

March 19, 2020

The following is a statement from Senate President Karen E. Spilka on elections:

“The ability to hold elections is fundamental to the continued functioning of our democracy. We are also aware that we must protect the health and safety of the public during this unprecedented global pandemic. As such, the Senate has determined that moving forward with traditional elections at this time would put our voters, election workers, volunteers and others in our cities and towns at excessive risk.

The Senate will therefore take action on Monday to give cities and towns needed flexibility to address this situation, including temporarily postponing municipal elections. It will also ensure that there are robust mail and absentee voting options and protections to maximize voter participation when elections do occur.

We are also working with stakeholders to postpone certain special Senate state elections previously scheduled for March 31, 2020. As with postponed municipal elections, we would allow for voters to vote with an absentee ballot or via a mail-in option due to the COVID-19 state of emergency. This is not a decision we take lightly as we seek to balance the need for representation for our legislative districts with the very real risks to our residents.

The right to vote is one that the Massachusetts State Senate cherishes and wishes to protect. We hope that the actions we take now will help ensure the integrity of our elections as this public health crisis evolves.”