>.

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