



LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

*Making Cape Cod a Better Place to
Live, Work, and Raise a Family*



State Representative Steve Xiarhos
R - 5th Barnstable District
Spring 2023

WELCOME!

It is my distinct honor and pleasure to serve as the State Representative for the 5th Barnstable District. I can't tell you how proud I am to represent the interests of the people of Sandwich, Barnstable and Bourne on Beacon Hill.

Last year was a year of success and accomplishment, highlighted by the bipartisan passage of Nero's Bill into law. I was also able to secure funding that will help the communities in our district with several important local projects. Now, it's a new year and a new legislative session, and I am working hard to promote a number of important priorities.

In the following pages, you will read more about some of the priorities I am already working on this year. This includes my work on legislative committees, bills that I have filed, and other important initiatives.

I also believe strongly in the importance of constituent service, communication, and supporting the communities I represent. My Legislative Aide and I hold regular office hours in the district to talk directly with people about issues they're worried about and ways that I can help them. We also speak regularly with elected officials on the local level, which I believe is important.

True to my past work, I also continue to dedicate time to volunteer for charities in our area. I believe strongly in the importance of giving back to the community at the same time I serve as an elected official.



I am also busy participating in our state's annual budget process as a new member of the Committee on Way and Means.

If there is ever any way that I can be of assistance to you, please do not hesitate to reach out to my office. My Legislative Aide and I are dedicated to serving you and using the power of my office to help you and the communities we hold dear. I pledge to always work hard on your behalf and to earn your trust, confidence, and support. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Steve Xiarhos". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Steven G. Xiarhos
State Representative
5th Barnstable District



NERO'S BILL BECOMES LAW

One of my first priorities when I was elected State Representative was to work to pass Nero's Bill into law.

This bill was inspired out of the tragic events of April 12, 2018. That day, a violent criminal resisting arrest murdered Yarmouth Police Sgt. Sean Gannon, and also gravely injured Sgt. Gannon's police dog, K9 Nero. I was Deputy Police Chief in Yarmouth at the time.

Unfortunately, due to a loophole in state law back then, Nero was not legally able to receive life-saving emergency medical treatment for his injuries at the scene. He also was not legally able to be transported to the hospital in an ambulance.

Nero's Bill was filed to help fix this legal loophole and to allow police dogs injured in the line of duty to receive the care that they need.

I was proud to sponsor this law this session, and I worked hard to gather support from elected officials from both parties, as well as many in the community. It worked!

It was my great honor to be at the Sgt. Sean Gannon Police Training Center in Yarmouth to watch Governor Baker sign the bill into law, four years to the day after Sgt. Gannon was killed.

Nero's Law is more than just a concept. The bill has already been used on several occasions to help treat injured police dogs. Also, first responders across the state are undergoing training to be able to render appropriate assistance under the bill if called upon.

I am also happy to report that other states are beginning to take note. Similar legislation is being considered in a number of other jurisdictions as of this writing!

CONSTITUENT SERVICE

One of my most important jobs as a State Representative is to serve as a liaison between the constituents and communities I represent and state government.

To this end, throughout my time in office, I have worked on developing a formal program to keep in touch with local leaders, including town administrators, selectmen and councilors, and school committee members. It is important for us to share a regular dialogue regarding local needs and ways the state can support individual communities.

I have also held regular “Coffee with the Rep” and other office hour sessions across the district. These are dedicated times meant to facilitate direct communication with people in the 5th Barnstable District. It’s a way for me to concentrate directly on what’s important to people, problems they need help with, and priorities they want me to work on.

In all of these efforts, I am assisted by my Legislative Aide, Stuart Daniels. Stuart is talented, capable, and friendly, and his ability to work hard to solve problems is a tremendous benefit for the people of the 5th Barnstable District. I appreciate everything he does and the help he has provided to so many people we serve.

If you are in need of assistance from my office, please contact Stuart at (617) 722-2488, or via e-mail at Stuart.Daniels@mahouse.gov.



Our New Boston Office

In February 2023 Stuart and I moved to a new office located on the 5th Floor of the State House.

If you happen to be in Boston, please come visit us!





LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEES

Legislative committees have jurisdiction over particular subject matters and are tasked with holding hearings regarding proposed legislation and recommending whether proposed bills ought to pass.

I have been appointed to serve on four committees this session, each of which has relevance not only to the 5th Barnstable District but also to matters that are important to me and fit well with my professional experience:

As a member of the **Joint Committee on Public Safety and Homeland Security**, I will continue working to make Cape Cod a safer place to live and work. As a former Deputy Police Chief with four decades of law enforcement experience, I feel I have a unique perspective to bring to this committee's work. I also want our state to always honor and support first responders. I am honored to be appointed the **Assistant Ranking Minority Member** of this committee this session.

