

HOUSE No. 2323

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT, STATE HOUSE, BOSTON, August 12, 1935.

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives:

The failure of your honorable body to approve a building program which contemplated the expenditure of some seven and one-half million dollars, of which some four and one-half million dollars was to be contributed by the commonwealth of Massachusetts and three million dollars by the federal government, leaves no course open for me other than to again submit to your honorable body a building construction program. The original measure as submitted made provision for a building construction program of some \$22,000,000 which the committee on Ways and Means in its wisdom saw fit to reduce to \$7,800,000, which was later amended by the House of Representatives, which made provision for expenditure by the state of but \$4,500,000 in anticipation of a contribution by the federal government of \$3,000,000 additional, making a total of \$7,500,000.

It appears needless, nevertheless I deem it necessary that the attention of your honorable body be directed to the necessity for favorable action with reference to a building program greater in amount than that which was recently rejected by your honorable body. The original estimate as submitted by the Department of Mental Diseases made provision for a building program in this one department of the state in the sum of \$24,000,000. Attention was directed by the Commissioner of Mental Diseases to the fact that at the present time there are 25,000 mental cases in the institutions of the state and that the annual increase in mental cases is

approximately 500, and that present accommodations are wholly inadequate.

The prison at Sherborn, where women are confined, is a structure that is a disgrace to the commonwealth and constitutes a menace to the health of the inmates therein confined. The institution at Sherborn has been in use for a period of sixty years and should have been condemned and closed more than a quarter of a century ago.

The prison at Charlestown, which has been a subject of investigation and controversy for more than a quarter of a century should be razed and the long term prisoners therein confined should be incarcerated in a new maximum security structure, since the accommodations for persons convicted of felonies are about one-third less than the present demand for accommodations. The necessity and importance of segregation of first offenders is accepted by penologists as the most important essential in the work of stamping out crime and preventing the growth of criminals and the necessity for a structure where segregation will be possible is accepted by everyone familiar with the subject.

The necessity for improved accommodations for tubercular cases at Rutland and the substitution of modern structures in place of the present wood and stucco, both as a protection from possible conflagration and as a means of restoration of the health of the inmates makes necessary an immediate expenditure upon a major scale at this institution.

The erection of a hospital in western Massachusetts for the treatment of cancer cases should not longer be delayed. Hence, the necessity for action in this particular field of activity. The recent fire at the state normal school at Framingham makes necessary an expenditure for this particular department that should not longer be delayed.

The adoption of the 48 hour law makes necessary an expenditure in the sum of at least \$2,250,000 for the erection of suitable accommodations for the housing of

the persons that will be employed as a consequence of the enactment of this legislation.

Construction is necessary also in the departments of Public Welfare and Education, and for the State Police.

I am not responsible for the conditions which obtain in the departments of the state. They existed before I became Governor of the Commonwealth and should have been corrected many years ago, hence it must be clearly obvious that the financial status to which Massachusetts has always pointed with pride may be traced in no small measure to the neglect of the wards of the state, and I believe it time that this neglect should end and that the state should discharge what is clearly a duty that has been too long disregarded.

In anticipation of a 45% contribution by the federal government I accordingly recommend a bond issue by your honorable body in the sum of \$7,500,000 as the contribution by the state towards a \$12,500,000 building construction program, the balance to be provided by the federal government.

There are three possible methods by which the necessary money for amortization of the loan may be secured, first, by a sales tax, which in view of the fact that some 700,000 of the population are being supported either through public welfare or E. R. A., would be construed as soaking the poor, and is undesirable; second, a further increase of 50% in the tax upon intangibles, which does not appear advisable since it would impose too great a burden upon business, and third, apportioning such money as may be necessary from the income from the highway fund, which can be done without increasing the present gasoline tax of 3¢ per gallon, and which in view of the fact that the cities of the commonwealth derive little or no direct benefit in the matter of construction from the gasoline tax and since it would entail no additional burden upon the home owner would appear the most advisable method of securing the required money.

JAMES M. CURLEY.

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