



State Library of Massachusetts - Special Collections Department

Ms. Coll. 57

Bill Owens Papers, 1989-1992: Guide

COLLECTION SUMMARY

Creator: Owens, Bill

Call Number: Ms. Coll. 57

Extent: 6 boxes (4 linear feet)

Preferred Citation Style: *Folder Title, Box Number #.* Bill Owens Papers. State Library of Massachusetts Special Collections.

About This Finding Aid: Description based on DACS.

Provenance: Received from Senator Owens, 1992.

Processed by: Finding aid prepared by Mary Micarelli, January 24, 1994; updated by Abigail Cramer, May, 2012.

Abstract: This collection documents Owens' second term as a Massachusetts Senator.

SCOPE AND CONTENT

This collection includes material from Owens' work on the Human Services and Elderly Affairs Committee, including material on the licensing of psychologists and social workers. This collection also includes legislative research, testimony, and public hearings on various issues related to social services, including materials related to the protection and care of the mentally and physically disabled, testimony on aversive therapy, testimony and legislation related to the Department of Public Welfare, materials documenting Emergency Service Assistance, legislation to help prevent drug abuse by pregnant women, testimony and legislation dealing with the elderly (including materials related to Medicaid, nursing homes, and respite care), and materials related

State Library of Massachusetts – Special Collections Department

Guide to Ms. Coll. 57 – Bill Owens Papers

Page 1 of 10

to aid for refugees and immigrants and housing assistance for the homeless. There is also material regarding legislation for lesbian and gay rights.

This collection also documents issues that relate to the district represented by Senator Owens. This includes education (including materials about Roxbury Community College, the Boston public schools, and the home rule petition which gives the Mayor the right to select members of the School Committee) and the “stop and search” practices of the Boston Police.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Senator William Owens was born in Demopolis, Alabama, July 6, 1937. He received his education at Boston English High School, Boston University, Harvard University, and the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. A Democrat, Owens was elected to the Massachusetts House of Representatives from 1973 to 1974; he was later elected to the Massachusetts Senate from 1975 to 1982 and again from 1989 to 1992. He was the first Senator to serve in the Massachusetts Senate from the newly-formed 2nd Suffolk District of Boston. This district includes parts of the Back Bay, the Fenway, the South End, Mission Hill, Jamaica Plain, Roxbury, Dorchester and Mattapan.

Owens was a member of several legislative committees, serving as Chairman of the Human Services and Elderly Affairs Committee and Vice Chairman of the Committees on Housing and Urban Development, Transportation, and Election Laws. He also served as a member of the Committees on Education, Public Safety, Counties, Banks and Banking, and Federal Financial Assistance. Owens' legislative initiatives were concentrated in several areas, including the issues of affordable housing, health care, economic development, education, job creation, public safety, and reinvestment in inner-city neighborhoods. His achievements include the creation of the State Office of Minority Business Assistance, creation of the Summer Youth Jobs Program, securement of the appropriation for construction of Roxbury Community College, and passage of the Assault Weapons Ban.

Further biographical information is available in Appendix A and Appendix B. Both appendices include biographies received with the collection and produced by Owens' office.

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Arrangement

The materials in this collection are arranged in their original order.

Conditions Governing Access

This collection is open for research during the Special Collections Department's regular hours.

Conditions Governing Reproduction and Use

Copyright restrictions may apply. Requests for permission to publish material from this collection should be discussed with Special Collections staff.

Languages and Scripts

The materials are entirely in English.

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Received from Senator Owens, 1992.