I am additionally gratified to continue my service as the **Ranking Minority Member on the Joint Committee on Veterans and Federal Affairs**, working to promote the interests of citizens who served in uniform. We owe a special debt of gratitude to those who served and sacrificed. That obligation is especially meaningful to me as a Gold Star Father. I have made an extensive commitment to our veterans on a volunteer basis in memory of my son, and it is my honor and pleasure to carry this work forward to committee work as a legislator.

New this session, I will serve as a member of the **Joint Committee on Ways and Means**. This is a very important committee that considers policy regarding revenue and spending, including particularly the state budget. Aside from promoting fiscal responsibility in state government, I hope my work on this committee will help me to bring vital financial assistance back to our district and our communities.

Also new this session, I will be serving as a member of the **Joint Committee on Mental Health, Substance Use and Recovery**. As a former police officer and as someone who knows so many people in our community who have been affected by issues of mental health and substance abuse, this committee is especially meaningful to me. In particular, I hope to bring increased focus on the mental health needs of our youth and to continue the fight against opioids that poison our communities.

As these committees begin their important work this Spring, I will keep you updated as to their important work. I am especially happy that many committee hearings will be in-person in addition to those being held virtually, which gives members a better opportunity to communicate with people who are interested in the policy we consider.

Serving the Community in Time of Need

As a Gold Star Father and a member of the Board of Directors of the Massachusetts Military Support Foundation, I believe strongly in the need to support our troops, their mission, and their families. Volunteer work is a very important part of who I am.

During the pandemic, my volunteer work took on an added dimension as so many veterans in our area are in need of assistance with basic needs.

I have devoted a substantial number of hours volunteering for the Food4Vets Program. Through the work of dozens of volunteers, this program has distributed millions of meals to needy veterans and their families throughout southeast Massachusetts.

We also expanded our work to provide food for children attending school in Sandwich and surrounding towns, and to provide winter clothing to needy veterans.



I am also proud of the work I have done to support local food pantries in our district, and to help bring diapers to families with infants in need.

I also continue to volunteer for Big Nick's Ride for the Fallen, the charity started in memory of my son, Nick. During the pandemic, Big Nick's Ride was responsible for donating personal protective equipment (PPE) to health care workers on Cape Cod. We also continue to sponsor blood drives in coordination with Cape Cod Hospital.

REGIONAL INITIATIVES

As State Representative, I actively participate in dialogue regarding a number of issues that don't necessarily involve legislation. Many of these have a local or regional component to them. Here are two examples of issues I'm watching closely this year:

Wastewater



I believe strongly in the need to protect Cape Cod's environment, including especially our fragile water supply.

To that end, I have been working with local officials in several communities as they attempt to address wastewater issues. For example, I have supported efforts to create a regional wastewater treatment plant at Joint Base Cape Cod.

I also have participated in the debate over changes proposed by MassDEP to regulations covering private septic systems (Title 5). These regulations are intended to help prevent high levels of harmful chemicals in estuaries and drinking water supplies, but they could impose enormous cost and burden on homeowners, businesses, and taxpayers. I have asked for these regulations to be put on-hold and reconsidered, because I want to make sure that any solutions to our wastewater problems don't just protect the environment, but also that they are enacted in a manner that makes them affordable and sustainable for the people who call Cape Cod home.

Canal Bridges



Cape Cod's Canal bridges are vital pieces of infrastructure. But, they are also old. In order to ensure transportation that is safe and effective, these bridges need to be replaced.

For several years there has been a plan in-the-works between state and federal officials to rebuild these bridges. My office has taken an active role in the conversation about designs and planning. I've also participated in the dialogue about how to pay for this project -- an issue that appeared to be resolved up until recently, when it was learned that federal grants to fund the bridges failed to receive initial approval.

I am committed to working toward solutions that see these bridges replaced with new structures that will adequately support transportation needs now and in the future. I also want these projects to be undertaken with the least amount of impact on surrounding areas, and with the most financial protection for Massachusetts taxpayers and motorists. In particular, I do not support new taxes or tolls to pay for these bridges to be rebuilt.



MY TOP PRIORITIES

As a State Representative, I have a number of priorities that serve as the focus of my work and reflect my core beliefs as an elected official and an individual.

