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Dear neighbors,

As we enter the fall season, I hope you and your family are staying safe and healthy. As our weather becomes cooler and students begin to return to classes, we cannot let our guard down in our fight against COVID-19. Please continue practicing physical distancing and mask wearing, so that we will not have a second wave of COVID-19 infections in the fall.

Now that our Boston Public Schools students and university students are returning to their classrooms, I'm closely monitoring any issues that may arise with our school reopening. One of the issues that I've been working on is digital equity, and I recently had a hearing on this topic to ensure that our students, immigrants, working families, and the elderly have equal access to the internet and digital resources for school, work, and everyday life. During this difficult time, it is important that we ensure everyone has equitable access to the services they need to be healthy, informed, and safe.

Aside from digital equity, I've been working on issues relating to quality of life and public health. I recently held a hearing on pest control and illegal dumping, and discussed measures that the city can take to curb the increase in rodent activities and better prevent illegal dumping. I also filed a hearing order on providing better services and resources for people living with HIV/AIDS, and was able to pass a resolution in the City Council to celebrate our hearing impaired community.

I hope you and your families continue to be well, and to enjoy the beautiful fall season.

Ed

City and District Updates

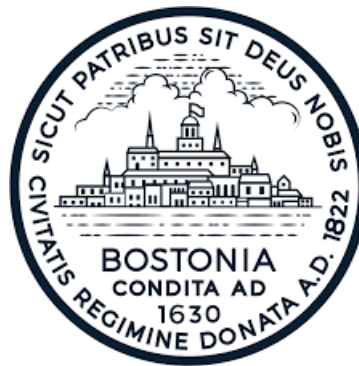
Abutters Meeting:

- 313 Old Colony Ave, South Boston (Monday, October 5, 5:30 – 6:15pm)
 - 564 East Broadway (Tuesday, October 13, 5:30pm - 6:15pm)
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BPDA Virtual Public Meetings

- 244 - 284 A Street, South Boston Waterfront (Wednesday, October 7, 6:00 – 8:00pm)
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Council Hearings



Order for a hearing to discuss ways for the city to be more proactive in providing services, educating the public, and raising awareness for those infected with HIV/AIDS

I called for this hearing with Councilor Flaherty to start a discussion on how we can better provide services for those living with HIV/AIDS, as well as discuss strategies on how to better prevent the spread of this disease. With the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, there are growing concerns in a surge in HIV infections in Boston, particularly among the most vulnerable and homeless population from increased needle sharing and decreased availability of prophylactic drugs during the period of lockdown. We need to continue to be proactive in working with our community health partners, advocates, and hospitals to ensure that the HIV/AIDS resources continue to be available.

Hearings recently held

Hearing to Discuss Electoral Recount Process in the City of Boston

Earlier this month, I held a hearing on the Boston Election Department recount process. The hearing was led by Councilor At-Large Julia Mejia, who is Chair of the Committee on Civil Rights. As seen in recent elections, the electoral recount process is critical to ensuring every vote is counted accurately. Boston's

recount process is more onerous than many other cities and town's practices, and requires that candidates requesting a recount collect 50 signatures in each ward that they would want a recount in. To change the recount process, there would need to be a change in the City Charter, and we discussed the possibility of having an automatic recount if the margin is narrow enough and ensuring that the recount process is fair to the municipality and candidates.

Hearing on Digital Equity and Internet Access

I held a hearing with Councilor At-Large Julia Mejia and Michael Flaherty on digital equity and internet access this week, as this topic is especially important now given how necessary access to the internet and digital skills are as services are moving online because of the pandemic. We heard from city officials, community leaders, and advocates working on this issue. Having access to the internet and the knowledge of how to use digital resources are crucial for our families and residents to engage in everyday life, and working families, immigrants, and seniors often have more barriers to access the internet. We need to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to access services and resources on the internet.

Hearing on Pest Control and Illegal Dumping

Last week, I held a hearing with Councilor Breadon to discuss issues relating to pest control and illegal dumping in the City of Boston. The hearing brought together city officials and community advocates, and together they discussed measures that the city has been taking to respond to the recent uptick in rodent activities and preventing illegal dumping. The Inspectional Services Department (ISD) officials have been responding to the increase in rodent activities by stepping up on inspections and enforcement, dropping flyers on impacted areas about how to properly dispose of trash, and looking at methods such as using dry ice. Officials emphasized the importance of properly disposing trash in curbing rodent activities, and encouraged residents to use 311 to report cases so ISD can better track the cases and activities.