Container List

Box #	Folder #	Folder Title	Date
1	1	Owens biography	undated
1	2	Joint Committee on Human Services and Elderly Affairs (JCHSEA): Meeting Minutes	March 10, 1992
1	3	JCHSEA: An Act Authorizing Qualified Licensed Independent Clinical Social Workers ... Forensic Evaluation	1991
1	4	JCHSEA: Legislation Relating to the Licensing of Psychologists	1991
1	5	JCHSEA: An Act Relative to the Board of Registration for Social Workers	1991
1	6-12	JCHSEA: Testimony, Disabled Persons	undated
2	13-15	JCHSEA: Testimony and Proposed Legislation to Protect the Disabled	1990-1992
2	16	JCHSEA: Legislation in Regard to Rehabilitation Services for Brain Injured Persons	undated
6	16a	JCHSEA: Testimony About Aversive Therapy	undated

2	17-19	JCHSEA: Testimony on Legislation Relating to the Department of Youth Services	1991
2	20-21	JCHSEA: Legislation for Veterans	1991-1992
2	22	JCHSEA: Legislation Relating to Workfare	undated
2	23	JCHSEA: Legislation Relating to Families and Children	1991
2	23a	JCHSEA: Legislation Concerning the Department of Welfare and Rate Setting Commission	1991
2	24a-b	JCHSEA: Testimony and Legislation for Emergency Service Aid	undated
2	24c	JCHSEA: Legislation to Help Financially Distressed Cities and Towns	undated
3	25-26	JCHSEA: Testimony on Miscellaneous Welfare and Social Service Problems	1991-1992
3	27-28	JCHSEA: Legislation Concerning Child Abuse	1992
3	29	JCHSEA: Foster Child Care	undated
3	30	JCHSEA: An Act Relative to the Provision of Services to Adolescent Parents and Children	undated
3	31	JCHSEA: An Act Appointing a Public Guardian	undated
3	32-35	JCHSEA: Legislation to Stop Substance Abuse	1992
3	36	JCHSEA: Legislation to Prevent Gang Violence	undated
3	37	JCHSEA: An Act to Allow Social Workers to Disclose Criminal Activity	1992
3	38	JCHSEA: Legislation to Protect Against Sexually Dangerous Persons	undated
3	39	JCHSEA: Testimony on Mental Health Legislation	1989, 1991
3	40-42	JCHSEA: Testimony on Medicaid	undated
3	43	JCHSEA: Nursing Homes	undated
3	44	JCHSEA: An Act Ensuring Respite Care	undated

3	45	JCHSEA: Refugees and Immigrants	undated
3	46	JCHSEA: Housing	undated
4	47-48	JCHSEA: Homeless	undated
4	49	JCHSEA: Lesbian and Gay Civil Rights	undated
4	50	Roxbury Community College (RCC): Statement of Purpose	undated
4	51	RCC: Recruitment Task Force	undated
4	52--53	RCC: Public Hearing	1991
4	54	RCC: State Auditor's Report on the Financial Assistance Programs	1991
4	55	RCC: A List of Members of the Study Advisory Group	undated
4	56	RCC: Correspondence	1991-1992
4	57	RCC: Meetings	1991-1992
4	58	RCC: Study Advisory Group Press Releases	undated
4	59	RCC: Newspaper Clippings	1991
4	60	Boston Public Schools (BPS): Meeting	June 4, 1991
4	61-63	BPS: Home Rule Petition	1991-1992
4	64	BPS: Background on Home Rule Petition	undated
4	65	BPS: Search Committee for Boston School Superintendent	1990
4	66-67	BPS: Newspaper Clippings About Boston Schools	1990-1992
4	68	Stop and Search (S&S): Correspondence	1989-1990
4	69	S&S: Meetings	1989
4	70	S&S: Protest Meeting on Stop and Search	undated
4	71	S&S: Report of the Boston Police Department Management Review Committee	1992

4	72	S&S: Special Commission on Police Procedure	1990-1991
4	73	S&S: Statement of Commissioner Francis M. Roache	May 7, 1991
5	74	S&S: Report of Attorney General's Civil Rights Division on Boston Police Department Practices	1990
5	75	S&S: Miscellaneous Material on Violence Prevention	undated
5	76	S&S: Legislation	1989
5	77	S&S: Press Releases and Statements About the Boston Police and Stop and Search	1989-1990
5	78-79	S&S: Newspaper Clippings About the Boston Police, Violence, and Stop and Search	1989-1992

Appendix A: Biography (February, 1991)

In November, 1988, State Senator Bill Owens was re-elected to the Massachusetts Senate, after an absence of six years. Senator Owens has the distinction of being the first African American to serve in the Massachusetts Senate, where he previously served from 1975 through 1982. Prior to his election to the Senate, he served one term as a State Representative, from 1973 through 1974.

