

SOMERVILLE/STATE SIDE

An e.newsletter from State Representative Denise Provost Vol. 1,  
No. 14

Wednesday, March 14, 2006

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- 1) Contaminated sites in Somerville-how serious? What can be done?
  - A) Questions on my mind

If you read any of our local press, then you've seen stories about problems with toxic chemicals in various parts of the city. These include the indoor air problem at the Capuano School, caused by the groundwater pollution at 50 Tufts Street, as well as soil and groundwater contamination documented at the "Maxpack" site. Given that we city-dwellers also face elevated levels of air pollution, and that the water in the Mystic River is none too clean, how do we evaluate the risks-if any-posed by our local environment?

- B) A conference with some answers

Trying to field constituent questions about the situations described above, I've realized that I need more information, and more analytic tools, to understand what's going on. Luckily, I have the opportunity to learn a lot more, at a conference right here in Boston.

Toxics Action 2007 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference  
March 24, 2007  
Wentworth Institute of Technology, Boston  
For more information and to register visit: [www.toxicsaction.org](http://www.toxicsaction.org)

Toxics Action Conference Agenda:  
8:00am: Registration & Breakfast Open  
9:00 to 9:15am: Conference Welcome  
9:30 to 10:50am: First Workshop Session  
11:00 to 11:45am: Morning Speaker: Lois Gibbs  
11:45am to 12:15pm: Citizen Awards  
12:15 to 1:45pm: Lunch (Bring your own or \$7-\$10 for the Wentworth cafeteria. Please note selection in the cafeteria is limited.)  
1:45 to 3:00pm: Second Workshop Session  
3:10 to 4:30pm: Third Workshop Session  
4:45 to 5:30pm: Afternoon Speaker: Dan Cantor  
5:30 to 7:00pm: Reception

How will this conference help me—and you, if you attend?

Well, to get a better picture of the "plume" of PTE-contaminated water under 50 Tufts Street, I could take "Hydrogeology 101." To understand the process to which that site and the "Maxpack" site may be subject, I could attend "The Nitty Gritty of Cleaning up Hazardous Waste Sites." There are so many tempting workshops, it's hard to choose!

How about "Internet Tools for Mapping the Environmental Health of your Community?" "Interpreting Your Own Test Results?" This VERY affordable conference has so much to offer that I hope that several of us from the community will attend.

2) Watch democracy in action from your computer! Live webcasts of Formal House sessions are now on-line.

You can now watch formal House session from the General Court's web site: <http://www.mass.gov/legis/>

Message from House Speaker Salvatore DiMasi:

It is my pleasure to announce that beginning January 2, 2007, live webcasts of formal House sessions will be available on the General Court's website. This new service is meant to better

connect your constituents to the work we do here at the State House and to strike the appropriate balance between public transparency and cost effectiveness in state government. Currently, 40 states and about three-fourths of the 99 legislative chambers provide live broadcasts of their proceedings over the Internet. In preparation for the new session, my staff spent several months examining various options and determined that webcasting was the preferred alternative to our increasingly cost prohibitive and restrictive contract with WGBH. Formal House sessions will continue to be broadcast on the closed circuit television network in the State House. My office is working with New England Cable and Telecommunications Association and local community access stations to supplement our webcasts with gavel to gavel television coverage. I will keep you informed about the progress of these efforts.

Sincerely,

SALVATORE F. DIMASI

Speaker of the House of Representatives

3) Protect yourself from Identity Theft

A) Bills I co-sponsored

I have heard from many constituents who are concerned about identity theft. I share this concern. This session, I have co-sponsored the following legislation to address this problem:

-HB 328 An Act Relative to Identity Theft Protection

-HB 333 An Act Relative to Identity Theft in the Commonwealth

-HB 1571 An Act Relative to the Crime of Identity Theft

-SB 1744 An Act Relative to Security Freezes and Notification of Data Breaches

-SB 161 An Act to Prevent Regarding Public Safety and Identity Theft

I will work to secure the passage of these bills, and look forward to advocating for them during this legislative session. If you would like to know when the hearings are scheduled for these bills, please contact my legislative aide Liz Monnin-Browder at 617-722-2810 or [elizabeth.monnin@state.ma.us](mailto:elizabeth.monnin@state.ma.us)

B) Information from Attorney General Martha Coakley

On Wednesday, January 17, 2007, The TJX Companies, Inc., announced that information was stolen from its computer systems

that store information related to customer transactions. TJX reports that information regarding credit and debit cards transactions in their stores during 2003 and 2006, may have been accessed. Federal law enforcement authorities are investigating the alleged breach.

