

# BECCA RAUSCH

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## **MASSACHUSETTS SENATE UNVEILS ROBUST NEXT GENERATION CLIMATE PACKAGE**

*The package includes central components from Senator Becca Rausch's bill to promote energy efficiency in existing large buildings*

Boston, MA – Amid increasing reports of environmental devastation worldwide, the Massachusetts Senate set out major new steps to combat climate change in the Commonwealth. The Senate's next generation climate policy package, comprised of three cohesive bills, includes central elements from a bill Senator Becca Rausch (D-Needham) filed to address energy usage in existing large buildings.

“Existing large buildings contribute significantly to our collective carbon footprint, and upon passage of this bill, Massachusetts will be the first state in the nation to directly address this contributor to global warming,” Senator Rausch said. “The legislation will create the first-ever statewide database of large building energy usage and make that data available to the public. Once we measure it, we can mitigate it. I am also very proud to have helped Senator Mike Barrett with the idea of creating the Climate Policy Commission, an independent watchdog agency dedicated to statewide climate change accountability, now a central component of the legislative package.”

In addition to creating the Climate Policy Commission and addressing large building energy consumption, the Senate's comprehensive next generation climate policy package sets a statewide greenhouse gas limit of “net zero” emissions by the year 2050 and mandates meaningful action in all energy sectors, including transportation, electricity, and heating & cooling. For example, the legislation directs the Administration to adopt a market-based carbon pricing program for transportation by 2022, for commercial, industrial, and institutional buildings by 2025, and for residential buildings by 2030. The legislation also requires a massive reduction in gas-powered vehicles owned by the Commonwealth, including a target of an all-zero-emissions MBTA bus fleet by 2040, thereby significantly improving environmental health in densely populated areas.

The Senate Committee on Ways and Means released the three bills, S. 2476, *An Act to Accelerate the Transition of Cars, Trucks and Buses to Carbon-Free Power*, S. 2477, *An Act Setting Next Generation Climate Policy*, and S. 2478, *An Act Relative to Energy Savings Efficiency*, on Thursday, January 23. The Senate will debate the robust climate policy package next week.

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Additional quotes:

“The young people of Massachusetts have told us in no uncertain terms that they are looking to state leaders to take bold action on climate change,” says **Senate President Karen Spilka**. “The Massachusetts State Senate has listened. I’m proud of Senator Barrett for his diligence in crafting a thorough legislative package that takes concrete steps to reduce emissions and provides a plan to create a greener, healthier and more sustainable future. I would like to thank Senator Barrett and Senator Michael Rodrigues for their contributions to this next generation of climate leadership.”

“As a result of a collaborative stakeholder process, the package of bills polled out by the Committee today proposes a comprehensive plan to reduce our carbon footprint and boldly confront the impacts of climate change,” said **Senator Michael J. Rodrigues**, Chair of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means. “I applaud Senate President Spilka for her leadership and Senator Barrett for his thoughtful collaboration and partnership, which helped shape our efforts to put forward a series of bills to achieve net-zero carbon emissions by 2050 and transform our energy delivery system to benefit our climate and future generations. I look forward to a robust and energetic debate next week on the Senate floor.”

“Getting to net zero is absolutely necessary but it’s also a big lift,” said **State Senator Mike Barrett**, lead author and Senate Chair of the Joint Committee on Telecommunications, Utilities and Energy. “When it comes to bringing down emissions, buildings are the toughest nut to crack. This bill is all about the how of it, as in ‘Here’s how we are going to get there.’”