



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Joint Committee on Tourism, Arts, & Cultural Development

Massachusetts General Court

State House, Room 195, Boston 02133-1054

(617) 722-2015

John D. Keenan
House Chair

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CONTACT: Lynne Montague

(617)722-2015

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN KEENAN NAMED TO BCEC CONVENTION PARTNERSHIP

BOSTON, MA – State Representative John Keenan (D-Salem), Chairman of the Joint Committee on Tourism, Arts & Cultural Development, was recently named to the Convention Partnership Panel, a key group of stakeholders representing a variety of city and state interests to debate the merits of possible expansion of the Boston Convention & Exhibition Center (“BCEC”). Speaker Robert DeLeo (D-Winthrop) appointed Representative Keenan to the Panel as the House member.

“I’m grateful to Speaker DeLeo for this opportunity to serve on the BCEC Expansion Review Panel. This decision, coupled with the anticipated debate on expanded gaming in Massachusetts, will impact tourism in Massachusetts for generations to come,” said Representative Keenan.

In making the appointment House Speaker DeLeo offered, “As House Chairman of the Committee on Tourism, Arts & Cultural Development, Rep. Keenan is prepared to represent the interests of the state in discussions about the expansion of the Boston Convention & Exhibition Center. I am confident that Chairman Keenan will explore new ideas for bringing visitors and tourism to the great state of Massachusetts.”

As a member of the Convention Partnership, Representative Keenan meets later this month with the 25-member working group formed to study the feasibility of expanding the facility, services and amenities of the existing BCEC for the purpose of increasing the city of Boston's meeting capacity. The "Top 5" initiative is a long term strategic initiative designed to make Massachusetts and Boston more competitive destinations for conventions and trade-shows as well as stimulating economic activity in the Commonwealth.

Spending tied to the 516,000 square-foot BCEC accounts for more than 20 percent of the \$7 billion visitor economy. Since its 2004 opening, the BCEC has allowed the city to pursue business that had outgrown Boston or would have bypassed it altogether. A study commissioned by the MCCA found that the current facility must expand to increase its market share and that expansion will necessitate the construction of a convention hotel in the immediate vicinity. Boston currently ranks ninth in North America for drawing meetings and conventions, a status that will be difficult to maintain over time without a long term growth strategy. The panel is expected to make final recommendations by December 31, 2010.

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