In light of this recent news, Attorney General Martha Coakley offers consumers information on how to protect their credit and debit information against identity theft. Consumers who have shopped at the TJX Stores, including Marshalls, TJ Maxx, Home Goods, AJ Wright, and used their credit or debit card, or a check, to pay for goods purchased, may wish to take the following cautionary steps:

1. Call one of the three major credit bureaus and place a one-call fraud alert on your credit report:

\* Equifax: Call (800) 525-6285, and write: P.O. Box 740241, Atlanta, GA 30374-0241.

\* Experian: Call (888) 397-3742, and write: P.O. Box 9532, Allen, TX 75013.

\* TransUnion: Call (800) 680-7289, and write: Fraud Victim Assistance Division, P.O. Box 6790 Fullerton, CA 92834-6790.

You only need to call one of the three credit bureaus; the one you contact is required by law to contact the other two credit bureaus. This one-call fraud alert will remain in your credit file for at least 90 days. The fraud alert requires creditors to contact you before opening any new accounts or increasing credit limits on your existing accounts. When you place a fraud alert on your credit report, all three credit bureaus are required to send you a credit report free of charge.

2. Order a copy of your credit report, and look for unauthorized activity. Look carefully for unexplained activity on your credit report.

3. If there is unexplained activity on your credit report, you may want to place an extended fraud alert on your credit report. If after reviewing your credit report you believe there is unexplained activity, you may want to place an extended fraud alert on your credit report. In order to do this, you need to file a police report with your local police department, keep a copy for yourself, and provide a copy to one of the three major credit bureaus. Then an extended fraud alert can be placed on your credit file for a 7-year period. This will mean that any time a user of your credit report (for instance, a credit card company or lender) checks your credit report, it will be notified

that you do not authorize any new credit cards, any increase in credit limits, the issuance of a new card on an existing account, or other increases in credit, unless the user takes extra precautions to ensure that it is giving the additional credit to you (and not to an identity thief).

4. Contact the fraud departments of your credit card issuers or bank. You may want to contact the fraud department of the credit card company or bank that you used when you made purchases at the TJX stores. These financial institutions can monitor your account for suspicious activity. You may also wish to cancel these accounts; you can discuss this option with your credit card company or bank.

Additionally, TJX has established a toll free customer help line. Callers from the United States may reach the help line at (866) 484-6978. TJX has also posted information on its web site at [www.tjx.com](http://www.tjx.com).

If you believe that you have been the victim of identity theft, you will need to take additional steps to protect your credit and your good name. For additional information, consumers may contact the Attorney General's consumer hotline at (617) 727-8400, or view the Federal Trade Commission's identity theft resource, available at [www.consumer.gov/idtheft/](http://www.consumer.gov/idtheft/).

#### 4) Job Postings

##### A) Web Services Director for the City of Somerville

The new Web Director will develop the City's website so that it can be used extensively for transactions and information sharing. The City hopes to break new ground in the use of the web to revolutionize customer service delivery. (See [http://www.ci.somerville.ma.us/mysom\\_jobs\\_detail.cfm?instanceId=188](http://www.ci.somerville.ma.us/mysom_jobs_detail.cfm?instanceId=188)). Salary \$50,000.

To apply email letters and resumes to [shirsch@ci.somerville.ma.us](mailto:shirsch@ci.somerville.ma.us).

##### B) Legislative Aide to State Representative Ruth B. Balser

To apply: send me a resume and cover letter at [Michael.Carr@state.ma.us](mailto:Michael.Carr@state.ma.us)

#### Job Description:

State Representative Ruth B. Balser is looking for full-time Legislative Aide. In addition to regular business hours Monday through Friday in the Massachusetts State House in Boston, the

position would require attendance at meetings/functions in the evening on behalf of the representative, as well as working late during legislative sessions.

Requirements:

- Bachelor's degree with two years work experience preferred
- Strong organizational skills, ability to multi-task, complete multiple assignments and duties in a timely manner, attention to detail, and ability to work under pressure and deadlines
- Excellent oral and written communication skills
- Strong computer skills, including database management and web page editing
- Respect, empathy and confidentiality working with constituents, colleagues and the general public
- Professional appearance

C) Legislative and Budget Director for Senator Harriett Chandler

Responsibilities include drafting legislation, preparing testimony for public hearings, monitoring Senate sessions, handling budget matters, staffing the office and working with local officials. Strong writing, interpersonal and analytical skills are essential. Legislative experience and law degree preferred, but not required.

To apply mail a cover letter, resume and writing sample to:  
Senator Harriette L. Chandler  
State House  
Room 312 D  
Boston, MA 02133