

ED ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ FLYNN



Dear neighbors:

I hope all is well with you and your loved ones during these unprecedented times. Our city and country are having much needed discussions on racial equity, and I continue to learn from constituents, advocates, colleagues, and residents in our Black and Brown communities about their lived experiences and issues of racial justice.

In the City Council last week, I voted in favor of the approved FY21 City budget. Ultimately, I believe this budget makes vital investments for our city during the current public health and economic crises, as well as taking steps in the right direction to address racial equity.

As businesses continue to reopen, I want to thank everyone again for doing their part in fighting the pandemic. Although we are seeing a decline in cases locally, we must remain cautious and vigilant as other parts of the country are having serious issues and remain in the first wave of the virus. I ask everyone to please continue practicing physical distancing, wear masks while in the public, wash hands frequently and follow guidelines from our public health officials.

I would also like to congratulate Boston Pride again for their 50th anniversary. We must continue to stand behind and support our LGBTQIA community, particularly those in the Black community and communities of color to live without fear of discrimination and racism. Looking ahead, I hope everyone has a safe Independence Day weekend, and that we all take the time to enjoy the summer while working together on moving our city and country forward.

City Budget

Please find my full statement regarding my vote in favor of the City of Boston FY21 budget.



Boston City Council

ED FLYNN
Councilor - District 2

June 24th, 2020

Dear neighbors:

One of the most important responsibilities that a City Councilor has is to approve a fiscally responsible budget that will make investments, deliver services and provide resources to our constituents. We must do so while responding to the need for racial equity, and also dealing with the impacts of a global health pandemic and what could potentially be a very deep and long-lasting recession. After attending every City Council budget hearing, talking with city officials, and residents in my district and across the city, I will vote in favor of the FY21 budget.

This budget makes large investments in affordable housing, education, public health, food access, services for immigrants, and other areas. There is an \$80 million increase for Boston Public Schools spending, a \$13 million increase for the Boston Public Health Commission, and \$18 million in housing investments. There is also new funding for the Boston Public Library, Boston Parks Department, and the Human Rights Commission. These are all priorities and departments that provide important services for our most vulnerable residents.

I also represent a large immigrant community in District 2, and this budget includes increased funding for both the Office of Immigrant Advancement and the Office of Language and Communications Access, which will help my constituents in Chinatown, the South End, South Boston and elsewhere who are trying to access resources like interpretation, legal advocacy, and housing. At a time when the rights of our immigrants are under constant threat, we need funding for these offices to do their vital work and advocate for our immigrant communities.

During this pandemic, our communities of color and immigrant neighbors have been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19. In particular, our AAPI community has experienced racism and discrimination. I'm glad that the Human Rights Commission is funded in this budget to help address racism and discrimination, and potentially be an outlet for residents to seek support. If we don't approve this budget, we'll lack funding for the Human Rights Commission and be unable to utilize this department to fight for the rights of our residents.

I also represent a large number of seniors, and this pandemic has magnified the importance of food access. I've helped deliver food to seniors and housing complexes throughout Boston, and I know that food access will continue to be critical for the city during this economic downturn.

This budget has investments for The Office of Food Access, which would help enable the elderly and others in need to access nutritious and healthy food.

I also have to consider what would happen if we do not have an approved budget by July 1st. We would have to go into what is called a “1/12 budget” based on last year’s approved budget and revenue, which means that we can potentially lose the investments included in this proposal and make cuts. With the current uncertainty in the economy, some city departments may struggle to pay their costs and ultimately have to lay off workers. I’m proud of the work that our city workers do everyday - from our teachers, school nurses, police officers, firefighters, EMTs, youth counselors, substance use disorder counselors, custodians, traffic engineers, to our parks department and public works department workers, and so many others - they all keep our city moving forward.

In the middle of an economic crisis, it is critical for us as a city to do all that we can to help keep working families employed so that they can pay their rent or mortgage, buy their groceries, and support our local restaurants and small businesses to help Boston recover from what could be a very deep and long-lasting recession.

I also understand that there are calls to reallocate more funding from the Boston Police Department to other programs and departments. The discussion on racial equity and justice must continue, and there is much work to be done in terms of reform. I believe that voting for this budget does not mean that we won’t work to address issues of accountability for misconduct and structural change. When we talk about structural change, we also have to talk about non-budgetary reforms. I’m committed to working with my colleagues, Mayor Walsh, our civic organizations and community advocates to further racial justice in our city, and to ensure that our police department continues to strive to be more inclusive, equitable, and empowering.

I believe this is a budget that makes much needed investments for our city during the current public health and economic crises, as well as taking steps in the right direction to address racial equity. This work will continue, but voting for this budget will preserve important investments in housing, education, public health, immigrant services and other vital areas during these uncertain times for our city and country.

Sincerely,



Ed Flynn
Boston City Councilor, District 2

LGBTQIA Pride Month



June is LGBTQIA Pride Month, and this year we also celebrated the 50th

anniversary of Boston Pride. Although we are unable to celebrate in person this year, we will make sure next year is the biggest celebration yet. At the City Council, I was happy to sign onto a resolution filed by City Councilors Liz Breadon and Julia Mejia to officially recognize June as Pride Month, which affirms the rights and equal treatment of all those in the LGBTQIA community. I represent a large LGBTQIA community in District 2, and I will always be an ally and remain committed to working with friends and neighbors to realize a future where everyone can live freely without fear of discrimination.