- As a former Deputy Police Chief, I have made a career out of working to improve public safety. Above all, to me that means being tough on crime, making sure our laws reflect law enforcement needs, and supporting first responders.
- Likewise, as a Gold Star Father, I am deeply committed on a personal level to supporting our troops, our veterans, and their families.
- I believe strongly in promoting a government that is limited in the exercise of its powers, and open and accountable to those it serves.
- I also believe in protecting Massachusetts taxpayers. It is important for all members of the Legislature to act as responsible stewards of public funds. We must do all we can to promote fiscal responsibility and efficiency while eliminating waste, fraud and abuse in state government.
- As Massachusetts continues to deal with pandemic recovery, it is important for us to appropriately address public health needs while also restoring our economy and supporting our businesses, especially our small business community.
- We must do all we can to support students and teachers in our public schools.
- I also believe it is important for us to advocate for seniors, elders, and other vulnerable populations.
- It is critical for us to protect the fragile environment here on Cape Cod.
- Above all else, my most important job as a State Representative is to support the communities and citizens I serve. I support Local Aid and will continue to work hard on constituent service.



2023 BILLS FILED

House Bill 225

An Act relative to Department of Transitional Assistance benefits for diapers

This bill would allow the Department of Transitional Assistance to pay benefits equal to \$30 per month per dependent child for the purchase of diapers. Currently, EBT funds are only allowed to be used for food. This legislation would not increase the benefit rate, but would allow the beneficiaries to use their funds to purchase diapers if they choose to do so. Just as food is vital for health and security, diapers are a necessity.

House Bill 611

An Act relative to school safety

This bill addresses several important safety needs in public schools. Subject to local approval, the bill would require every city and town to have a school resource officer present in every public school building during

school hours. The bill also would require regular safety audits of school buildings and training for active shooter situations, and it would establish a special dedicated telephone exchange for people to submit tips about school safety issues to local police.



House Bill 1383

An Act relative to emergency backup power in newly-constructed senior housing facilities

This bill (filed by request) would require that any newly-constructed senior housing facility include backup electrical generators for the safety of residents who live there.

House Bill 1822

An Act relative to fentanyl arrests (Tatiana's Law)

This bill would eliminate bail for persons arrested for the manufacture, sale, or distribution of fentanyl. It is called "Tatiana's Law". Fentanyl is a synthetic opioid that is driving the increase in overdose deaths according to the Centers for Disease Control and are made to look like other prescription drugs. Much of the fentanyl in Massachusetts is illicitly produced, according to the Massachusetts Department of Public Health.

House Bill 1823

An Act relative to assault and battery against healthcare personnel, school officials, and first responders

This bill would increase the penalties for those who commit assault and battery against first responders, teachers and school staff, nurses, school athletic referees, and police dogs, allowing a penalty of up to 5 years in prison and a fine of up to \$5,000.

House Bill 1824

An Act relative to stenographer compensation

This bill would increase the statutory rates court reporters and stenographers could charge for their services.

House Bill 1825

An Act relative to enhanced penalties for those who commit assault and battery against school sports officials

This bill fixes a loophole in existing law, clarifying that school sports officials should be considered as "public employees" even if they are an independent contractor, for purposes of imposing enhanced penalties against those who commit an assault and battery upon such a sports official.

House Bill 1826

An Act relative to the establishment of a statewide registry of persons convicted for the sale/trafficking of certain class A drugs

This bill establishes a special commission to study the implementation of a statewide registry, similar to the sex offender registry, for persons who are convicted of the sale or trafficking of Class A substances. The purpose of the bill is to increase public awareness of drug dealers in the community, who pose a serious risk to public safety and also have a high risk of reoffending.

House Bill 1827
An Act relative to bail fees

This bill would increase statutory bail fees.

House Bill 2015
An Act relative to the limited sharing of medical information with the family of mentally ill patients in emergency situations

This bill (filed by request) would allow family members of patients suffering from mental illness to have access to information about their medical condition to the extent necessary to prevent serious injuries, sickness, or death.

House Bill 2421
An Act relative to emergency response in an active shooter or hostile event situation

This bill would enhance school safety by establishing an Active Shooter or Hostile Event Situation Response (ASHER) Council within the Executive Office of Public Safety and Security. The ASHER Council would be responsible for coordinating plans for the response to active shooter and hostile event situations at school facilities statewide. The bill also would implement best practices and minimum standards for training.

House Bill 2422
An Act relative to the security of exercise equipment and free weights in correctional institutions (Matt's Law)

This bill would require superintendents of medium- and maximum-security correctional facilities to make sure that inmates in those facilities do not have access to free weights or any other exercise equipment that is not secured. The bill is named "Matt's Law" in honor of Corrections Officer Matthew Tidman, who was brutally assaulted by a prison inmate who attacked him using free weights from a prison gym facility.



