

My Report to You

An update for Bourne, Carver & Wareham

From State Rep. Susan Williams Gifford

September, 2009



1,000 Great Places in Massachusetts And I Need Your Help!

Inside this issue:

Best Public School 2
in the State!

Legislative Update 3

New Aide in the 3
State House Office

Carver Eagle 3
Scouts

100% Voting 4
Record

Take the Survey 4

Tourism is one of the largest stimulators of the economy for the state of Massachusetts, and our area is no different. Job creation and preservation is at the forefront of my mind. I was pleased to be appointed as one of 13 members of this bi-partisan commission. The group is also made up of local tourism boards and the state cultural and tourism offices. We will name 1,000 great places to visit, from Provincetown to the Western corners of the state.

I would like your help identifying some of your favorite places so I can see them make the list. The places can be scenic views, statues, museums, historical landmarks, ball fields, beaches or bridges. It can be that favorite restaurant or store. It can be a church, lighthouse, fair, or school.



Somewhere you consider one of the great places to visit is likely worthy of the list.

While I would love to hear about your favorite local place, since these places create local jobs and fund our economy, you may also share your favorite spots throughout the state.

You can help by mailing me the survey on the back of this newsletter. That is

the best way to let me know not just what places are great, but also to communicate with me about the issues which concern you most.

You can also go to my website www.susangifford.com and click on contact, or e-mail me: rep.susangifford@hou.state.ma.us.

I welcome your help and hope that this list, when published, will be one part of a large economic turnaround, bringing more tourist dollars in, to create more jobs for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Newsflash!!

- School Is Back Please Be Careful
- The Governor Has Added 2,000 new jobs, funded by increasing YOUR taxes
- Please fill out and return the Survey on the back

Tax and Spend - It's Back Again

You know that you are paying 25% more in sales tax now, and if this administration has its way, hikes in the income tax and gas tax are coming too. I voted against this tax hike, along with 35 Democrats and 15 Republicans.

What is most infuriating, is that these tax hikes come as

the Governor is INCREASING the size of government. According to reports, the Governor has added more than 2,000 new state jobs, funded by increasing your taxes. This comes as unemployment continues to grow.

We need to be vigilant when it comes to protect-

ing our hard-earned tax dollars. The reckless policies of this administration jeopardize our ability to run local government properly, provide for our families and meet all of our financial obligations.

I will continue to fight on behalf of hard working people like you.

Top Mass Public High School Accepts Students from Bourne, Wareham and Carver. Sturgis Charter Public School Tops Newsweek List.



**School
is
Back.
Please
Drive
Carefully**



When Newsweek released this year's top public schools in the country, Sturgis Charter Public School leapfrogged to #27 in the nation, #1 among Massachusetts high schools. Sturgis is in Hyannis and has a limited geographic area it serves. It's charter focuses on Wareham, Plymouth, Carver and Barnstable County.

A tribute to the core work, curriculum and dedication of the staff at Sturgis, Newsweek continues to recognize the college-ready students graduating from this charter school.

The school of just 402 students is selected by lottery, with no fee and no test to be admitted. This past year, Sturgis had over 225 applications for just 100 spots. With names picked out of a hat, any student from the area has

a chance to get into this academically rigorous school.

The cornerstone of Sturgis is an "IB for All" program which requires that all juniors and seniors be fully immersed in the International Baccalaureate program. The program is challenging and world renowned, requiring heavy academic coursework, projects and testing. But it all pays off as IB graduates find they have been well prepared for university.

Sturgis is located on Main Street in Hyannis, in a building which previously housed a furniture store. The facility is



Sturgis Charter Public School in Hyannis. #1 public high school in Massachusetts.
(courtesy of www.sturgischarterschool.org)

a bit non-traditional and the average class size of 17 is also a bit out of the norm. All in all, Sturgis Charter Public School is a great option for students in Wareham, Bourne and Carver. The admissions process kicks off soon. Visit www.sturgischarterschool.org for more information.



Students make frequent visits to the State House.

I enjoy welcoming students to the State House. If your classroom is interested in visiting this year, please contact my office and I will meet with the students and make sure their experience is a great one.

Rep. Gifford Fights for More Local Aid for Schools, Police and Fire

I know our towns are struggling to make ends meet. From layoffs and furloughs to delaying equipment or textbook purchases, we just do not have enough funding to do the things we need to do - and we are all paying the price. Whether it is reduced response times by emergency personnel, fewer programs for seniors or higher class sizes, this financial crisis is touching all those who rely on town services.

Now, more than ever, it is important that we are getting our fair share of state funding. For decades, the funding formulas have unfairly made residential property values more important than income in determining state funding.

