
The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT,
STATE HOUSE, BOSTON, June 3, 1959.*To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives:*

I am today recommending in advance of the general appropriation bill a program of fire protection at specific institutions, though I am aware of your present concern with other important issues. Unfortunately, fires are not controlled by diplomatic timing and I have no choice but to submit this message immediately upon receipt from the commissioners of mental health, public health, education and correction of the necessary information.

I urge you to immediately give your urgent consideration to this message as a matter of the very highest priority — not just high priority, but the very highest priority.

At the present time 30,568 patients are housed in mental health hospitals and 2,621 patients are being accommodated in our public health hospitals. The Department of Education services directly 13,977 students, and the Department of Correction is charged with providing security requirements for 3,443 inmates.

These four departments — Mental Health, Public Health, Education and Correction — provide housing and living accommodations for more than 52,000 people, not including thousands of public employees. I am advised by the Commissioners of Mental Health, Public Health, Education and Correction that the buildings and facilities at many institutions constitute a decided threat to the safety of the public in that a variety of serious fire hazards are presently existing in these four departments. Many of our public institutional buildings were built in the nineteenth century, and a large number of our public hospital structures date from the beginning of this century. These serious fire hazardous conditions in these Commonwealth institutions should be corrected immediately.

According to the Commissioners, existing fire hazards can be divided into three specific categories:

(1) Fire hazards that can be corrected through the installation of sprinkler systems, provisions for protection against lightning, modernization of wiring systems, and other needed repairs;

(2) Fire hazards that can be corrected through the widening of staircases, altering the construction of exits or entrances and other minor internal structural alterations to meet the specifications of the Department of Public Safety, and other needed repairs;

(3) Fire hazards that can be corrected only by a total replacement of existing facilities.

Throughout the past months I have directed the Commissioner of Administration to conduct a thorough survey of fire hazardous conditions in public institutions where individual citizens are housed or where they congregate for recreational or other purposes. In addition, I have directed the Commissioners of Mental Health, Public Health, Education and Correction to conduct a thorough survey of their institutional needs and to report directly to me concerning fire hazardous conditions. Their reports are alarming and demand immediate legislative action.

The first category of fire hazards requires immediate attention, and I am recommending \$4,138,000 in capital outlay for this purpose. Of this sum \$2,669,000 is required for the correction of fire hazardous conditions in the Department of Mental Health; \$332,500 in the Department of Correction; \$525,000 in the Department of Public Health; and \$601,500 for institutions under the jurisdiction of the Youth Service Board. This recommendation is independent of present appropriations for fire protection programs. Modernization of electrical wiring and adequate fire protection facilities must not wait, and this program will finally complete an important phase of our public protection program.

I am recommending \$1,982,732 for the immediate correction of conditions in public institutions relative to public safety. In some cases it is necessary to widen a stairway; in other instances it is necessary to widen an exit door in order to meet the standards established by the Department of Public Safety. This is a small price to pay for insuring the maximum safety for our citizens.

The third category of existing fire hazards concerns the replacement of existing facilities. The Department of Mental Health and the Department of Public Health have a number of antiquated wooden institutional buildings constructed, in many cases, decades ago, and constituting, in the judgement of responsible officials, serious threats to the safety of patients and state employees.

Program planning for the future for the Department of Mental Health is now in progress with a view toward greater out-patient service close to the major centers of population and sources of pro-

essional services. Such a program will mean that a substantially greater portion of mental health costs will be devoted to direct services to patients and will be designed for maximum preventive treatment and will facilitate post-institutional care.

It would be unwise at the present time to replace mental health institutions in their present locations — unwise and uneconomical. I have recommended more than \$3,500,000 for the correction of serious immediate fire hazards at mental health institutions, and this will contribute substantially to increase protection for patients and public employees at these institutions.

