

2025-2026 Legislative Agenda



H.2185/S.1365 | *An Act to Provide Fair Wages to Employees of Public Institutions of Higher Education*

Lead Sponsors: Rep. Andy Vargas (D-Haverhill) | Sen. Pavel Payano (D-Lawrence)

Salaries for faculty and staff working at Massachusetts public higher education institutions are well below national averages, when adjusted for cost of living. Currently the state does not fund the full cost of wages or fringe benefits which has left our public colleges and universities unable to pass these costs onto students.

This legislation would address this injustice by:

- **Adjusting Salaries of Faculty and Staff:** Mandates that by the end of each contract, average salaries meet or exceed the national average (adjusted for cost of living) for each job category in our public education system.
- **Reducing Turnover:** Would help recruit and retain a diverse and qualified staff by providing fair and stable compensation to provide the supports students need for success.
- **Fully Fund Collective Bargaining Agreements:** Requires that the state cover the incremental costs of contracts for public higher education faculty and staff.
- **Shift Fringe Benefit Costs to the Commonwealth:** Currently the state pays a share of these costs and forces the colleges and universities to make up the difference. This bill would make the full cost of pensions, health insurance and other benefits the responsibility of the state, reducing pressure on institutional budgets to increase costs for students.
- **Reduced Student Financial Burden:** Shifting the costs of wages and benefits to the state will keep tuition and fees from ballooning and makes college more affordable for all students.

Please contact MTA Government Relations if you have any questions or require any additional information.
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