Council Hearings & Resolutions



Order for a hearing to discuss ways to prevent and investigate incidents of hate crimes and discrimination

Together with City Councilors Andrea Campbell and Lydia Edwards, I called a hearing on the investigation of hate crimes and discrimination. There has been an uptick of racist incidents with COVID-19, and the killing of George Floyd and other tragic events have highlighted the need for serious discussions on institutional racism impacting the lives of Black Americans and communities of color. I hope to start this discussion and see if the city can utilize an agency like the Boston Human Rights Commission for preventing and investigating hate crimes and discrimination.

Order for a hearing to discuss the creation of a Frontline Workers COVID-19 Health Registry

City Councilor At-Large Michael Flaherty and I called for a hearing on the creation of a Health Registry for our first responders and frontline workers during COVID-19. Our first responders from the Boston Police Department, Boston Fire Department, Boston Emergency Medical Services (EMS) and our healthcare workers, grocery clerks and essential workers continue to risk their health. With the long-term effects of COVID-19 still unknown, a Health Registry would allow us to better track the virus and allow us to respond to potential complications more effectively in the future.

Order for a hearing regarding dyslexia services

I'm proud to co-sponsor with City Councilor At-Large Annissa Essaibi-George for a hearing on dyslexia services in Boston Public Schools. Teacher training

and early testing are key to identifying learning disabilities and help with improving children's confidence and reading skills. I will continue to work closely with parents, teachers and advocates. This hearing aims to discuss dyslexia services in Boston Public Schools, and highlights the need for early intervention, testing, and the using the appropriate teaching system to help dyslexic students.

Resolution in support of state legislature bills regarding the occupational presumption of exposure of COVID-19

I was proud to join City Councilor Liz Breadon as a co-sponsor on this resolution in support of proposed state legislation on occupational presumptions of exposure to COVID-19 to ensure that many of our essential healthcare, frontline workers will be better protected.

Resolution in support of Four Seasons workers and support of a statewide "right to recall" for hotel workers

I was proud to join City Councilors Kenzie Bok and Julia Mejia to pass a resolution in support of the workers of Four Seasons Hotel Boston and a statewide "right to recall" for hotel workers. Last month, the Four Seasons Hotel on Boylston Street announced that it would permanently eliminate 194 employees, offering little severance for decades of service in some instances. Hospitality jobs provide a path to the middle class and help to achieve first generational wealth for many of our Black, Brown, women and immigrant neighbors. The Four Season has since provided more severance to their employees and we continue to advocate for "right to recall" legislation. [You can read more in the Boston Globe here.](#)

In the Community



It was great to visit Karen LaFrazia and the dedicated staff at St. Francis House this month. I enjoyed talking with the guests and residents of this wonderful facility. Thank you for your work in rebuilding lives by providing refuge and pathways to stability for people experiencing homelessness and poverty.



Thank you to State Representative Jon Santiago, the Inquilinos Boricuas en Acción (IBA) and Blackstone/Franklin Square Neighborhood Association and the City of Boston team for delivering food packages to South End families in need this month. We safely distributed food to 200 families.



It was wonderful to join Community Servings, State Representative Jon Santiago and volunteers to distribute nutritious meals to seniors and families in need at the Tent City Apartments in Back Bay. Thank you Community Servings for their donation, and thank you to Mayor Walsh and the residents task force.



I was glad to join Massachusetts Military Support Foundation, Boston Veterans Commissioner Robert Santiago, MA Department of Veterans' Services Secretary Francisco Urena, the Veteran's Network team from the Gillette Company and the New England Patriots for the Food4Vets event in South Boston. Along with volunteers, we distributed a 14 day food supply for veterans. It is important that we support our veterans and military families especially during these difficult times.

I enjoyed spending time with the Castle Square Tenants Organization team in South End on Census Day of Action. We encouraged residents to complete the census. Everyone counts!



I was honored to attend the 6th Annual Timothy "Doc" Cook Scholarship award ceremony with State Representative David Biele in honor of U.S. Navy Petty Officer Tim "Doc" Cook. Congratulations to the award recipients for your work in educating our youth and community about PTSD and the challenges of our returning veterans.

We had a moving mass for Racial Justice

and Healing celebrated by Cardinal Sean O'Malley at Castle Island. Cardinal O'Malley and other faith leaders, including Bishop William E. Dickerson of the Greater Love Tabernacle Church, prayed for peace and advocated for justice, respect and dignity for all.



This month, I met with various civic and neighborhood organizations to discuss issues related to food access, pedestrian and public safety, the city budget, development and the neighborhood process, clean streets, racial justice and quality of life. Thank you to Andrew Square Civic Association (ASCA), Bay Village Neighborhood Association (BVNA), Chinatown Resident Association (CRA), Fort Point Neighborhood Association (FPNA), Friends of the Public Garden, Midtown Park Plaza Neighborhood Association (MPPNA), Pilot Block Neighborhood Association (PBNA) and the South Boston Association of Non-Profits (SBANP) for having me.

Together with City Councilor At-Large Michael Flaherty, State Representative David Biele, Boston Fire Commissioner Jack Dempsey, Boston Police Department Captain Boyle, the offices of State Senator Nick Collins and Congressman Lynch, I met with South Boston residents virtually to discuss the issue of illegal fireworks. Illegal fireworks affect our health, mental health and frighten our pets. They also pose serious dangers to pedestrian and public safety and are a fire hazard. I have talked with many neighbors and sent a memo to schools and community organizations to highlight the dangers of fireworks and the quality of life issues they present. I will continue to work closely with City Departments and colleagues on this issue.



If I can be of any assistance, please do not hesitate to contact my office at 617-635-3203 or ed.flynn@boston.gov.