



*Commonwealth of Massachusetts*  
**EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF  
HOUSING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**  
ONE ASHBURTON PLACE, ROOM 2101  
BOSTON, MA 02108  
[www.mass.gov/eohed](http://www.mass.gov/eohed)

DEVAL L. PATRICK  
GOVERNOR

TIMOTHY P. MURRAY  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

GREGORY BIALECKI  
SECRETARY

TELEPHONE  
(617) 788-3610

FACSIMILE  
(617) 788-3605

**COMMUNICATIONS CONTACTS:**

**KOFI JONES**

Director of Communications  
(617) 788-3652 (voice)  
(617) 721-2231 (cell)  
[Kofi.jones@state.ma.us](mailto:Kofi.jones@state.ma.us)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**ANDREW JACKMAUH**

Communications Aide  
(617) 788-3654 (voice)  
(857) 207-1550 (cell)  
[Andrew.Jackmauh@state.ma.us](mailto:Andrew.Jackmauh@state.ma.us)

**PATRICK-MURRAY ADMINISTRATION ANNOUNCES  
RESPONSIBLE ZOO REFORM PLAN**

*Comprehensive solutions designed to keep zoos open and establish reforms  
for long-term sustainability*

BOSTON – Monday, November 16, 2009 - Secretary of Housing and Economic Development Greg Bialecki today announced that the Patrick-Murray Administration has worked in collaboration with Zoo New England, a Zoo New England sponsored community-business advisory task force, and legislators to develop both short- and long-term reforms to address the zoos' immediate fiscal needs and support their efforts to create a sustainable self-sufficiency model. The reforms require Zoo New England to submit a sustainability plan, includes legislation to reorganize the Zoo New England board and allocates \$5 million for zoo FY2010, which represents a \$1.5M reduction from their original FY2010 funding level. The funding will allow the zoos to remain open while these reforms are implemented, but the funding is contingent on Zoo New England delivering a long-term sustainability plan to the state.

“Through this collaborative process, we have determined a level of state support that will allow the zoos to remain open while they establish the critical reforms necessary for them to achieve greater long-term self-reliance and sustainability,” said Secretary Greg Bialecki.

"In these tough economic times, we are all being asked to do more with less and be creative in our solutions to our budget challenges. Zoo officials understand this reality and are taking the necessary steps to fundamentally change the way they do business so that they rely less on the state for support and more on revenue generated from improved operations," said Secretary of Administration and Finance Jay Gonzalez. "Our financial support for the zoos is tied to tough but reasonable benchmarks and we look forward to the zoos' plan for aggressive expansion of revenue earned through operations."

"We are grateful to the Administration and members of the task force for their support and continued partnership, and we are prepared to meet the challenges before us and build a great future for our Zoos," said John Linehan of Zoo New England.

Zoo New England has agreed to submit a long-term sustainability plan by January 15, 2010. The plan will outline a strategy for how Zoo New England will achieve greater self-sufficiency, allowing for a gradual reduction of state financial support through reforms and reorganization. The plan will include a roadmap for increasing non-state revenues including gate, concession, membership receipts and contributions from donors, corporate sponsorships and other sources. As part of the implementation strategy, Zoo New England will also be responsible for detailing the best practices of successful zoos across the country and specific methods to achieve cost-savings and efficiencies. Zoo New England has hired a consultant, with private funds, to help develop this long-term sustainability plan by January 15, 2010. Continued state support for FY2010 is contingent upon the development and implementation of this long-term sustainability plan.

"This unique and collaborative process has allowed for the development of a strategy that will provide the zoos with the comprehensive resources necessary for them to move toward greater self-reliance," said Robert Beal, Chair of the Zoo New England community-business advisory task force. "With support from a nationally recognized consultant, the pending legislation, and a clear timeline for meeting necessary goals, the zoos are now on a path to achieving greater success."

"We are thankful for the ongoing support from the Commonwealth which will allow us to develop and implement a number of critically needed new strategies for our long term growth and sustainability," said Grace Fey, Chair of the Zoo New England Board of Directors. "This fiscal environment requires that we take action to streamline our operations, and the team that has worked with us during this process has given us the tools to do so."

In addition, Senator Jack Hart and Representatives Liz Malia and Jason Lewis, who are also members of the collaborative task force will, with the support of the Patrick-Murray Administration, file legislation to allow for the expansion and reorganization of the Zoo New England board. This will place the zoos in a position to recruit top talent and support their efforts to become a nationally-recognized operation as they work to increase and retain private revenues and become more self-reliant.

"I am pleased Zoo New England will remain an available resource to residents of the Commonwealth," said Senator Jack Hart. "Moving forward, in light of the current financial crisis, it is important to create a more self sufficient model of operation. I look forward to working with my colleagues on this legislation."

"The Franklin Park and Stone Zoos are a valuable economic, cultural, and recreational resource for the Commonwealth," said Representative Jason Lewis. "This plan will enable the zoos to continue operating and become more self-sufficient over time."

“Zoo New England is a key economic and cultural anchor for my district and the state as a whole,” said Representative Liz Malia. “So I’m glad that we’ve joined together to do the work needed to ensure the zoos will continue to be there for Massachusetts residents.”

###

*The Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development is one of eight Secretariats that make up the Governor’s Cabinet. Under the leadership of Secretary Gregory Bialecki, the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development oversees the following undersecretariats: the Departments of Business Development, Housing and Community Development, and Consumer Affairs and Business Regulation.*