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**GOVERNOR PATRICK SIGNS BILL AUTHORIZING CITY OF BOSTON  
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION TO LEASE HISTORIC  
PROPERTIES**

BOSTON - Wednesday, August 4, 2010 - Governor Deval Patrick yesterday signed legislation authorizing the city of Boston's Parks and Recreation Commission to lease two historic properties to private entities that will renovate each building and operate food concessions and other services out of the spaces.

The legislation, "An Act Authorizing the Boston Parks and Recreation Commission to Lease Certain Real Property," will allow the city to revive two buildings - former comfort stations known as the Duck House in the Back Bay Fens and the Pink Palace on Boston Common - to private individuals or groups. Under terms of the new law, the leases must ensure the preservation and maintenance of the historic properties for park-related purposes. The leases will be awarded only after an open, competitive bidding process.

"This law will give these two historic buildings a new lease on life, providing the City of Boston with new sources of revenue and park visitors with much-needed places to rest, refresh and refuel," said Governor Patrick.

Both buildings were constructed as comfort stations (restrooms) and have not been used since the 1970s. Pink Palace (so named because of the pink hue of the stone used in its construction) is octagonal and was built in the 1920s. Duck House on Agassiz Road in the Fens was designed by Alexander Longfellow and built in 1897 of granite and stone. Both buildings are in important pedestrian corridors and have the potential of adding vibrancy and amenities to the surrounding parks. Boston city officials hope to find a lessee who will provide vending or cafe services, bike rental, or other use compatible with the park setting.

The bill signed today is modeled after 1994 legislation establishing the Department of Conservation and Recreation's (DCR) Historic Curatorship Program, which matches some of the Commonwealth's unused historic buildings with people interested in rehabilitating and maintaining them in exchange for a long-term lease. Since the program's inception, 14 properties across the Commonwealth are under agreement and nearly \$10 million in private funds have been leveraged toward these restorations. Current uses for the DCR properties include single-family homes, artist lofts, a nonprofit group, and a for-profit events and overnight facility.

"We have seen restaurants transform neighborhoods from the South End to Mission Hill, and I believe we will see the same shift in the Boston Common and Back Bay Fens once a restaurant or small business opens in these parks. I thank Governor Patrick for recognizing the value of these small businesses in our city and signing this legislation today," said Boston City Council President Michael P. Ross.

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