I recommend the immediate replacement of the Tewksbury Hospital and the Lakeville State Sanatorium as constituting so serious a threat to human life that it takes precedence for legislative action over all other matters. The replacement of Tewksbury Hospital is estimated to cost \$17,500,000, and the replacement of the Lakeville State Sanatorium \$4,000,000. These two institutions have many very old wooden structures that remain serious fire hazards in spite of alterations and improvements to the existing plant.

The Commissioner of Public Health and the superintendents of the two institutions are agreed that the situation is so serious that during an interim period, while new facilities are under construction, a special fire watch must be provided at a cost of \$17,628 at the Tewksbury Hospital and \$18,655 at the Lakeville State Sanatorium and I so recommend. The buildings at these institutions must be patrolled daily between the hours of 3:30 P.M. to 12 midnight and from 12 midnight to 8:30 A.M. This will require the services of six special attendants, grade 6, at \$2,938 per year for Tewksbury Hospital, and four such special attendants at the Lakeville State Sanatorium.

A new telephone switchboard is scheduled for installation at Lakeville State Sanatorium during the month of June, and in order to have adequate telephone service around the clock for fire protection and for other purposes, it will be necessary to provide four permanent positions — three regular telephone operators and one relief operator. The new positions required for special attendants and telephone operators should be provided without delay, and individuals for the positions should be selected from civil service lists.

The reports of all responsible departments and officials have stressed the seriousness of conditions at these two institutions, and I urge that immediate favorable action be taken to provide new

facilities and to provide for the maximum protection of patients and employees without delay.

I further recommend that an additional position of Supervisor of Plans, grade 16, be created in the Division of Inspection of the Department of Public Safety. This agency is a critical focal point for the processing of plans pertaining to fire safety at public institutions. During the last five years the work load at this office has undergone an enormous increase, and in order to facilitate the processing of a fire protection program for public institutions, it is necessary to strengthen the Division of Inspection.

It is apparent that the fire protection program I have today recommended cannot be accomplished in a matter of weeks. The Commissioners have requested that Chapter 582 of the Acts of 1948 as amended by Chapter 487 of the Acts of 1957 be extended to July 1, 1961, and I so recommend.

I am appending to this message a list of scheduled improvements and repairs as recommended by the Commissioners for the various institutions of the Commonwealth under the jurisdictions of the Departments of Mental Health, Public Health, Education and Correction. There is no more compelling obligation before you. I request your support for this program in the best long-run and short-run interest of all of our people.

Respectfully submitted,

FOSTER FURCOLO,

Governor of the Commonwealth.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year One Thousand Nine Hundred and Fifty-Nine.

AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE DATE UPON WHICH BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES, EXCEPT THE STATE HOUSE, OWNED OR OCCUPIED BY THE COMMONWEALTH OR ANY OF ITS POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS, SHALL COMPLY WITH CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF THE LAW RELATING TO THE SAFETY OF PERSONS IN BUILDINGS.

1 *Whereas*, The deferred operation of this act would tend to
2 defeat its purpose, which is to defer immediately the date upon
3 which buildings and structures, except the state house, owned
4 or occupied by the commonwealth or any of its political sub-
5 divisions, shall comply with certain provisions of the law relat-
6 ing to the safety of persons in buildings, therefore it is hereby
7 declared to be an emergency law, necessary for the preservation
8 of the public convenience.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1 Chapter 582 of the acts of 1948 is hereby amended by striking
2 out section 3, as amended by chapter 487 of the acts of 1957,
3 and inserting in place thereof the following section: —

4 *Section 3.* This act shall take effect on July first, nineteen
5 hundred and sixty-one.

FIRE PROTECTION SCHEDULE BY DEPARTMENT.

Department of Education.

Fitchburg State Teachers' College:		
For fire protection improvements	. . . . .	\$18,000
Framingham State Teachers' College:		
For fire protection improvements	. . . . .	1,200
Salem State Teachers' College:		
For fire protection improvements	. . . . .	3,250
Bradford Durfee College of Technology:		
For completion of fire alarm system	. . . . .	12,500
Lowell Technological Institute:		
For fire protection improvements	. . . . .	500,000

Youth Service Board.

