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Legislature Enacts \$1.8 Billion Bond Bill to Strengthen the Commonwealth's Information Technology & Physical Infrastructure

Invests in food security, education, public safety accountability

(BOSTON – 08/27/2020) **Senator Anne M. Gobi (D-Spencer)** joined **House Speaker Robert A. DeLeo** and **Senate President Karen E. Spilka** and their colleagues in House and Senate to pass legislation authorizing up to \$1.8 billion in spending for the improvement of information technology equipment and other capital projects in Massachusetts.

The legislation also authorizes funding for food security, law enforcement body cameras, and investments in educational technologies in Massachusetts schools.

“I am proud to see our body realizing the importance of our information technology infrastructure and addressing it here,” commented Senator Gobi on the bill’s signage. “These investments will strengthen our access to key services for our residents, and stabilize a grid that has been strained during this pandemic.”

“As we adjust to a world transformed by a global pandemic we stand committed and ready to supporting existing programs and finding new ways to invest in underserved and underrepresented populations,” stated **Senate President Karen E. Spilka (D-Ashland)**. “I am thrilled to see this bill authorizes additional much-needed supports for childcare providers. I am equally proud to see this borrowing bill directs resources to a program aimed at supporting communities of color. I would like to thank all my colleagues, including House Speaker DeLeo and Senator Michael Rodrigues, for their work priorities.”

The capital plan, which includes \$794 million for state and local general technology and physical infrastructure, features the following targeted investments.

- \$110 million in public safety infrastructure and equipment

- \$134 million in statewide economic development grants and reinvestment in disproportionately impacted communities
- \$80 million in educational IT and infrastructure grants, including \$50 million to assist public schools in facilitating remote learning environments
- \$10 million to fund technology investments at community health centers
- \$37 million in food security grants
- \$25 million in capital improvements for licensed early education and care providers and after school programs to ensure safe reopening during COVID-19
- \$30 million in public safety accountability technologies including body cameras and a race and ethnicity data sharing system

Senator Gobi included two amendments that were adopted in the bill, dedication \$350K to the town of New Braintree to help expand broadband internet access, and \$55K for the Police Department in Sturbridge to purchase body-worn cameras.

The legislation has been signed into law by the governor.

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