

FOR RELEASE MONDAY, DECEMBER 9, 1974RELEASE #4/DC/4

STATE HOUSE, BOSTON -- Governor Francis W. Sargent today announced the filing of legislation to complete the Reorganization of the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs. The legislation recommends the abolition of eight agencies including the Milk Control Commission, the Water Resources Commission and the Outdoor Advertising Board.

At a meeting with his Advisory Board on the Environment, the Governor accepted the Final Reorganization Report of the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs that recommends to the legislature these and other measures.

In accepting the report, the Governor stated: "Already this year, through passage of the Environmental Affairs Reorganization Act, we have made substantial progress in streamlining Massachusetts' environmental agencies. We have transferred major environmental agencies which were once scattered about the state bureaucracy to the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs.

"But though agencies such as the Division of Waterways, Bureau of Solid Waste Disposal and Pesticide Board are now where they belong, much remains to be done to complete the Reorganization."

In addition to abolishing certain agencies, the report calls for the creation of five Regional Environmental Affairs Administrations, headed in each case by a single Commissioner. In the Metropolitan Boston area, such a regional administration would replace the Metropolitan District Commission, with its five member board.

The Governor added: "As an environmentalist, I take pride in what we've been able to accomplish in reorganizing state environmental agencies. Some said we could never come as far as we have... that we could never bring to an end the chaos which traditionally gripped these agencies.

"Well, we've done pretty much what we set out to do. Earlier this year we passed a landmark Environmental Affairs Reorganization Act and now we've outlined the final steps that should be taken to complete the job.

"And above all, we've done it with full citizen participation. Citizens helped us draft this year's Reorganization Act. And citizens helped us to prepare this final report."

(NEWSMEN: SEE ATTACHED)

-- Highlights of recommendations.

-- Transmittal letter from Secretary Foster.

Highlights of Recommendations

- Abolish the Water Resources Commission, Pesticide Board, and Outdoor Advertising Board and establish a new Environmental Quality Council, thereby combining the functions of the three boards to be abolished, as well as the environmental quality functions transferred to EOEA from the Public Health Council.
- Abolish the Milk Control Commission, the Milk Regulation Board, and the Board of Agriculture, and establish a new Board of Food and Agriculture.
- Abolish the Metropolitan District Commission Board, and establish a single Commissioner to serve as regional administrator of Environmental Affairs programs for metropolitan Boston.
- Establish a network of four other regions for the administration of all environmental programs, with boundaries consistent with those prescribed by Resource Management Policy Council; establish mini-environmental cabinets at the regional level to insure cooperation and coordination and of programs in the field, where services are actually delivered.
- Establish a Division of Environmental Hazards within the Department of Environmental Quality Engineering, thereby combining responsibilities for radiological protection, noise control, pesticide use, ...
- Establish a single engineering, construction, and land acquisition unit as a Department of Environmental Development.
- Establish a single unit for Environmental Impact Responsibilities within the Office of the Secretary.
- Coordinate and consolidate all environmental law enforcement activities.
- Designate local conservation commissions as the building blocks for all state-local environmental programs.
- Transfer the Massachusetts Historical Commission from Office of the State Secretary to the Department of Environmental Management.

- Consolidate activities of the Division of Mineral Resources and Reclamation Board activities other than past control.
- Establish a new Division of Land Resources Protection with responsibilities for wetlands, program, regulation of outdoor advertising waterways permits, ...
- Abolish the Division of Waterways and transfer its licensing functions to the Department of Environmental Quality Engineering, its responsibilities for Great Ponds to the Department of Environmental Management, and its construction functions to the proposed new Department of Environmental Development.
- Establish a new Division of Recreation within the Department of Environmental Management.
- Transfer the responsibility for MDC parks into Department of Environmental Management.
- Abolish the Public Access Board and shift its remaining reclamation activities to the Division of Mineral Resources.
- Transfer the responsibility for designation of wetlands requiring protection to the Office of the Secretary, with imposition of wetlands restrictions and enforcement performed by Department of Environmental Quality Engineering.



CHARLES H. W. FOSTER
Secretary

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Executive Office of Environmental Affairs

18 Tremont Street

Boston, Massachusetts 02108

December 9, 1974

His Excellency Francis W. Sargent
Commonwealth of Massachusetts
State House
Boston, Massachusetts 02133

Dear Governor Sargent:

I am pleased to transmit herewith a copy of the report with recommendations made to the Legislature on December 4, 1974, concerning the further reorganization of the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs.

Section 40 of Chapter 806 (the state's reorganization law for environmental affairs) directed the preparation of this report, in order that the General Court might have the needed background material and recommended courses of action available for use during the forthcoming legislative session.

We are recommending a streamlined Executive Office of Environmental Affairs consisting of five (5) departments and eighteen (18) statutory divisions. Among the major agencies would be the following:

°A Department of Environmental Quality Engineering (the state equivalent of the Federal EPA) which would contain all regulatory programs for air, water and environmental land use controls.

°A Department of Environmental Development which would house the development functions of six different environmental agencies and thus serve as a single 'turnkey' construction arm for the entire cabinet agency.

°A Department of Food and Agriculture which would assume primary responsibility for the entire food system from point of production to point of consumer distribution.

°A Department of Environmental Management which would assume responsibility for the protection and use of all state-owned environmental properties.

°A Department of Fisheries, Wildlife, and Recreational Vehicles, to be concerned with the well-being of the living resources of Massachusetts, including nongame and endangered species.

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In addition to the recommended regrouping of state agencies, the report suggests a process of consolidation and elimination which could reduce the number of state environmental agencies by nearly fifty (50) percent. Eight statutory agencies would be abolished outright.

The report recommends a uniform administrative system by which clear points of accountability would be established, and all programs and properties would be subject to uniform management and policies.

We are recommending that five (5) regions be established by which the delivery of services in the field would be improved. The Metropolitan District Commission would be abolished and converted into a broadbased environmental district for all of Metropolitan Boston. It would be empowered to act as the operating agency for all state environmental programs, not just those related to water, sewerage and parks, and would be expanded to include a service region of some sixty (60) Metropolitan communities.

In regard to state environmental policies, we are recommending authorization of a consolidated environmental code for the state by which all present regulations of individual agencies would be folded into one volume. Authority to designate in advance those critical areas of the environment where development activity should be curtailed is sought since we believe such a system would afford developers an 'early warning system' to protect them against costly regulation and delay. The agency would also be given summary authority to prevent environmental degradation before it occurs.

For the most part, the proposed Environmental Affairs agency would be self-supporting through special revenues, service assessments, and federal grants. Existing personnel would be used to staff the new agencies and programs.

May I conclude by noting that the past four years have been an extraordinarily dynamic period for the environment in Massachusetts. No other state has displayed more resourcefulness or determination in upgrading the caliber of public service in this field, and given continued legislative commitment to the reorganization begun last year, we can be assured of remaining a leader nationally with our reputation undimmed.

Sincerely yours,

Charles H. W. Foster
Secretary

CHWF/lma