Dear Friends and Allies,

I am proud to share the 2016 MPHA Annual Report with you. Over the course of this year we have had tremendous victories and we have seen our organization grow and become an even more impactful voice for public health.

Working with allies and partners across Massachusetts, we accomplished two big wins for the Massachusetts Food Trust Program. The promise of this program is substantial and we will work in the year ahead to ensure funds that were authorized in 2016 are released.

In addition to our work on healthy, affordable food and improvements to the built environment, we laid the groundwork to ensure reauthorization of the Prevention and Wellness Trust Fund. And we have been working with partners to launch a new Alliance for Community Health Integration that would put the social determinants of health at the center of health care transformation.

I am proud of the MPHA Annual Meeting, Moving the Public Health Agenda: No Racial Justice, No Public Health!. More than 450 public health leaders, professionals and students joined us to strategize how we will double down on our efforts to root out racial injustice and join together in solidarity into the coming years and in the new political climate.

I look forward to working with you in the year ahead to shore up the progress we have made and continue our march towards a truly just and healthy commonwealth. You can email me at: rgewirtz@mapublichealth.org.

From all of us at MPHA,

Rebekah Gewirtz, Executive Director

The Massachusetts Public Health Association (MPHA) is a private, non-profit 501c3, statewide membership organization that promotes a healthy Massachusetts through advocacy, education, community organizing, and coalition-building. We are the catalyst for change, eliminating health inequities and creating healthy communities for all.

Our focus is on policies and programs that prevent illness, disease, and injury, particularly among those vulnerable to disparities in health status.
Funds Authorized for Massachusetts Food Trust – A Driver for Health and Jobs

More than one million Massachusetts residents live in economically distressed urban and rural communities with very limited access to affordable, healthy food. Once funds are released, the Massachusetts Food Trust Program will provide loans, grants, and technical assistance to support new and expanding healthy food retailers in low and moderate income communities. In 2016, working with our partners, MPHA secured $6M in authorized capital funds and $100,000 in administrative funds for the program. In the coming session, we will work hard to make sure the funds are released.

Honored Public Health Heroes

Attorney General Maura Healey spoke at MPHA’s Annual Spring Awards Breakfast honoring Ray Considine, Durrell J. Fox, Donna Lombardi and Elsie Taveras for their dedication to health equity. This year’s breakfast inspired so much interest, we had over 350 attendees and sold out!
Ramped Up Transportation Justice Advocacy

Access to affordable, convenient transportation plays a crucial role in public health. In 2016, MPHA increased our transportation advocacy by playing a leadership role in the Transportation Justice Working Group of Transportation for Massachusetts (T4MA) to advance economic and racial justice. Through our coalition work, we led advocacy efforts for Complete Streets funding, now slated at $50M. We also prioritized the Fair Share Amendment campaign that, if passed in 2018, will create new revenue to invest in two core determinants of health: transportation and education.

Mobilized Movement to Re-Authorize Prevention Wellness Trust Fund (PWTF)

MPHA worked with state and local partners to build support for the reauthorization of the Prevention and Wellness Trust Fund (PWTF). We worked with local PWTF partners to educate legislators and community leaders through a series of legislative breakfasts across the state, organized a strong State House presence for an informational hearing of the Joint Committee on Public Health, and mobilized more than 200 civic leaders – including mayors from all corners of the state to sign a letter to legislative leaders calling for reauthorization. PWTF is a first-in-the-nation program funded at $60 million over four years, which MPHA was instrumental in creating through legislation in 2012. PWTF prevents chronic disease and advances health equity by connecting community and clinical services for residents in 9 regions of the state. Current PWTF funding will sunset in June 2017 without action in the legislature to reauthorize it.

Championed Alliance for Community Health Integration

MPHA is in the process of organizing a new Alliance for Community Health Integration, a collaboration among state and local leaders in public health and consumer advocacy with the goal of improving social determinants of health as a centerpiece of Massachusetts health care reform in order to address the deep inequities in health outcomes across race, ethnicity, and income.

Organized forums on the Marijuana Ballot Question

MPHA held two informational forums on the marijuana ballot question, the second in partnership with the MetroWest Health Foundation, featuring leading advocates on both sides. After careful study over many months, MPHA released a statement in opposition to Question 4, highlighting the areas where the ballot question falls short in protecting public health and promoting equity.
Thank you to MPHA’s major funders for making this work possible

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Cooley Dickinson Hospital
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In-Kind Donations 3%
Conferences 3%
Special events 20%
Revenue $846,143
Programs 79%
Expenses $733,955
Fundraising 14%
Administration 7%