

As the voice for Real Estate in Massachusetts, the Greater Boston Real Estate Board provides its members and affiliates invaluable advocacy at the state and local level. We tirelessly advocate for ethical members of the multifamily housing industry in all aspects of Massachusetts government. We are the primary resource for policymakers, who benefit from our insights when framing key decisions. Our public affairs team includes policy analysts, lobbyists, communications specialists, and lawyers who persistently defend our members' interests.

For executive summary click on bullet(s) below

Legislative initiatives that passed in 2020

- [Housing Choices Legislation](#)
- [Climate Change Bill](#)
- [Economic Development Legislation](#)
- [Baker Veto's 2 Problem Sections](#)
- [Boston Linkage Payment Revisions](#)

Legislation that will return in the 2021-2022 Session

- [Covid/Pandemic related issues](#)
- [Transfer Taxes](#)
- [Rent Control](#)
- [Just Cause Eviction](#)
- [Fair Housing](#)
- [Climate Change Bill](#)
- [Mandatory Energy Scoring](#)

Legislative initiatives that passed in 2020

Housing Choices Legislation:

GBREB stood with the Governor, other trade groups and municipalities in **supporting the most comprehensive zoning reform law changes in the last 50 years to produce housing at all types across the Commonwealth.** This was a huge win for the industry.

Climate Change Bill:

The Climate Change Bill was an Omnibus Legislative Bill which contained many different sections affecting all aspects of climate change and environmental issues. The bill was about 100 pages in length. GBREB supported some provisions in the legislation and was opposed to some aspects of it. It was ultimately vetoed by the Governor because the requirement to reduce emissions by 50% in the future was not achievable. The Governor could reach 45%. The Governor had announced that emissions target several months earlier. All industries, and certainly economic trade groups in Massachusetts supported the Governor in this assessment. At 50% the Commonwealth would lose jobs, and ultimately that would have an effect on real estate. The Bill will be back on his desk soon, and those emissions limits will be negotiated with the Legislature.

Economic Development Legislation:

The Legislature approved a sweeping economic stimulus plan to bolster business and individuals most impacted by the pandemic. GBREB was advocating for the industry's interests, supporting good aspects of the bill (increasing tax credits for housing production, money for small business and increased rental assistance for tenants and landlords) and opposing problematic sections. They were the return of Rent Control to Massachusetts, the imposition of Transfer Taxes, Sealing Eviction records and creating secret courts (Specifically not allowed by the Supreme Judicial Court), and requires that before the sale of property that is leased it must be offered to that tenant for purchase. Before the sale can occur.

Baker Veto's 2 Problem Sections:

Right of First Refusal—This section would have, by local option, **required sellers of multifamily and possibly single-family homes that are leased to be offered to the tenants for purchase before they can be sold.** The law would stall, and in many cases stop transactions. It is a tremendous burden on a free market. This section was vetoed by the Governor.

Sealing Eviction Records-GBREB supports sealing the records of minor tenants living at the property that experience an eviction. However, as drafted, the legislation would have resulted in serious offenses committed by a tenant to be sealed and not available to another landlord if a tenant wished to work in the owner's building. This section would also materially alter the way our American Judicial functions by establishing secret courts. This section was vetoed by the Governor.

Boston Linkage Payment Revisions:

A Bill that would modernize the fees paid by developers of commercial projects in Boston was passed and became law with the support of the Greater Boston Real Estate Board.

Legislation that will return in the 2021-2022 Session

Covid/Pandemic Related Issues:

There will be continued attempts to reinstitute an Eviction Moratorium of lengthy or unlimited duration affording tenants more protections to remain in their homes. There will also be a push to include other tenant protections as well passed under the guise of Covid relief. GBREB will continue to evaluate these measures and react appropriately. **GBREB will continue to advocate for continued financial support for rental property owners, homeowners and tenants who are struggling because of Covid.**

Transfer Taxes:

GBREB opposed transfer taxes on commercial and residential property at time of sale proposed for Boston as well as transfer taxes proposed for Cambridge, Somerville, Concord, Arlington, and many others.

Rent Control:

GBREB has and will continue to oppose any efforts to have the government regulate free market rents. Many bills are filed on this issue each Session. GBREB has formed a subcommittee of its Government Affairs Committee to work on strategy regarding Rent Control. This is in conjunction with our national affiliates, the National Apartment Association, National Multifamily Housing Council, and the National Association of Realtors. Any attempt to pass Rent Control in Massachusetts would require an amendment to the General Laws of the Commonwealth.

Just Cause Eviction:

GBREB has and will continue to oppose any attempt to add to the legal requirements needed to bring an eviction case in the Commonwealth. This legislation makes it very difficult for an eviction case to be commenced, which is not fair to owners who must also balance the rights of other tenants in their developments.

Fair Housing:

GBREB has been working with Boston's Fair Housing and Equity Office to identify problems and issues in the market with Fair Housing. Education is a component of this process. MAR is also filing legislation which GBREB will support to require Fair Housing or Diversity training to be a part of the real estate licensing process.

Climate Change Bill:

(Please see explanation on page 1)

Mandatory Energy Scoring:

GBREB continues to oppose any requirement that a residential dwelling must have any energy score before it was offered for sale in the Commonwealth.

Here's just some of the outlets we've placed stories in and participated to help change the narrative:

Worcester Business Journal | WWLP | Telegram & Gazette | MassLive | WCVB | Lowell Sun | Milford Daily News | MetroWest Daily | Banker & Tradesman | Bloomberg Baystate Business | Dorchester Reporter



CommonWealth Magazine: [New bill would extend eviction moratorium by a year](#)

The Boston Globe: [Healey/GBREB warn of virtual rental scams](#)

The New York Times: [Tenants Largely Stay Current on Rent, for Now](#)

Boston Business Journal: [Feds join Boston in moratorium on housing evictions](#)

NBC Boston: [With Apartment Hunting Moving Online During Pandemic, Scam Listings Increase](#)

WBUR: [Mass. Landlords And Tenants Are At Odds — But Agree On Need For Massive Infusion Of Cash For Rent](#)

WBZ: [Mass. Eviction Protection Bill Clears Committee On Party Line Vote](#)