

# WEEK IN REVIEW



*The Week in Review is posted to update you on what happened on Beacon Hill in the previous week.*

JANUARY 23 – 27

Governor Deval Patrick came out with calls for unified community colleges and improved education in Monday's [State of the State address](#). Patrick also [encouraged the passage of health care reforms and sentencing changes](#).

On Wednesday, Governor Patrick released his version of the fiscal year 2013 budget. The budget includes [\\$32.3 billion in appropriations](#), with [\\$5.2 billion of that earmarked for local aid](#). It also includes an increase in cigarette taxes and [a new tax on candy and soda](#).

The Patrick administration also announced this week that [Taunton State Hospital, the only inpatient hospital of its kind in the South Shore region, will be closing](#), much to the chagrin of local lawmakers and city officials.

More trouble erupted for Lieutenant Governor Tim Murray, as sources close to him [claim that ousted Chelsea Housing Authority director Michael McLaughlin was a major fundraiser for Murray's campaign](#). The FBI is investigating whether or not McLaughlin laws prohibiting federal employees from participating in such political activity.

Public transit riders [expressed their frustration in a rally on the steps of the State House](#) on Monday and at the T's hearing in Salem on Wednesday on the proposed fare hikes and service cuts.

A five-hour hearing on [the fate of a proposed Meditech building in Freetown brought mixed testimony](#) to the Joint Committee on State Administration and Regulatory Oversight on Tuesday. Meanwhile, a hearing of the Joint Committee on Municipalities & Regional Government on Wednesday [tackled a township position for Devens](#).

The "three-strikes" sentencing legislation that has been floating around the State House for several months is [continuing to draw fire from scholars and activists](#).

The [Mass. Teachers Association is suing the AG's office over a ballot question](#) that would change hiring and promotion practices in schools, basing such decisions on performance over seniority.

A report filed with the Office of Campaign and Political Finance indicated that the group seeking a ballot question for the legalization of medical marijuana in the Commonwealth is [bankrolled by Peter Lewis, the chairman of insurance company Progressive](#).

William Brownsberger was sworn into the Senate, and [some committee and leadership positions were shuffled](#).

The AG's office [closed their case on late Sheriff James DiPaola](#), and his campaign treasurer agreed to turn over all of the money remaining in his account.

The Joint Committee on Transportation [reported out several bills that would ban handheld cell phone use](#).