House Bill 2423

An Act relative to providing advanced life support to K9 dogs injured in the line of duty

This bill would make certain changes to Nero's Law, which allows for the medical treatment and transportation of police dogs injured in the line of duty. Under this bill, it would be clarified that injured police dogs would be eligible to receive advanced life support care.

House Bill 2424

An Act establishing a fund for the care of retired police dogs

This bill would establish a new fund which, subject to annual state appropriation, would be used to pay for documented expenses for the care, support, and medical needs of retired police dogs.

House Bill 2685

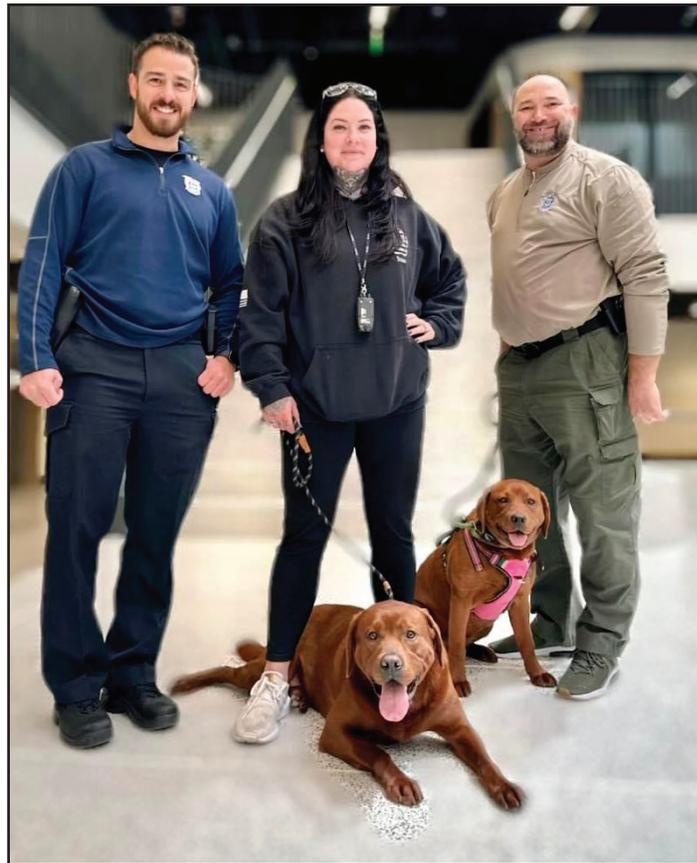
An Act relative to MassPort police officers

This bill would include MassPort port officers and supervisory staff within Group 4 for purposes of the state contributory retirement system.

House Bill 2687

An Act relative to fair worker representation on joint purchasing group committees

This bill requires that steering committees to govern joint purchasing agreements entered into by governmental agencies shall have union representation consisting of not less than one-quarter of their entire voting membership.



House Bill 3477

An Act regarding right of way violations (CeCelia's Law)

Cecelia's Law is named in memory of Cecelia Finnegan, age 26, of Bourne, who was killed in a crash caused by a driver of a vehicle who failed to grant her the right of way and collided with her as she was driving her motorcycle to work in September 2020. Failure to grant the right of way is a major factor in the death or serious injury of many motorcycle operators. This bill would increase the penalties for a right-of-way violation while driving a motor vehicle: for a violation resulting in injury, a fine of \$200 and a license suspension of 30 days; for a violation resulting in serious bodily injury, a fine of \$500 and a license suspension of 90 days, and for a violation resulting in death, a fine of \$1000 and a license suspension of one year.

House Bill 3478

An Act relative to the air medal license plate

This legislation would expand the existing law directing the MA RMV to issue Veterans plates free of charge for recipients of combat awards within the “Pyramid of Honor”. Of the awards within the Pyramid of Honor, only the Air Medal was excluded. The Air Medal is awarded to members of the Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force, and Coast Guard for valorous or meritorious action in aerial flight. The Bronze Star was actually modeled after the Air Medal, and like the Bronze Star, it can only be awarded for combat operations.

House Bill 3479

An Act relative to the “Move Over Law”

This bill increases fines and penalties under the state’s “Move Over Law,” increasing penalties for second and subsequent violations of the law.

