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Under the Wire, Governor Baker Approves FY 2020 Budget

BY ANTHONY J. DRAGGA • AUGUST 6, 2019

With the clock winding down on the stopgap spending plan that covered the first month of the fiscal year, Massachusetts Governor Charlie Baker has signed the FY 2020 budget. A temporary budget kept the state operating on July 1, but that spending authority was due to run out at the end of July.

Breaking from prior state budgets during his tenure, Governor Baker did not exercise his line-item veto power to trim any spending in the budget, saying it wasn't necessary because the spending plan was balanced. For reference, Baker last year vetoed \$48.9 million from a \$41.7 billion budget. The new budget does not raise taxes but increases overall spending by 3.3% (\$43.3 billion) over the most recent fiscal year.

In a [press release from the governor's office](#), Governor Baker said he is pleased by increases in state spending on public schools and public colleges "while investing in critical areas of the budget including education, housing, transportation, efforts to fight opioid misuse, the care of vulnerable children and support for cities and towns."

Of note, the budget increased by \$268 million the state's contribution to elementary and secondary schools, officially known as Chapter 70, pushing the total aid to \$5.2 billion.

As expected, the FY 2020 budget leaves major hot-button issues, such as reworking the state's funding formula under Chapter 70, extending the tobacco tax to e-cigarettes and Governor Baker's proposal to tax opioid manufacturers, on the table for future years.

For reference, here is a copy of the [FY 2020 budget](#).