

THE HIGH TECH AGENDA

MASSACHUSETTS HIGHTECHNOLOGYCOUNCIL

Dedicated to Growth... Committed to Action

Access to Talent: the Starting Line

A 2016 question on the Massachusetts statewide ballot will provide sustainable growth to charter schools for the more than 37,000 students on waitlists for the first time since 1993. Student learning and problem-solving skills, subject matter mastery, and potential career interests are shaped well before they enter the higher education pipeline. Council members have understood this and have been actively engaged in advocacy for charter public schools since they were established in the Commonwealth in 1993 as a means to expand access to quality schools, particularly in underperforming school districts. Despite an overwhelming body of evidence and data ([including a recent Stanford University study](#)) establishing a clear record of charter school success, demand for access to charter schools has consistently exceeded supply due to restrictions under state law.

In 2010, the Council and a coalition of business and civic leaders successfully advocated for raising existing caps on charter schools in certain school districts. Those higher enrollment limits, however, were maxed out in just a few years, and today 37,000 students are on waiting lists to attend charter schools. In 2014, the Massachusetts House of Representatives passed legislation that would allow the further expansion of charter schools in underperforming school districts but the changes were rejected by the State Senate.

This fall will see renewed legislative debate on charter school expansion, with the Governor poised to file legislation and Senate leaders expressing their expectation of reconsidering the issue. Any legislative activity will play out against a backdrop of the 2016 ballot question which will allow voters in the state election to circumvent the legislature and directly empower state education officials to expand access to charter schools, targeting Massachusetts cities and towns with low-performing traditional public schools.

Council President Chris Anderson is one of the original ten signers of the [charter school ballot question](#) and the Council will be a leading proponent for a “yes” vote on the question. In an [August 5 Council statement](#), Anderson stated, “The enactment of additional and lasting reforms expanding student access to charter schools is an urgent moral and economic imperative and the Council looks forward to again playing a strategic role in advancing these critical reforms.” In September, the Council will convene business leaders and business groups from across the Commonwealth to formulate and implement a strategic advocacy plan to advance these critical reforms.

MISSION STATEMENT

The *High Tech Agenda* keeps the High Tech Council's members and partners up to date on its pro-growth advocacy concerning state and federal public policies and programs in support of its mission.

The goal of the Massachusetts High Technology Council is to help make Massachusetts the world's most attractive place in which to live and work, and in which to create, operate, and grow high technology businesses. Read our Mission Statement at mhtc.org.

DATA THAT MATTERS

If approved by voters, a 2016 ballot question

MATTERS[™]
MASSACHUSETTS TECHNOLOGY, TALENT,
AND ECONOMIC REPORTING SYSTEM

would increase the top income tax rate in Massachusetts from 5.15% to 9.15%. According to the Massachusetts Technology, Talent & Economic Reporting System (“[MATTERS](#)”), that would give Massachusetts the [second highest rate](#) in the US, and among our [technology peer states](#).

Council Director Al Bunshaft Appointed to Massachusetts STEM Advisory Council

The Council congratulates Al Bunshaft, CEO of DS Government Solutions, Dassault Systemes Americas Corp., on his appointment to the [Governor's STEM Advisory Council](#). Al leads Dassault's North American operations and is Co-chair of the Council's Talent Development Policy Team. He is a national voice for STEM education through his leadership role at the [STEMconnector consortium](#). Al will join several fellow Mass. High Tech Council members on the Governor's STEM team, including Laurie Leshin, President of Worcester Polytechnic Institute and Jeff Leiden, CEO of Vertex Pharmaceuticals.

STEM Career Accelerator Day in October

The Council is partnering with Dassault Systemes and the STEM Council to raise awareness about STEMconnector's "[STEM Career Accelerator Day](#)" initiative. Career Accelerator Day (CAD) is a national initiative to expose 10,000 young people to STEM careers by connecting schools, students and STEM employers. This year CAD will take place on **October 22**.



Council's Anderson to Moderate Education Reform Panel at Harvard Business School

Council President Chris Anderson, a former chair of the Massachusetts Board of Education, will moderate a **September 28** roundtable on education reform hosted by the Harvard Business School Association of Boston. The forum, entitled Education Reform: the Key to Sustainable Mass. High Tech Success, will feature **James E. Ryan**, Dean of the Harvard Graduate School of Education and **Robert Schwartz**, Professor Emeritus at Harvard Graduate School of Education, as well as **Susan Fallon**, Vice President of Global Strategy and Business Development for Monster Government Solutions and Co-chair of the Council's Talent Development Policy Team, and **Gary Beach**, Editor Emeritus of CIO Magazine and a leading Council collaborator on talent and education issues.

Please click [here](#) for additional detail and to register.

2016 Ballot Questions Raise Competitiveness Issues

On September 2, Massachusetts Attorney General **Maura Healey** certified that 22 initiative petitions are eligible to appear on the 2016 statewide ballot for consideration by the voters. In addition to the Council-backed charter school question, proponents initially filed more than 40 other proposals.

