

half-year highlights

SUMMER 2015

Impacting Public Policy



MBR Board meets with Attorney General Healey

Energy

- **MBR Establishes Energy Task Force**—Led by Executive Committee member Joseph Basile, MBR established and convened an Energy Task Force that developed guiding principles and charged MBR with engaging in public education efforts to frame the energy cost issue for policy makers.
- **BBJ Publishes MBR Energy Op-Ed**—MBR Chairman Michael Hogan and Energy Task Force Chairman Joseph Basile co-authored an op-ed that ran in the Boston Business Journal highlighting MBR's member-driven energy principles and action steps to reduce energy costs.
- **Energy Conference with Brandeis International Business School**—MBR joined the New England Economic Partnership and Brandeis International Business School to develop and promote a conference focusing on the New England region's energy challenges and trends. MBR worked with member Tom Foley to secure Siemens CEO Eric Spiegel to provide keynote remarks and receive the 2015 Perlmutter Award for Excellence in Global Business Leadership from Brandeis University.

Transportation

- **MBR Members Meet with MBTA Review Panel**—MBR members met with Robert Gittens and other members of the special panel created by the Baker Administration to review the operations, governance and funding of the MBTA. Members provided ideas for reforms and shared their experiences with the panel as it developed its report.
- **Commonwealth Magazine Publishes MBR Transportation Op-Ed**—MBR's Transportation Task Force Chairman Jay Doherty co-authored an op-ed with Executive Director JD Chesloff in Commonwealth Magazine that outlined MBR's principles for transportation reforms and the development of a long-term plan to support a world-class transit system.
- **Business Coalition for Transportation**—MBR signed a unified business community statement with 24 other business groups in support of recommendations made by the special panel reviewing the MBTA. The coalition continues to advocate for major legislative reforms at the MBTA.

For more than three decades, the Massachusetts Business Roundtable has brought together CEOs and senior business leaders from diverse industry sectors across the state to help shape and drive public policies that strengthen the long-term economy in the Commonwealth. The Roundtable serves as a platform for members to express ideas, develop innovative solutions and influence the state's public policy agenda. The Roundtable's member-driven competitiveness agenda and policy advocacy is making an impact in the first half of the year. Thank you to all our members for your continued engagement and support.

New Roundtable Members in 2015



Allen Fore



Marylee Hanley



Robert Johnson, Ph.D.



James Tierney

Collaborating on Policy

...with local partners

▪ **Education Forum in Pittsfield**—MBR joined the Mass. Business Alliance for Education and AIM to co-sponsor a special employer forum—Educating Your Future Workforce—hosted by Interprint in Pittsfield. The forum included Commissioner of Elementary & Secondary Education Mitchell Chester and former Commissioner of Higher Education Richard Freeland with western Massachusetts business leaders on their workforce needs.

▪ **MBR Partnership with RAM**—The Roundtable and the Retailers Association of Massachusetts are teaming up with the UMass Emerging Leaders Program to benchmark labor costs and other challenges confronting businesses of all sizes looking to hire talented workers. The team will develop policy recommendations to address areas of competitive disadvantage.

▪ **Housing**—Roundtable Chairman Michael Hogan joined a panel of experts at The Boston Foundation to address major demographic changes, a shortage of workforce housing and a mismatch in the types of housing available and what is most needed in greater Boston.

...with Legislative leadership

▪ **STEM/Computer Science**—MBR is working closely with member Google to expand computer science education across the state. MBR is advocating for an investment in the state budget that would be matched 1:1 by private sector funding.

▪ **Workforce Development**—MBR is advocating for recapitalization of the Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund, a competitive job training fund that emphasizes regional partnerships with employers to develop the talent pipeline. MBR is also supporting the Governor's Special Commission on Long-Term Unemployment, which includes Donna Cupelo from Verizon and Tony Benoit from Benjamin Franklin Institute of Technology.

...with national partners

▪ **Roundtable Executives Convene in Washington DC**—MBR convened 16 state Roundtable executives at EMC's Washington office and held a briefing with the national BRT on energy and health care costs. Leaders from New York, Ohio, Hawaii, Connecticut, Iowa, Pennsylvania, Texas, California, Washington, Florida, Delaware, Colorado, Maryland, Minnesota and Louisiana shared best practices and statewide competitiveness data.



...with Baker-Polito Administration

▪ **Regulatory Reform**—MBR led efforts to support the new regulatory reform initiative launched by the Governor. MBR directly connected members from diverse industry sectors with the Administration to highlight specific regulations and policies that should be modified or repealed. Reforming outdated and unnecessary regulations remains a high priority issue for MBR members.

▪ **Four Business Groups & Baker Administration Meet Monthly**—MBR, AIM, MTF, the Chamber and leaders in the Baker Administration—meet monthly on policy priorities and issues of importance to the business community.

▪ **Tax Administration**—MBR recruited members for a special working group to recommend ways to improve DOR's combined reporting process for employers operating in multiple states. Several members designated tax experts to provide feedback and ideas to DOR as part of MBR's ongoing efforts to enhance tax administration.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Special thanks to EMC Corporation for hosting the 2015 MBR Annual Meeting at its headquarters in Hopkinton. The Roundtable also wishes to thank long-time Executive Committee Member and Chairman of the Competitiveness Task Force Barry Nearhos, Managing Partner, PricewaterhouseCoopers, for his strong support and numerous contributions to the organization over the years. MBR welcomes incoming Managing Partner for PwC John Farina.

Accessing an Influential Network

▪ **MBR Competitiveness Task Force**—MBR Competitiveness Task Force Chairman Barry Nearhos convened a conversation with Secretary of the Executive Office for Administration & Finance Kristen Lepore. She announced a statewide Competitiveness Review to improve on the state's competitive disadvantages (i.e. costs, regulatory environment) and invest in its advantages (i.e. talented workforce).

▪ **"Policy Makers" Conversations**—Members engaged in Roundtable discussions with Attorney General Maura Healey and Chief Justice of the Supreme Judicial Court Ralph Gants.

▪ **Board Meeting with Energy Secretary**—Secretary for Energy & Environmental Affairs Matt Beaton met with members on reducing energy costs and expanding natural gas capacity, key priorities for the Roundtable.

▪ **Northeastern University CEO Breakfast Series**—MBR worked with Northeastern University on the CEO Breakfast Series, which featured John Fish, CEO of Roundtable member Suffolk Construction.

▪ **Discussion on 2024 Olympics Bid**—At the suggestion of the MBR Executive Committee, the Roundtable convened a discussion of the Boston 2024 Olympics bid that included presentations by Boston2024, the UMass Donahue Institute and The Boston Foundation. The Olympics briefing was hosted at the TD Garden by President Amy Latimer.

▪ **Tech Hub Caucuses at State House**—Roundtable members EMC, Verizon and MassTech convened two Tech Hub Caucuses Co-Chaired by Senator Karen Spilka and Representative Ann-Margaret Ferrante that included Senate President Stan Rosenberg, House Speaker Robert DeLeo and Secretary Jay Ash. MBR members Verizon, EMC, MassTech, iRobot, Google, Comcast, AT&T and UMass met at the State House to tackle top issues in the tech sector.