House Bill 3541

Resolutions calling on Article V of the United States Constitution for the convening of a convention of the states

Article V of the US Constitution permits two-thirds of the states to join together to call for a Convention of States to consider proposed amendments to the Constitution. This resolve would add Massachusetts to the list of states calling for such a Convention of States, which would specifically consider proposals to limit federal power, limit federal spending, and impose term limits on federal officials.

House Docket No. 4110

An Act relative to wastewater treatment and disposal in the town of Sandwich

This bill would assist the Town of Sandwich with its wastewater disposal plans. Pending local approval, the bill would allow Sandwich to enter into a contract with the private vendor that provides wastewater treatment at Joint Base Cape Cod, and it would assist Sandwich with the infrastructure that would be needed to pipe wastewater to that facility for treatment.







ABOUT STEVE XIARHOS

Steve Xiarhos (R - 5th Barnstable) was elected to serve as State Representative on November 3, 2020 and was sworn into office on January 6, 2021. He is currently serving his second term of office.

Steve is the grandson of Greek legal immigrants and a lifelong American Patriot. He is the son and grandson of United States Army, Air Force, and Merchant Marine Veterans. He has a strong desire to serve our Country and assist and support the men and women of our American Armed Forces, First Responders, and Veterans and Military families of all wars and conflicts especially post 9-11. Currently, he serves on the Board of Directors of the Massachusetts Iraq and Afghanistan Fallen Heroes Memorial Fund and the Massachusetts Military Support Foundation; as well as a Volunteer for Wounded Warrior Project Cape Cod Soldier Ride. He is a graduate of Anna Maria College, Northeastern University, and Cape Cod Community College (where he majored in Criminal Justice and Law Enforcement).

Steve was born and raised in New Bedford, Massachusetts. In the summer of 1979, he found work as a seasonal Summer Reserve Police Officer, patrolling the town's beaches during tourist season. One day, he received a call from the town, saying that he was being hired to be a full-time Patrol Officer. He accepted, beginning a 40-year career with the Yarmouth Police Department. During those four decades of service, Steve was promoted to the ranks of Detective, School Resource Officer, Patrol Sergeant, Lieutenant, Patrol Force Commander, Detective Division Commander, and eventually Deputy Chief of Police. He retired from the police department on December 8, 2019.

Throughout his career, Steve attended numerous specialized training courses and is a graduate of the Babson College Command Training Course and the FBI Law Enforcement Executive Development Seminar. He is the recipient of 22 various police department awards and decorations including Officer of the

Year, Yarmouth Area Chamber of Commerce Person of the Year, Rotary Club of Yarmouth Vocational Service Award, Mothers Against Drunk Driving Officer of the Year, and the Barnstable County Human Rights Commission Rosenthal Award.

Currently, Steve lives in Barnstable with his fiancée, Denise L. Kalbach. Denise was born and raised in Harwich and is a Family Nurse Practitioner. She has earned a Bachelors Degree from Salve Regina and Masters Degrees from UMASS Dartmouth and UMASS Boston.

Steve is a proud parent of four children. He is a Gold Star Father, in honor of his oldest son, Nicholas. Nick Xiarhos died at age 21 on the battlefield during Operation Enduring Freedom. He was going to the rescue of fellow Marines in combat as part of 'Operation Strike of the Sword' in the Garmsir district of Helmand Province Afghanistan on July 23, 2009. Steve's other son, Alexander, served alongside Steve as a full-time Police Officer in the town of Yarmouth, and is now a Massachusetts and National School Resource Officer Association Certified SRO. Steve's identical twin daughters, Elizabeth and Ashlynne, serve in the hospitality industry.

Aside from his work with the Yarmouth Police Department, Steve has successfully initiated and coordinated many community fundraising and awareness events including the YPD BLUE 5K Run for a Reason, First Responder Appreciation Freedom Ride, and Big Nick's Ride for the Fallen.

Steve also participated in and completed numerous road races including the Marine Corps and Boston Marathons as well as the



Marine Corps Honor Run, the Falmouth Road Race, Boston Firefighters 10K, the Boston Run to Remember, and the Marine Corps Marathon 10K.

The 5th Barnstable District

The 5th Barnstable District consists of:

- Barnstable (Precincts 10, 11, and 12)
- Bourne (Precincts 1, 2, 3, 5A, and 7)
- Sandwich

Disclaimer

This publication is paid for privately by The Committee to Elect Steven Xiarhos, PO Box 617, East Sandwich, MA, 02537. Gerald Fortin, Treasurer. Telephone: 508-534-8752. E-mail: contact@xiarhosforrep.com. All rights reserved. No taxpayer funds or public resources were used to produce this publication.



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