The Council is particularly interested in a handful of questions, including proposals that would require and impose a graduated income tax on certain taxpayers; impose penalties on employers for failing to provide at least 3 weeks' notice of work schedule changes; and regulate insurance contracts to cap the extent to which any hospital can charge rates higher than the state average.

Look for a more in depth review of the key ballot questions as part of the Council's Public Policy Update email next week. If you do not already receive the Public Policy Update, contact [Mark Gallagher](#) to subscribe.

UPCOMING EVENTS

New England Tech Vets and Home Base Program Veteran Hiring and Training Series
Topic: Military Families



**September 15 –
2:00 PM to 4:00 PM**

Location: Gillette Stadium – Foxborough, MA

Sponsored by New England Tech Vets and the Home Base program, this no-cost training series for Council members and their human resources staff consists of three sessions. Each session will feature a presentation and training segment by the Home Base Program on a related topic, followed by a presentation of data and discussion including New England Tech Vets program metrics; user experience; workplace best-practices; and development of our internship program with higher education partners. Participants are welcome to attend one or more sessions guided by their interests. Specific meeting location instructions will be provided upon your registration. Please note, seating may be limited in some venues. Click [here](#) to register for the September 15 session.

Education Reform Panel at Harvard Business School
**September 28 –
5:30 PM to 7:30 PM**

Location: Harvard Business School – Boston, MA

Council President Chris Anderson, a former chair of the Massachusetts Board of Education, will moderate a September 28 roundtable on education reform hosted by the Harvard Business School Association of Boston. The forum, entitled Education Reform: the Key to Sustainable Mass. High Tech Success, will feature James E. Ryan, Dean of the Harvard Graduate School of Education and Robert Schwartz, Professor Emeritus at Harvard Graduate School of Education, as well as Susan Fallon, Vice President of Global Strategy and Business Development for Monster Government Solutions and co-chair of the Council's Talent Development and Policy Team, and Gary Beach, Editor Emeritus of CIO Magazine and a leading Council collaborator on talent and education issues. Click [here](#) for more detail and to register.

Council Driving Competitiveness through Regulatory Reform Efforts

This summer the Council continued its focus on reducing the cost of doing business and improving the Commonwealth's ability to attract and retain economic activity and employment. The Council hosted a series of regulatory reform roundtables with members of Governor Baker's cabinet including Administration and Finance Secretary **Kristin Lepore**, Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary **Matt Beaton** and Department of Revenue Commissioner **Mark Nunnally**.

In October, we will reconvene with Secretary Lepore and Secretary Jay Ash to discuss and advance key Council reform priorities. The Council will also maintain its efforts to make tax administration in Massachusetts more fair and predictable through ongoing engagement with DOR. The Council's Executive Vice President of Public Policy and Communications **Mark Gallagher** was recently selected to serve as a member of the [Department of Revenue's Advisory Council](#). The DOR Advisory Council is the centerpiece of the [DOR 360](#) campaign to expand outreach to DOR stakeholders and embolden citizens and business participation in shaping tax administration. The DOR Advisory Council meets with the Commissioner and DOR's senior management regularly to bring a variety of issues to the table from key taxpayer constituencies.

UMASS Awarded Key Federal Matching Grants

In August, the US Department of Defense named Council member UMass Amherst as the lead higher education institution in New England for its **Flexible Hybrid Electronics Manufacturing Innovation Institute**, one of seven national institutes supported by the federal government's National Network for Manufacturing Innovation initiative. The overall Institute is supported by a \$75 million federal grant over a 5-year period which is being matched by \$96 million in cost sharing by state governments, industry partners and others. As the lead institution in New England, UMass Amherst will be joined by other academic partners, including fellow Council member Northeastern University as well as partners from private industry.

Also in August, the National Institutes of Health awarded a highly competitive renewal to the UMass Medical School for its Clinical and Translational Science Award. The \$17.3 million award will provide support for the UMass 5-campus Center for Clinical and Translational Science for an additional 4 years. This center focuses on moving laboratory discoveries into treatments for patients, engaging communities in clinical research, and training a new generation of researchers.

Key investments by the Baker Administration empowered UMASS and other local research institutions to pursue these significant federal grants. The Council views these expenditures as "can't lose" investments for the Commonwealth, as no state money is spent unless the matching federal grant is awarded and the Council will continue to advocate for a robust level of funding to support similar endeavors in the future.

Mass. Health Care Costs on the Rise

The [Massachusetts Center for Health Information and Analysis \(CHIA\)](#) recently reported Total Health Care Expenditures (THCE) in 2014 Massachusetts were \$54 billion, or \$8,010 per capita, an increase of 4.8% from 2013, exceeding by 1.2% the cost growth

UPCOMING EVENTS

New England Tech Vets – Online WebEx Training Session



September 30 –
2:00 PM to 3:30 PM

Location: Online session

The Council and its program partner, Monster Worldwide, Inc. will be hosting periodic WebEx training sessions like this for interested members and their recruiting staff to provide an overview of the features and functionality of [NewEnglandTechvets.org](#). To register and receive WebEx instructions for the July 15 WebEx, please click [here](#).