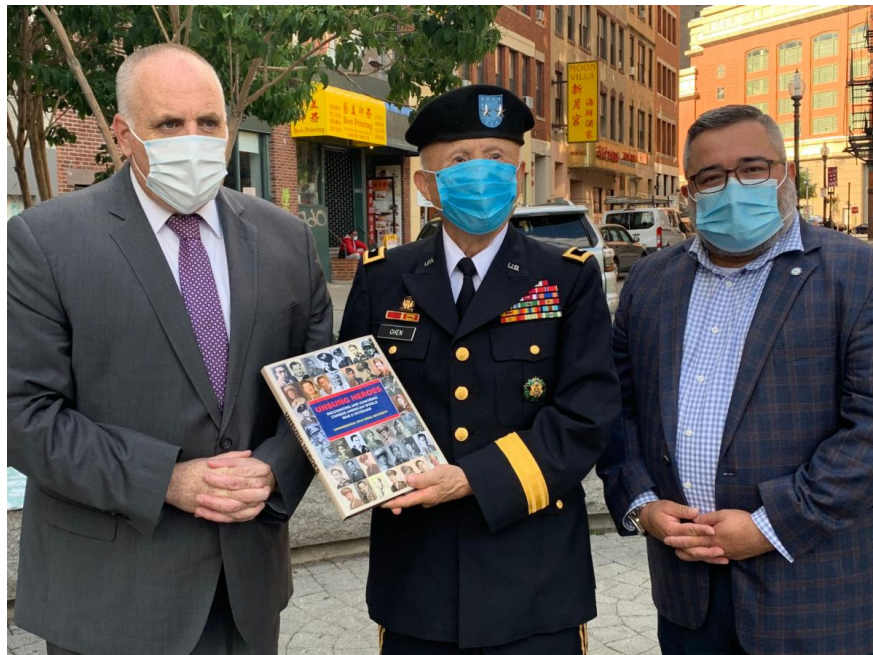
Resolution recognizing International Week of the Deaf

I was proud to pass a resolution recognizing the International Week of the Deaf. Set annually in the last full week of September, it celebrates the accomplishments of people who are deaf and promotes their rights. With 1 in 8 people in the United States who are deaf or are significantly hard of hearing, and more than 2.7 million veterans who receive disability benefits for hearing loss or tinnitus, we must affirm our support for these individuals.

In the Community



It was an honor to join elected officials and our South Boston neighbors for the 39th rededication of the South Boston Vietnam Veterans Memorial at Medal of Honor Park. We will always remember and honor the 25 South Boston Vietnam Veterans who paid the supreme sacrifice for our nation.



I was honored to join Boston Veterans Commissioner Robert Santiago, the American Legion Boston Chinatown Post 328, and Chinatown residents to recognize the contributions and sacrifices of over 20,000 Chinese and Chinese-American World War II Veterans. These unsung heroes fought for our freedom, democracy, and helped build our country.



Earlier this month, I had an informative meeting and walkthrough of Downtown Boston with the Downtown Boston BID and Downtown Boston Residents' Association. We were joined by Boston Police Department's Sergeant Moy, Kim Thai-Durrigan from the Mayor's Office, State Representative Aaron Michlewitz, Chinatown ONS Lisa Hy, staff from the Department of Neighborhood Development, and the Mayor's Office of Recovery Services. We must continue to work together to improve quality of life issues in the Downtown area.



With the 2020 Census in Boston coming to a close soon, I would like to thank Mayor Marty Walsh, State Representative Aaron Michlewitz, Age Strong Commission, Census Liaison Sebastian Zapata, Chinatown ONS Lisa Hy, the dedicated team at Chinese Progressive Association, and many other

organizations in Chinatown for assisting residents in completing the census over the past several months.

I was honored to attend the Greater Boston Labor Council Labor Day rally this month. I was very proud to stand with our essential workers, many of whom continue to sacrifice greatly for our country during this pandemic. Now more than ever, it is critical to continue to stand for economic justice with our working families, and building an inclusive economy that works for all.



I was proud to join Boston Education Justice Alliance, Boston Teachers Union and Councilor Essaibi-George for a rally in support of students with disabilities and ELL this month. I will continue to advocate and support students with disabilities, their families, and teachers for the services they deserve. Special education is a civil right!

This month, I am proud to celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month, which starts on September 15 and ends on October 15. It is a time to reflect and celebrate the enormous contributions and sacrifices made by so many in the Hispanic and Latinx communities. Our diversity is our strength!



I am proud to support and recognize the contributions of immigrant-owned businesses to our city and our country. Let's continue to stand with our immigrant neighbors.



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