

# THE HIGH TECH AGENDA

## MASSACHUSETTS HIGHTECHNOLOGYCOUNCIL

*Dedicated to Growth... Committed to Action*

### As I See It – Chris Anderson



During his [State of the Commonwealth Address](#) on January 24, Governor Charlie Baker struck a tone reminiscent of President John F. Kennedy's 'centrist' call to good governing: "Let us not seek the Republican answer or the Democratic answer but the right answer. Let us not seek to fix the blame for the past. Let us accept our own responsibility for the future." As we round the corner from a divisive national election of historic proportions, we applaud Governor Baker and the Democratic and Republican leaders in the Legislature who focus on the well-being of the Commonwealth and in so doing, serve as

a model for other elected officials to emulate. As the Governor said at the conclusion of his Address, "Our job remains the same. That is to represent Massachusetts to Washington and not Washington to Massachusetts."

That framework is perfect for connecting the dots regarding the High Tech Council's now forty-year mission. Advancing strategies and collaborations that strengthen Massachusetts' economic competitiveness for businesses and expand economic opportunity for individuals throughout the Commonwealth have been—and will continue to be—core to the High Tech Council's mission.

New data released in January 2017 reveals that Massachusetts enjoys an unemployment rate of 2.8%, the lowest in the state since Paul Cellucci was Governor more than 16 years ago. This strong job growth has helped fuel continued growth in state tax revenues without increasing income taxes. According to the Mass. Department of Revenue's most recent Annual Report, Massachusetts collected \$4.4 billion more in total revenue in 2015 than it did just 5 years previously, that's a 21% increase in available funds for state programs. Not surprisingly, state spending has expanded to almost \$40B per year, supported by that phenomenal revenue growth—but many public spending constituencies that benefit most from increased spending continue to push for even higher taxes and ever greater spending from Beacon Hill.

Keep an eye on these pages throughout the legislative session as we follow a variety of policy proposals emerging on Beacon Hill and how they will likely impact our state competitiveness and how they might help (or hurt) efforts to expand economic opportunity for the citizens of the Commonwealth.

### 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](http://mhtc.org).

### UPCOMING EVENTS

#### Governance from Start-up to Exit

**February 14 –  
7:30 – 9:00 AM**

*Location: Boston, MA*

Members in board positions and corporate decision makers that influence board decisions are invited to attend "Governance from Start-up to Exit (Transaction or IPO)" on Tuesday, February 14 from 7:30 to 9:00 AM at the Boston Harbor Hotel, Wharf Room. Council members Paul Gudonis (Myomo) and Dave Krupinski (Care.com) will be among the featured panelists.

Please contact [Julie Champion](#) for more information or registration details.

#### MHTC Board of Directors Meeting

**February 23 –  
7:30 AM to 10:00 AM**

*By invitation*

Please RSVP via calendar response or email to [Julie Champion](#).

## Governor Announces Veteran Hiring Initiative; Council's New England Tech Vets Program to Play Key Role



Among the priority initiatives announced by Governor Baker in his State of the Commonwealth address is an expanded commitment to enhance veteran hiring initiatives

and incentives. The Governor's proposed \$4,000 employer tax credit for each veteran employee wisely recognizes that it is critical that employers focus on ways to hire and retain veteran employees. Through our [New England Tech Vets](#) program, the Council is working with members of the Baker Administration along with veteran employment experts to explore the development of a "veteran-friendly" employer education and certification program that could serve as a national model. Combining an easily accessible on-line employer certification program with hiring incentives will assist and empower Massachusetts employers to more successfully recruit and retain veteran employees.

The Governor and Veteran Services Secretary Francisco Urena first announced their intention to explore a veteran-friendly employer certification program with the Council at the New England Tech Vets 2016 Fall Forum in November, to the enthusiastic response of dozens of veteran employers in attendance.

## Beacon Hill's "Big Three" Outline 2017 Policy Initiatives

As a new year and new legislative session commence, the State's top political leaders have begun to outline their policy priorities, including several that connect directly to key Council priorities and concerns. We expect that efforts to foster more robust economic growth; enhance our public education and workforce development systems; improve the state's transportation infrastructure; and control employer health care and other business costs will again take center stage. All of this will play out against the backdrop of a new administration and new policy priorities in Washington.

The Council will be actively engaged in partnership with these key policymakers and effected stakeholders to lead efforts to advance public policies that help to create the conditions for success for our members and all technology employers in Massachusetts.

**Governor Baker:** In addition to announcing his veteran employment initiative, Governor Baker used the State of the Commonwealth Address to articulate an array of specific administration priorities for 2017. The Council was pleased to see the Governor identify among his top priorities growing the Commonwealth's economy overall and finding ways to spread the economic success of Greater Boston to other areas across the state. The Governor also outlined his proposals to help address the Commonwealth's ongoing fiscal challenges and recent history of recurring budget crises, despite record state tax revenues and employment levels. Among the Governor's proposals is an effort to rein in spiraling spending on the state's Medicaid program, MassHealth that will warrant particular focus by the Council.

**Senate President Rosenberg:** On January 4, Stan Rosenberg was reelected as Senate President by his colleagues and used the occasion to articulate a number of specific areas of focus for the new legislative session. Rosenberg outlined a broad array of policy proposals, several of which would require significant increased state spending, including the Senate's "Kids First" initiative which is designed to expand educational opportunities for children from infancy through pre-school and carries a price tag that could run into the billions.