That hurts towns like ours, where water views or abutting conservation areas drive up values while the majority of our people are blue-collar workers or retirees on fixed incomes. The current formula helps cities like Lowell, Brockton, Springfield and Boston over suburban communities like ours.

I have, and continue to fight to get more Chapter 70 funding for our schools, and more local aid for our town services. Having a Senate President from Plymouth should help our efforts to change the formula. It is the first time in memory that a legislative leader is not from Suffolk County. I am hopeful that the time has come.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Oil Spill Legislation Finalized



A revision to the Buzzards Bay Oil Spill law will come very soon. As we go to print, this bill is on its way to the governor for signature. The revision will update the law, making it safer and more manageable for the personnel critical to the safety of the Bay.

Welcome New Aide Heather Leosz

My new aide, Heather Leosz, started in mid-summer. She replaces Mary-Rose, who had served as my legislative aide for several years. Mary-Rose was wonderful, and I expect you will find Heather to be just as friendly and helpful.

I continue to fight for changes to the 40b affordable housing law. The law allows builders to bypass local zoning laws if the town does not have 10% affordable housing. While I support affordable housing, the law is flawed by not including mobile homes towards the town's 10%. There is great pressure to make many changes to the law, which makes my colleagues leery of opening the law up for any adjustment. I will keep fighting for this make-sense solution which will help our towns.

Chapter 40b Changes Proposed



Heather is a 2003 graduate of Eastern Nazarene College with a degree in music. She has worked in real estate and on political campaigns, but her real loves are music and helping people. In her spare time, she plays and teaches piano, participates in her college community choir and likes to read and travel.

The next time you call or visit my State House office, please say hello to Heather.

OFFICE HOURS

Held one Friday a month at the following locations. Check your newspaper for the date and time each month. Of course, meetings may also be scheduled by appointment.

- BOURNE: Town Hall, lobby
- CARVER: Town Hall, Room 205
- WAREHAM: 191 Main St, Suite 213F

Eagle Scouts Make Their Mark These Rare Achievements Continue to Impress Me



One of the events I truly enjoy attending is an Eagle Scout Court of Honor. Not long ago, I was a guest of three young men in Carver who were awarded their Eagle Scout at the same time. If you have never had the chance to witness one of these ceremonies, let me tell you how impressive they are.

It is not really the pomp and circumstance which captures my awe, although there is a great deal of it. Everything from official color guards posting the flags to candlelight ceremonies marking the path these young men have taken in Scouting.

It is not the letters from the Gover-

nor, Senator or the President of the United States which stick in my mind.

It is listening to the stories of how these young men developed from boys, just tinkering around a campfire into men who are truly prepared for the world. They have developed skills which will serve them well, but they have also been raised to value service to others.

to become Eagle Scouts and every time I hear from them that this is the beginning of their lives of service to others, not the end of a journey. They pledge to give back to Scouting more than it has given them. They have, in all cases, already performed rigorous service to their community, yet they continue to yearn to serve.

I am always honored to celebrate along with the families, friends and fellow scouts. I appreciate them giving me an opportunity to share their moment. I hope they realize how truly special it is for me, too. If you get the chance to attend an Eagle Court of Honor, try to make it. You will be glad you did.

VOTING RECORD 100%

Again this year, I have a 100% voting record. While attendance by itself is not a terrific achievement, it is hopefully a signal to you that I take my job seriously. Representing the people of this district is a tremendous privilege which I do not take for granted.

By making sure to vote on matters before the House of Representatives, I am making sure your voice is heard every time.

I believe it is just as important to be accessible and responsive to you when I am not voting. That is why you will see me at local events, in my district office, or simply around town talking to people about issues of concern to them.

Never hesitate to reach out to me. Information to contact me is below - please use it when you need help dealing with government offices or when you just want me to know how you feel on an important issue.



Some More Local
Great Places

Do You Know them All?

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Please Tear Off This Survey and Mail it Back to Me!

GREAT PLACES: Please list some of your favorite places!

IMPORTANT ISSUES: Please tell me what your priorities are!

- Protecting and Creating Jobs (Economy)
- Fighting against Tax Increases (Taxes)
- Protecting Health Care Access for All (Health Care)
- Cutting Wasteful Spending (Government Reform)
- Supporting Our Schools (Education)
- Getting More State Funding (Local Aid)
- Protecting beaches and parks (Environment)
- Rewriting Chapter 40b (Local Control)
- Susan, You Are Doing Great, Keep Up the Good Work!

Name _____

Phone _____

Address _____

E-Mail _____

Comments _____