Please contact [Ron Trznadel](#) to learn about the New England Tech Vets Program and how to become a New England Tech Vets 'Charter Employer'.

MHTC Board of Directors Meeting

October 6 –
6:00 PM to 10:30 PM

Location: Symphony Hall – Boston, MA

New England Tech Vets and Home Base Program Veteran Hiring and Training Series



Topic: Military Culture

November 17-
2:00 PM to 4:00 PM

Location: MHTC offices - Waltham, MA

Sponsored by New England Tech Vets and the Home Base program, this no-cost training series for Council members and their human resources staff consists of three sessions. Each session will feature a presentation and training segment by the Home Base Program on a related topic, followed by a presentation of data and discussion including New England Tech Vets program metrics; user experience; workplace best-practices; and development of our internship program with higher education partners. Participants are welcome to attend one or more sessions guided by their interests. Specific meeting location instructions will be provided upon your registration. Please note, seating may be limited in some venues. Click [here](#) to register for the November 17 session.

MHTC Board of Directors Meeting

December 10 –
8:00 AM to 10:00 AM

Location: MHTC offices - Waltham, MA

benchmarks established by a 2013 state law. THCE includes health care expenditures for Massachusetts residents from public and private sources. The establishment of the THCE measure is a key provision of the 2012 Massachusetts Health Care Cost Containment Law of 2012. For 2013-2014, the Health Policy Commission set the health care cost growth benchmark at +3.6%.

Important additional findings include:

- Both the commercial market and Medicare reported total spending growth of less than 3% in 2014.
- Spending for MassHealth, the major state Medicaid health coverage program, increased by \$2.4 billion (+19%), which was driven by enrollment growth.

Council Board to Host Special Event with Boston Symphony Orchestra and Speaker DeLeo

On October 6, the Council Board of Directors will host an evening reception for Council directors and invited senior executives at Symphony Hall in Boston. The evening will feature cocktails and heavy hors d'oeuvres, remarks from House Speaker Robert DeLeo and Council President Chris Anderson, and a performance of Prokofiev and Rachmaninoff by the [Boston Symphony Orchestra](#), led by Maestro Andris Nelsons.



Parthenon-EY, led by Council Chairman Bill Achtmeyer, has generously sponsored tickets for the performance. As a result, we are able to offer the event for a reduced event fee of \$100 per person which includes the evening reception and concert performance.

Please note the reception and concert is by invitation only. Please contact Julie Champion at 781-890-6482 or via email at julie@mhtc.org if you have questions.

New England Tech Vets Event at Gillette Stadium

The Massachusetts High Technology Council and the New England Tech Vets Advisory Council will host a forum at Gillette Stadium on **September 15 from 2:00 PM to 4:00 PM** to discuss the exciting progress of the [New England Tech Vets](#) program including the launch of a New England Tech Vets Internship Program scheduled for fall 2016.



As part of the Council's ongoing effort to increase military awareness, our meeting will also include a training session by our clinical advisor, The Home Base Program, on "Military Families". Home Base's trained clinicians provide similar education programs for employers and employee assistance programs to build awareness of symptoms of post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and traumatic brain injury (TBI) and help their veteran employees and military families seek effective treatment.

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- The Kraft Group
- The L.S. Starrett Company
- The MITRE Corporation
- Trinity Partners, LLC

This meeting is hosted by council member The Kraft Group, a Charter Partner of New England Tech Vets.

Please click [here](#) to register for the September 15 NETV meeting and training session and join us at Gillette!

Council Supporting 2015 IEEE High Performance Extreme Computing Conference

The HPEC Conference, organized by the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE), is the largest computing conference in New England and the premier conference in the world on the convergence of high performance and embedded computing. Performance is IEEE's passion and its community is interested in computing hardware, software, systems and applications where performance matters. The conference is September 15 to 17 at the Waltham Westin and welcomes experts and people new to the field. Click [here](#) for more details and to register.



Council Member

Visitors to the Council's office in Waltham have likely been introduced to VIC Technology Venture Development, LLC (VIC). VIC is a private, for-profit, technology venture development firm that resides in our office and has worked with our members and others to form new technology companies based on innovative science and engineering with the purpose of commercializing licensed technologies to create new innovative businesses in Massachusetts. VIC has a strong track record of advancing and growing IP/technologies. One of VIC's recent successes, Sevo Nutraceuticals, was established with IP licensed from UMASS for a cognitive supplement – [PERCEPTIV](#). With independent clinical studies showing efficacy for brain health - improved memory, mental clarity and the protection of cognitive decline associated with aging - the company is expanding rapidly in the US and will do so internationally in 2016. For more information on VIC and their commercialization/investment into Massachusetts based IP/technologies and beyond, please contact our neighbor here at the Council, [Bernie Prusaczyk](#).