

REP. KATE HOGAN'S SENIOR NEWS



Beacon Hill is looking out for seniors

Dear Friends,

Here's wishing you a safe and joyous holiday season. As I take time to reflect on blessings this time each year, I continue to be thankful for representing you on Beacon Hill. This December, I would also like to take the opportunity to update you on some steps recently taken by the legislature to better care for our seniors.

Safeguarding against handicapped parking fraud

I joined my colleagues in the Massachusetts House of Representatives in voting to pass legislation that authorizes the Registry of Motor Vehicles (RMV) to investigate charges that someone has falsely obtained, or is falsely using, a handicapped parking placard or license plate.

A 2016 report by Inspector General Glenn Cunha revealed widespread abuse of handicapped placards. Among its findings, the report states that over a 34-day surveillance period, more than 300 cars parked in four neighborhoods of Boston were identified as using special parking identification placards belonging to someone other than the vehicle owner.

This bill creates fines for intentionally making false statements to obtain a handicapped plate or placard: \$500 for the first offense and \$1,000 for a second or subsequent offense.

Improper use of handicapped parking placards and plates prevents those with disabilities from accessing the parking they need, and is just plain wrong. This important measure will crack down on fraudulent practices to ensure our truly disabled residents aren't placed in unnecessary danger or discomfort because all of the handicapped parking spaces are already taken. A similar bill was recently passed by the Senate; the bills are being reconciled and will then head to the Governor's desk for his signature.

Addressing Alzheimer's and dementia as a healthcare crisis

In August I informed you about legislation before the Joint Committee on Public Health, which I chair, that aims to address Alzheimer's and dementia in the Commonwealth. I'm also pleased to share that the *Joint Committee on Public Health* teamed up with the *Joint Committee on Elder Affairs* this October to host an informational hearing on "Alzheimer's and Dementia as a Healthcare Crisis." With the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) projecting that more than 150,000 people in Massachusetts will suffer from Alzheimer's by the year 2025, the committees convened this hearing to bring together individuals working in government, research, advocacy, care delivery, and councils on aging - all of whom have experience with Alzheimer's and dementia. These individuals spoke to the questions of where Massachusetts stands in terms of preparedness for the increasing population of those with Alzheimer's and dementia and what we, as a state, can do better. I look forward to working closely with my colleagues as we sift through the information provided during this hearing and translate it into policies that will best support seniors in the Commonwealth.

Rep. Hogan's Office Hours

- Office Hours are by appointment-only during the month of December. If you would like to meet, or if you have any issues or concerns, please contact my office at 617-722-2130 to schedule an appointment. Regularly scheduled monthly Office Hours will resume in January.

Rep. Hogan's staff is also available in the District Office at Maynard Town Hall, 195 Main Street, on Mondays from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. (*Closed Holiday Mondays*)

Kate Hogan, State Representative
Proudly represents Bolton, Hudson, Maynard, and Stow

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