



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

House of Representatives

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House Republican Caucus statement on FY23 closeout budget

BOSTON – *The attached statement was released by House Minority Leader Bradley H. Jones, Jr. (R-North Reading) on behalf of the Massachusetts House Republican Caucus following this morning’s House standing vote to accept the conference committee report on the FY23 final deficiency appropriations bill:*

“The House Republican Caucus understands the importance of passing a final deficiency appropriations bill to address the unfunded union contract situation, provide disaster relief funding for cities and towns, and meet the fiduciary responsibilities associated with closing the books on Fiscal Year 2023. At the same time, we remain deeply concerned about the lack of meaningful reforms contained in the bill to address the emergency shelter crisis created by the recent influx of thousands of migrants, which remains an untenable situation that must be resolved. Democratic leadership put us in an impossible situation by intentionally weaving these separate issues together. There is no legitimate reason that funding for union contracts and aid for cities and towns needed to be tied to controversial immigration policy; it was done by design.

The Democrats are trying to promote a false narrative laying the blame on our caucus for holding up final action on the closeout budget for the last few days. The reality is the Democrats delayed action on this bill for nearly two months, failed to reach an agreement before formal sessions ended on November 15, and did not produce a conference committee report until November 30, exactly eleven weeks after Governor Healey first filed the bill.

There has been little regard over the past 19 days, by some, for those caught in the crosshairs of this situation. We are in deep disagreement with the flawed immigration policy and lack of meaningful reform contained in the conference committee report. We all know the funding in this bill is just the tip of the iceberg which will ultimately crowd out spending in other areas absent serious and meaningful reforms.

We are dismayed that we were denied the opportunity by Democratic leadership to do our job as legislators, the job that we were elected to do by the citizens of this Commonwealth. Our Democrat colleagues, and all citizens who exercise their right to vote, no matter their opinion on these particular issues, also should be deeply dismayed by that fact. However, we refuse to engage in political games with the livelihoods of the hardworking men and women of our great state during the holiday season when they are already burdened daily by enormous financial obstacles created by failed policies, wasteful spending, and burdensome regulation. These contracts were negotiated in good faith and agreed to many months ago, and these workers should have received their pay raises before Labor Day, without being dragged by leadership into such a highly contentious issue as immigration policy.

Whether the majority party likes it or not, this is a democracy, and a democracy works best when multiple viewpoints are afforded a voice. One-party rule stifles debate, silences voices, and moves our state further from the democracy that this country was built on. When the majority ignores the rights of the minority, democracy is lost, and that is nothing to celebrate.”

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