Senator Rosenberg also echoed one of the primary concerns raised by many Council members in the [Fall 2016 MATTERS Executive Competitiveness Insight Survey](#) when he referenced the

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### MHTC Board of Directors Meeting

May 8 –  
10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

*By invitation*

Please RSVP via calendar response or email to [Julie Champion](#).

### 2017 MHTC Annual Meeting

June 13 –  
11:00 AM – 2:00 PM

*Location: TBD*

More details and save-the-date to follow. Please contact [Julie Champion](#) with initial questions.

### MHTC Board of Directors Meeting

December 7 –  
10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

*By invitation*

Please RSVP via calendar response or email to [Julie Champion](#).

Commonwealth's deteriorating roads, traffic congestion and failing public transit system and announced plans to work with the Boston-based Barr Foundation to formulate a transportation vision for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

The Senate President also reaffirmed his support for efforts to imbed in the Massachusetts Constitution an additional 4% income tax on certain high income earners. The Council has [opposed the tax based on serious member concerns](#) about the proposal's negative impact on the state's environment for business and fiscal stability and is working to gather and share data on its impacts with lawmakers before they decide whether to approve the proposal to appear before the voters in 2018.

**House Speaker Robert DeLeo:** The Speaker will wait to communicate a detailed public policy agenda until he delivers the traditional Speaker's Address to the Citizens of the Commonwealth in the coming weeks. But in public comments and private meetings to date, the Speaker has already given some early indications of his intended areas of focus, including a likely call for additional resources and opportunities for children in need and steps to manage rapidly growing employer and public health care costs.

For more information on the Council's policy priorities and activities, contact Mark Gallagher ([mark@mhtc.org](mailto:mark@mhtc.org)).

## 2017 Annual Meeting Will Mark Council's 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

The Council's 2017 Annual Meeting will take place on June 13<sup>th</sup> and will once again feature keynote remarks from Governor Charlie Baker. In the coming weeks, we will confirm the event location and announce a nationally-recognized expert on state competitiveness who will join us as an additional speaker. We will also use this year's meeting to celebrate the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Council's 1977 founding by recognizing members of the Massachusetts tech community who've displayed visionary and sustained leadership.

The Annual Meeting is always one of the Council's best events of the year. For more information about the meeting or to learn more about sponsorship opportunities, contact Julie Champion ([julie@mhtc.org](mailto:julie@mhtc.org)).

## Council Invites Senior Executive Members to Attend NACDNE Forum: "Governance from Start-up to Exit"

On February 14, the Council, the National Association of Corporate Directors New England and the New England Venture Capital Association will present "Governance from Start-up to Exit (Transaction or IPO)." The event will include an expert panel featuring Council members Paul Gudonis (Myomo) and Dave Krupinski (Care.com) on the issues facing growing companies as they move to their "exit"; either a strategic sale or an IPO. The discussion will focus on the evolution of successful founders through exit; the major inflection points; issues and decisions they face along the way; and the implications for boards and corporate governance.

Please click [here](#) for more information and to register. First-time NACD event attendees will be asked to complete a registration form with their info, including board service. Please select 'Member' in the 'Registration Type' field and type 'MHTC' in the 'Coupon' field to obtain a discounted member registration rate.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

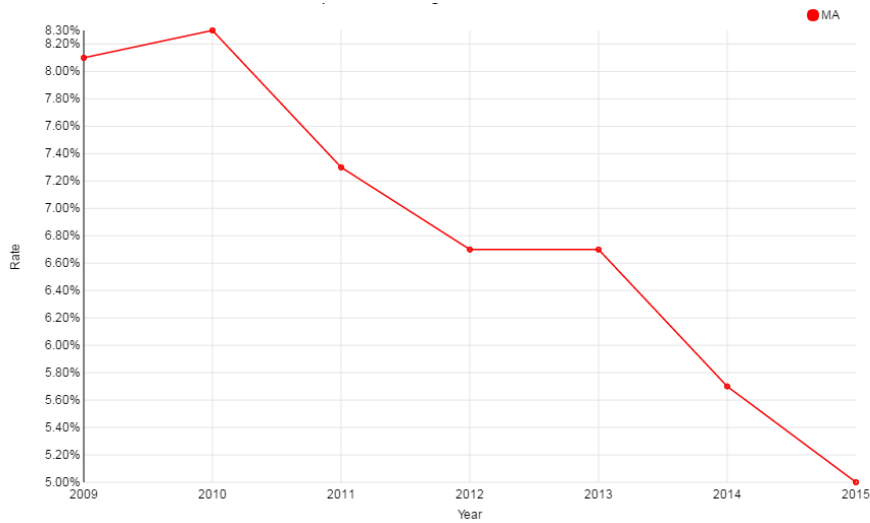
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The Kraft Group  
The L.S. Starrett Company  
The MITRE Corporation  
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University of Massachusetts System  
Worcester Polytechnic Institute

## DATA THAT MATTERS

At 2.8% currently, Massachusetts has not had an unemployment rate this low since December of 2000. See the graphic below and check out [MATTERS](#) to see how this rate is off the charts-literally!



Unemployment Rate



## Contact Us

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