Industrial School for Boys:	
For rewiring and sprinkler system	\$250,000
For fire protection improvements	890
Industrial School for Girls:	
For rewiring and sprinkler system	35,000
For fire protection improvements	3,500
Lyman School for Boys:	
For rewiring and sprinkler system	265,000
For fire protection improvements	20,500
Reception-Detention Facilities for Boys:	
For fire protection improvements	312
Institute for Juvenile Guidance:	
For rewiring and sprinkler system	21,500
For fire protection improvements	15,050
Reception-Detention Center for Girls:	
For fire protection improvements	480
Residential Treatment Unit:	
For rewiring and sprinkler system	30,000
For fire protection improvements	250
Total, Department of Education	<u>\$1,177,432</u>

Department of Mental Health.

Massachusetts Mental Health Center:	
For public safety improvements	\$3,000
Boston State Hospital:	
For public safety improvements	150,000
For fire protection improvements	7,000
For rewiring	290,000
Danvers State Hospital:	
For public safety improvements	70,000
For fire protection improvements	3,000
For lightning protection	33,000
Foxboro State Hospital:	
For public safety improvements	250,000
For fire protection improvements	14,000
Gardner State Hospital:	
For fire protection improvements	4,000
For rewiring	50,000
For sprinkler system	66,000
Grafton State Hospital:	
For fire protection improvements	5,000
For rewiring certain buildings	120,000
Medfield State Hospital:	
For public safety improvements	70,000
For fire protection improvements	10,000
For rewiring certain buildings	200,000
Metropolitan State Hospital:	
For public safety improvements	20,000
For fire protection improvements	10,000
For rewiring certain buildings	275,000

Northampton State Hospital:	
For public safety improvements	\$150,000
For fire protection improvements	15,000
For rewiring certain buildings	70,000
Taunton State Hospital:	
For public safety improvements	23,000
For fire protection improvements	10,000
For rewiring certain buildings	235,000
Westboro State Hospital:	
For public safety improvements	30,000
For fire protection improvements	8,000
For rewiring certain buildings	150,000
Worcester State Hospital:	
For fire protection improvements	4,000
For rewiring certain buildings	80,000
Monson State Hospital:	
For fire protection improvements	33,000
For rewiring certain buildings	90,000
Belchertown State School:	
For fire protection improvements	15,000
For rewiring certain buildings	375,000
For ramped egress from Infirmary Building	30,000
For fireproofing employees cottages	20,000
Walter E. Fernald State School:	
For public safety improvements	85,000
For fire protection improvements	13,000
For rewiring and sprinkler system	385,000
Wrentham State School:	
For public safety improvements	5,000
For fire protection improvements	10,000
For rewiring certain buildings	250,000
Total, Department of Mental Health	\$3,736,000

Department of Correction.

Massachusetts Correctional Institution, Monroe:	
Replace space heaters with central heating system	\$4,500
Massachusetts Correctional Institution, Bridgewater:	
Replace wiring, State Hospital	325,000
Install new fire alarm system	250,000
Massachusetts Correctional Institution, Concord:	
For fireproofing and additional egresses	25,000
Massachusetts Correctional Institution, Framingham:	
For improvements to electrical distribution system	7,500
For fire alarm system	10,300
Massachusetts Correctional Institution, Norfolk:	
For fireproofing laundry building	15,000
For additional egresses from Gatehouse, Supply and Utility Buildings	35,000
Total, Department of Correction	\$672,300

Department of Public Health.

Tewksbury Hospital:	
For the construction of new hospital buildings	\$17,500,000
For rewiring certain buildings	325,000
Lakeville State Sanatorium:	
For the construction of new hospital building	4,000,000
Rutland State Sanatorium:	
For repairs and improvements to electrical distribution system	100,000
Pondville Hospital:	
For fire protection improvements and rewiring certain buildings	100,000
Total, Department of Public Health	<u>\$22,025,000</u>
Grand Total	<u><u>\$27,610,732</u></u>