Currently, he is the Senate Chairman of the Human Services and Elderly Affairs Committee and Vice Chairman of the following Senate committees: Housing and Urban Development, Transportation, and Election Laws. The Senator also serves as a member of the committees on: Counties, Education, Banks and Banking, Federal Financial Assistance, and Public Safety.

A partial listing of Senator Owens' achievements during his tenures in the House and Senate include: the creation of the State Office of Minority Business Assistance; creation of the Summer Youth Jobs Program; securing of a \$30 million appropriation for the construction of Roxbury Community College; co-sponsorship of legislation prohibiting age discrimination; passage of the Assault Weapons Ban; and passage of the Parcel 18 legislation.

The Senator's current legislative priorities include: the creation of employment opportunities for neighborhood residents; the continued development of decent, affordable housing for low and moderate income families; and improvement of the health care delivery system, in order to improve the quality of life for his constituents. The Second Suffolk District, which the Senator represents, is one of the most economically, socially, and culturally diverse areas of the

commonwealth, and possibly of the country. This district includes: sections of the Back Bay, the Fenway, South End, Mission Hill, Jamaica Plain, Roxbury, Dorchester, and Mattapan.

Appendix B: Biography with Legislative Accomplishments (August, 1992)

Senator Bill Owens has the distinction of being the first African-American to serve in the Massachusetts Senate, from 1975 through 1982. Prior to this, the Senator served one term in the House of Representatives, 1973 through 1974.

The Senator's current tenure, 1989 through the present, has been concentrated on improving the quality of life for all of the constituents of the Second Suffolk District. His initiatives cover a broad range of issues, including: affordable housing, quality health care, economic development, quality education, the creation of jobs, public safety concerns, the regulation of mortgage lenders and brokers, and reinvestment in the inner-city neighborhoods. The following is a partial listing of Senator Owens' accomplishments and/ or legislative initiatives, since 1989:

Creation of the Urban Initiative Fund, a \$5 million loan and grant program which will provide funds for **education, job training, business development, health care, day care, youth activities, and violence prevention** programs in inner-city neighborhoods. As the Senate sponsor and Chairman of the Ma. Black Legislative Caucus, Senator Owens played a pivotal role in the passage of this Caucus initiative.

Improvement of the community benefits package in the Parcel 18 legislation, which resulted in doubling the community's share of the net operating income, from 5% to 10%; creating community boards for the residents of Roxbury and Chinatown so that they may determine how this income is spent to the benefit of their respective communities; recording of the community benefits package with the Registrar of Deeds.

Creation of the Minority Health Commission, which will develop a plan for increasing resources and services to the communities of color.

Establishment of the Massachusetts AIDS Fund, which is the first in the nation. This fund consists of the contributions of citizens who wish to do so through their state income tax returns. The money is used for

prevention, research, and education. During the first year of its existence, this fund raised \$350,000 in citizens' donations.

Passage of the Assault Weapons Ban, which prohibits the possession, sale, or transfer of weapons such as the UZI and the AK-47.

Passage of legislation which regulates mortgage companies and provides consumers, who took out very high-interest loans, with recourse against a bank or mortgage company for faulty work by a home improvement contractor, or unfair dealings by a lender. This law also lowers the community Reinvestment Act (CRA) rating of banks whose lending practices result in high interest loans and foreclosures.

