



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
MASSACHUSETTS SENATE

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April 28, 2012

His Excellency Deval Patrick
Governor of the Commonwealth
State House, Room 360
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Governor Patrick:

I write today regarding the disposition of the site of the former Medfield State Hospital. After years of involvement with this issue, I remain outraged and extremely concerned about the Department of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance's current Phase IV remediation plan for the site. Under the plan, DCAM would not fully remove all of the hazardous materials (including, among other toxic substances, construction and demolition debris and hospital waste) from the land on the banks of the Charles River.

First and foremost, as a Commonwealth we share a moral imperative to ensure that residents are able to live and raise their families in a safe, clean environment. Massachusetts has long been a leader in environmental stewardship, and I believe the incomplete cleanup planned for Medfield State Hospital site is inconsistent with the stated goals of the Administration to move toward a greener future.

Specifically, the Climate Change Adaptation Report, required under the Global Warming Solutions Act of 2008 and issued in September 2011, identifies restoring and managing flood plains as a priority in protecting the Commonwealth from impacts of climate change. The Report notes the risks posed by former landfills and other contaminated sites with respect to flooding, recommending that the health of flood plains be preserved and restored in preparation for rising water levels in order to limit the potential economic and environmental damage flooding may cause. The Medfield State Hospital site sits on 3.2 acres of flood plain along the Charles River, putting the watershed and community at risk under DCAM's current plan. This has implications not only for Medfield but also for homes and businesses in municipalities all along the Charles.

In terms of cost, the expense of a total removal of hazardous materials from the site would be a comparatively modest increase over the current remediation plan. The Fiscal Year 2013 budget engrossed this week by the House of Representatives is over \$32 billion; the estimated difference between DCAM's current Phase IV remediation plan and the cost of a total cleanup is \$5 million. Certainly, \$5 million is no small amount in this economy, but given the grave implications of leaving toxic materials at the site and in comparison to the overall budget, it is absolutely our duty to protect the well-being of those who choose to make Medfield their home.

Most importantly, nothing short of complete removal of all toxic material will guarantee the safety of current and future residents. Labeling town land in close proximity to residences and water resources labeled as limited use, with the potential for severe environmental problems 10, 20, or even 50 years down the road, is simply unacceptable, particularly given the site's location in Zone II of the town well. And, as you might imagine, it is incredibly frustrating to have the same entity responsible for polluting the site make the decisions as to how to address the problem. If a private company were in the same position, I would argue any cleanup plan addressing less than 100% of the waste left behind would not be approved by state regulators charged with upholding strict environmental protection standards.

Many town residents with professional expertise in environmental matters strongly disagree with DCAM's current plan and with the rationale behind the plan, and I wholeheartedly share their concerns. I do intend to seek funding for this project during the Senate budget debate next month, and I am hopeful I will receive support from my colleagues in the Legislature and from the Administration in doing so. We must put our words into action and affirm our commitment to a clean and healthy environment by restoring the Medfield State Hospital site to a fully accessible, useful, and beautiful property.

Thank you for your attention to this extremely important matter, and I look forward to working with you to resolve this problem in a way that appropriately protects the citizens of Medfield and surrounding communities.

With every good wish,

James E. Timilty
State Senator
Bristol & Norfolk District