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Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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Representative Kane supports supplemental budget bill funding education and transportation initiatives

BOSTON – State Representative Hannah Kane (R-Shrewsbury) recently supported a \$1.3 billion supplemental budget that allocates surplus revenues to a series of education and transportation-related initiatives, including universal school meals, special education reimbursements for cities and towns, and MBTA infrastructure and safety upgrades.

The supplemental spending bill, which is funded primarily through the use of above-cap Fair Share surtax revenues available from fiscal years 2023 and 2024, was initially released from House Ways and Means on April 7 as House Bill 4005. The bill was subsequently amended and engrossed by the House of Representatives on April 9 by a vote of 140-14.

Representative Kane noted the initial supplemental budget allocated \$828 million for transportation and \$353.5 million for education investments, including \$190 million for Special Education Circuit Breaker reimbursements in Fiscal Year 2026 for costs school districts incurred in Fiscal Year 2025. Another \$58 million has been allocated from the Student Opportunity Investment Fund to provide for additional Special Education Circuit Breaker reimbursements for the current fiscal year.

During floor debate, the House adopted dozens of amendments to fund various local education and transportation projects across the state, adding \$28.8 million in additional transportation funding and another \$46.2 million in education funding, including a \$15 million reserve for regional school transportation costs offered as an amendment by Assistant Minority Leader Kimberly N. Ferguson (R-Holden).

Representative Kane supported an amendment, filed by Representative Joseph D. McKenna (R-Sutton), to redirect \$50 million set aside in the supplemental budget for the MBTA to instead provide additional funding for the Chapter 90 road and bridge program, using a formula based strictly on each municipality's local road mileage, rather than the traditional three-pronged formula that also takes into account a community's population and employment numbers. Using this approach would provide for more regional equity in the distribution of funding for road maintenance, particularly in rural communities. The amendment was defeated along a party line vote of 25-129.

Transportation-related initiatives funded in the supplemental budget include:

- \$400 million for the MBTA Workforce and Safety Reserve;
- \$300 million to replenish the MBTA Deficiency Fund;
- \$600 million for MBTA physical infrastructure work;
- \$20 million for the MBTA low-income fare relief program;
- \$13 million for mitigation support to the MBTA during the Sumner Tunnel closure; and
- \$10 million for an Unpaved Roads pilot program

In addition to the \$248 million in Special Education Circuit Breaker reimbursement funding, the supplemental budget includes the following education-related initiatives:

- \$50 million for Career Technical/Vocational School improvements;
- \$40 million for Early Education and Care workforce and operational improvements;
- \$25 million for early literacy high-dosage tutoring;
- \$10 million to support the Universal School Meals program;
- \$10 million for the Green SchoolWorks clean energy program;
- \$10 million for a Department of Higher Education Endowment Match;
- \$10 million for a UMass Endowment Match;
- \$8.5 million for English for Speakers of Other Languages services; and
- \$5 million for the Holocaust Legacy Foundation, Inc. to establish the Boston Holocaust Museum

House Bill 4005, as amended, now moves to the Senate for its consideration.

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