



Speaker Robert DeLeo & Chairman Aaron Michlewitz
Massachusetts State House
24 Beacon Street
Boston, MA 02133

July 21, 2020

Dear Speaker DeLeo and Chairman Michlewitz:

As businesses with significant operations in the Commonwealth, we write to express our support for *H. 4264--An Act relative to environmental justice in the Commonwealth*.

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the profound connections between environmental health and human health. [People of color are suffering the worst impacts from both the pandemic and climate change](#), in large part due to decades of policy reinforcing deep inequities and environmental burdens that continue to harm communities across the Commonwealth.

It is incumbent on us to do our best to address this by naming the problem and being thoughtful about the potential impact of our actions on vulnerable populations.

H. 4264 aims to remedy longstanding inequities in three main ways:

- Codifying a definition of “environmental justice (EJ) population” in state law that includes race, income, and English language proficiency;
- Enhancing reviews for projects proposed in EJ communities so that they include consideration of potential public health impacts and long-term harms; and
- Ensuring that residents have reasonable access and information to meaningfully participate in public processes concerning projects in their neighborhoods.

Every member of our community deserves to be protected from pollution and to live in and enjoy a clean and healthy environment. This should not be dependent on race, income, class, handicap, gender identity, sexual orientation, national origin, ethnicity or ancestry, religious belief, or English language proficiency.

While we commend the legislature for working to address the need for police reform and racial justice, we urge the House also to address environmental injustice before the end of the legislative session.

Environmental justice can't wait.

Thank you for your consideration.

Bemis Associates
Berkshire Bank
Biogen
Boston Medical Center
Cape Air

Eastern Bank
Mass General Brigham
NRX Logistics
Saunders Hotel Group
Trillium Asset Management