Passage of Fiscal Year '92 amendment which mandates not less than **\$4 million for community health centers** (from revenue pool which reimburses hospitals for part of free care). In addition, **\$185,000 was obtained for technical assistance to health centers.**

Passage of Fiscal Year '92 amendment which obtained over \$2 million in funds for the **Teen Pregnancy Prevention Challenge Fund.**

Establishment of the Trust Fund for Head Injury Treatment Services. This law mandates a \$100 fine on drunk driving offenders. The funds will be used for head injury treatment services.

Restored the \$150 welfare clothing allowance for children. This Fiscal Year '93 budget item had been cut to \$75. Senator Owens was successful in increasing the allowance, with the support of his colleagues.

Increased funding for Disabled Persons Protection Commission. This Fiscal Year '93 budget item was used as a tool to combat the horrendous abuse of disabled persons, by giving the Commission the resources to hire investigators and to implement a variety of recommendations developed by the Human Services & Elderly Affairs Committee.

Passage of the X-ray Safety Bill. This law gives the Dept. of Public Health the authority and responsibility to ensure that standards exist to protect individuals from improperly administered diagnostic x-rays (including-mammograms) and excess radiation.

Passage of the Caribbean Week Bill, which mandates that the Governor of the Commonwealth annually issue a proclamation setting apart the last week in August as Caribbean Week and that said week be observed in an appropriate manner by the people.

Passage of the "**Boom Box**" **Amendment.** This law mandates that individuals who use a radio, boom box, or similar equipment **while riding on public transportation,** must use earphones, or risk a fine.

Passage of an amendment to the Transportation Bond Bill, which set aside \$500,000 for a statewide "disparity" study. Under the auspices of the Executive Office of Transportation and Construction, a study will be performed to determine the **availability and utilization of minority and women-owned business enterprises (M/WBE).** The purpose of the study is to develop public policy and future civil rights initiatives with regard to M/WBEs.

Preservation of Nursing Home Bed Hold: Sponsored amendment to the Fiscal Year '93 budget, which provides that nursing home beds will be held for up to 10 days, if an elderly Medicaid recipient is hospitalized, **so that these individuals may return to their nursing homes, after going to a hospital for necessary treatment.**

Prevented Restrictions to Nursing Home Eligibility: Sponsored "Score 4" amendment to the Fiscal Year '93 budget, which will **protect the elderly and other patients** from proposed **plans to restrict nursing home eligibility under Medicaid.**

Increased the Availability of Home Care Funding: Sponsored amendment to the Fiscal Year '93 budget, which will result **in the availability of \$4 to \$6 million to be used to serve more elders,** through the Department of Elder Affairs Home Care Program.

Passage of legislation to build \$17 million track and field facility at Roxbury community College.

Sponsored Fair Housing Commission Bill which enables cities and towns, with populations in excess of 64,000, to establish commissions empowered to **create equal access to housing; creates a housing trust fund; empowers those individuals protected by this legislation** to serve as members of the Housing Trust Fund board; **creates funding for affordable housing.**

Currently, Senator Owens is Chairman of the Human Services and Elderly Affairs Committee, which has the responsibility of monitoring approximately \$7 billion in statewide programs. He is Vice Chairman of the committees on: Housing and Urban Development, Transportation, and Election Laws. He serves as a member of the committees on: Banks and Banking, counties, Education, Federal Financial Assistance, and Public Safety.

The Second Suffolk District, which the Senator is honored to represent, is one of the most racially, economically, socially, and culturally diverse areas of the Commonwealth. This district includes sections of: the Back Bay, the Fenway, South End, Mission Hill, Jamaica Plain, Roxbury, Dorchester, and Mattapan. Senator Owens' legislative and public policy agenda is focused on the basic issues for the preservation and enhancement of the quality of life for every individual who resides in this district. He welcomes and seeks your continued support. If you would like further information, please contact Senator Owens' office at 722-1673. *[Please note: This text is from 1992 and the phone number is no longer accurate.]*