



February 1, 2021

His Excellency Charles D. Baker  
Governor of Massachusetts  
State House, Room 280

Dear Governor Baker:

We write today as community college presidents in strong support of an *Act Creating a Next-Generation Roadmap for Massachusetts Climate Policy (S.9)*. The Next-Generation Roadmap bill is a necessary step that protects the health and safety of Massachusetts residents by accelerating the pace to reach net zero emissions while also protecting environmental justice communities. Further, the bill invests in workforce training to further commit to educating the skilled workforce needed to ensure a breathable, livable, equitable future for the Commonwealth.

To avoid a climate catastrophe, we must change the way we generate and consume energy by boldly embracing renewable energy, energy efficiency, and vehicle electrification. To meet the local challenges created by climate change, the Commonwealth must leverage our 15 community colleges to increase the size and diversity of the clean energy workforce.

As a national leader in clean energy innovation, Massachusetts has a unique opportunity to demonstrate how investments in clean energy workforce development can create jobs for an entire ecosystem of skilled workers from the engineers who design systems to the technicians who are critical to their ongoing operations. In parallel, we can open pathways to career opportunities for new entrants and adult learners from communities of color. The community colleges of Massachusetts can play a pivotal role in ensuring that these high-demand jobs are filled with well educated and trained local workers.

We respectfully request your support of S9 and would like to highlight two critical components of the bill that promote bold climate action across the Commonwealth:

- ***Diversifying the Green Energy Workforce.*** This bill advances the Commonwealth's national leadership in clean and innovative Research & Development and promotes equity in developing the clean energy workforce through support of the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center. The bill includes \$12 million in new annual funding for clean energy workforce development that prioritizes minority-owned and women-owned small businesses, environmental justice communities, and fossil fuel workers. This is the bold action the Commonwealth needs to both diversify the clean energy sector and create more pathways for people hardest hit by the economic downturn due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

- ***Environmental Justice Community Protections.*** The bill codifies environmental justice into Massachusetts state law, providing new tools and protections for affected neighborhoods. Legally protecting environmental justice communities is crucial as the Commonwealth works towards net zero emissions. The converging crises of the pandemic and the lack of affordable housing provides these communities with the most to benefit from an equity-centered approach to reaching net zero emissions by 2050.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts has a strong local network of community colleges who stand ready in our critical mission to offer accessible and high-quality degree and certificate programs for students of color, adult learners, veterans, and students of all ages. This opportunity to invest in green technology and workers will support economic recovery, tackle climate change, while showing why Massachusetts remains the innovation capital of the clean energy industry.

Thank you for your support of our community colleges and your consideration of this important legislation.

**Ellen L. Kennedy**, President  
Berkshire Community College

**James C. Mabry**, President  
Middlesex Community College

**Laura L. Douglas**, President  
Bristol Community College

**James Vander Hooven**, President  
Mount Wachusett Community College

**Pam Eddinger**, President  
Bunker Hill Community College

**Nate Bryant**, Interim President  
North Shore Community College

**John L. Cox**, President  
Cape Cod Community College

**Lane A. Glenn**, President  
Northern Essex Community College

**Yves Salomon-Fernandez**, President  
Greenfield Community College

**Luis Pedraja**, President  
Quinsigamond Community College

**Christina Royal**, President  
Holyoke Community College

**Valerie R. Roberson**, President  
Roxbury Community College

**Brenda Molife**, Interim President  
Massasoit Community College

**John B. Cook**, President  
Springfield Technical Community College

**David Podell**, President  
MassBay Community College

C: Secretary James Peyser, Massachusetts Executive Office of Education  
Commissioner Carlos Santiago, Massachusetts Department of Higher Education  
Massachusetts Association of Community Colleges