

**Please Support H.886: An Act Relative to Combined Sewer Overflows
Filed by Representatives Adrian Madaro and David Rogers**

THE WATER POLLUTION PROBLEM: RAW SEWAGE IS BEING DUMPED INTO OUR WATERWAYS

THIRTY-EIGHT YEARS after the legislature created the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA) to end the dumping of sewage and sludge into Boston Harbor, and twenty-five years after the Deer Island Treatment Plant started treating the region's sewage to end Boston Harbor pollution:

- **DUMPING OF UNTREATED SEWAGE CONTINUES:** Fifty Combined Sewer Overflows (CSOs) discharge many hundreds of millions of gallons of sewage (human and industrial wastes) annually into Boston area rivers, streams, brooks, water channels, and Boston Harbor.
 - Five of those fifty CSOs were engineered to dump untreated sewage only in greater than 25-year sized storms. The other 45 dump sewage into our waterways in smaller storms.
 - Only five of those fifty CSOs have treatment to remove some solids and deactivate bacteria before the sewage is dumped into our waterways.
 - **Forty CSOs dump untreated human and industrial wastes into our waterways in larger and smaller storms without any treatment whatsoever.**
- **PUBLIC HEALTH AT RISK & ENVIRONMENT DEGRADED:** Many CSOs are in Environmental Justice neighborhoods. Public health officials recommend avoiding contact with CSO receiving waters during rainstorms and for 48 hours afterwards due to increased public health risks of encountering CSO waters laden with bacteria and pollutants. A stream with CSO sewage has overflowed into people's homes. CSOs also harm wildlife, have noxious odors, degrade the environment, and reduce our ability to enjoy our parks, rivers, and streams.

WHY DO CSOs EXIST? CSOs exist because Boston, Cambridge, Chelsea, and Somerville have Victorian-era combined sewers that mix rainwater and human and industrial wastes. In dry weather, the sewers send wastewater to Deer Island for treatment. In wet weather, however, rainwater and sewage together exceed the capacity of the sewers, causing those communities to dump untreated sewage into our waterways through CSOs. In addition, the MWRA sewer system remains undersized to handle the additional stormwater flows, causing MWRA to release untreated sewage into our waterways.

WHAT HAS BEEN DONE TO REMEDY THE PROBLEM? There has been progress: Some combined sewers were separated, and more separation is planned, sewer system capacity was increased, five CSOs got treatment, five CSOs got 25-year storm control, 34 of 84 CSOs were closed, and others dump less sewage, **but there is no plan to end CSO dumping of untreated sewage -- even in smaller storms.**

THIS LEGISLATION ADDRESSES THE CSO POLLUTION PROBLEM HEAD ON

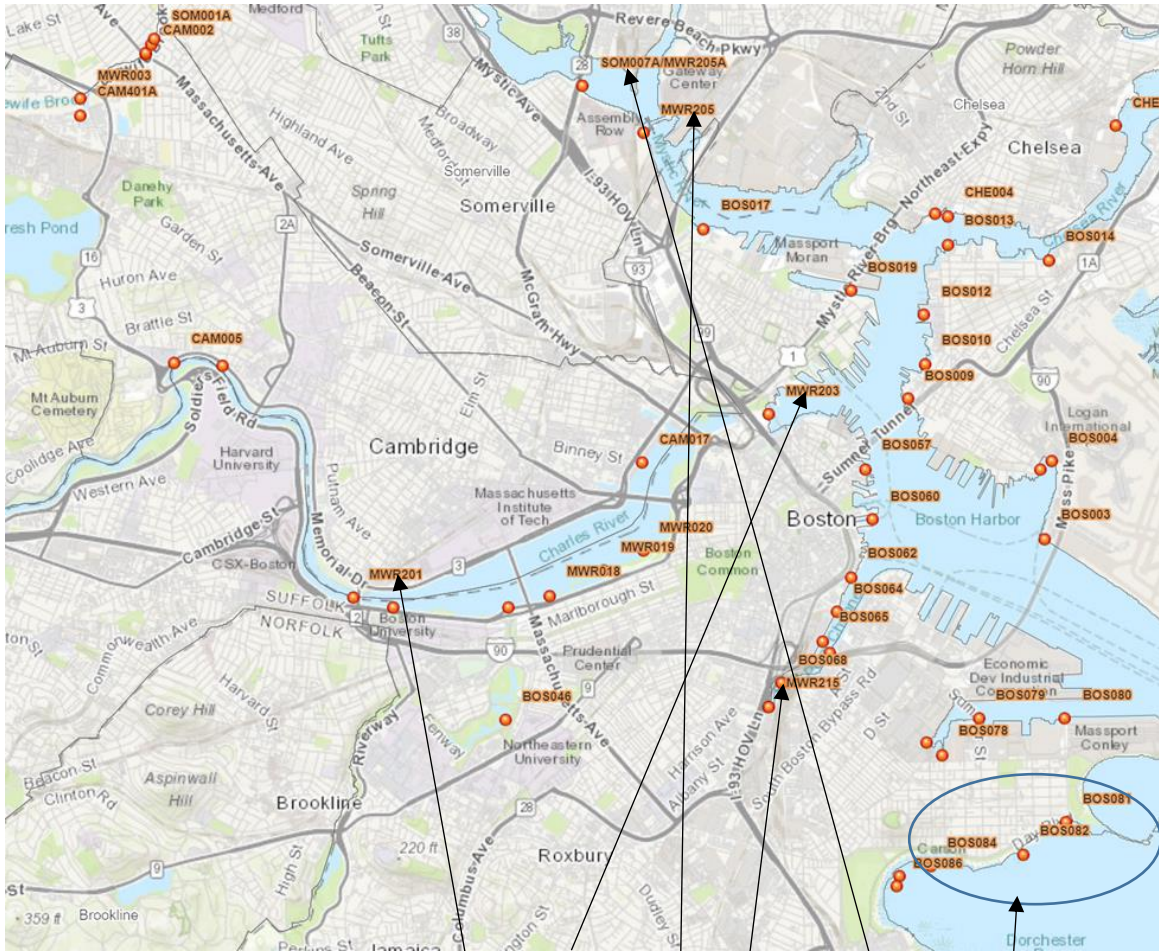
Recognizing that some CSOs may need to be available in large storms to prevent sewer backups, this legislation requires that in ten years each of the CSOs then in the MWRA sewer service area must either:

- 1) have the treatment now provided at five CSOs; or 2) only activate during 25+year storms and not during smaller storms, as now is the case for five CSOs along Dorchester Bay.

Ten years is an adequate amount of time to do more sewer separation, incorporate more green stormwater infrastructure such as rain gardens, close more CSOs, and plan, permit, and implement the necessary engineering fixes.

For further information or to help, please contact: arlington@savethealewifebrook.org

CURRENTLY ACTIVE CSOs (Map from MA DEP website)



CSOs with treatment: MWR201, MWR203, MWR205, MWR215, SOM007A/MWR205A
 CSOs with 25-year storm control: (BOS081, BOS082, BOS084, BOS085, BOS086)

CSO DISCHARGE AMOUNTS

CSO discharge amounts vary by year, depending on rain amounts and intensity during the year.

- MWRA presentation dated March 2022:
 - CSOs discharge 414 million gallons (MG) of sewage annually.
- MWRA annual CSO report for 2021, dated April 29, 2022:
 - In 2021, CSOs discharged more than 1 BILLION gallons of sewage. Of that amount, more than 190 MG of sewage were not treated before being released to our waterways:
 - Alewife Brook CSOs: **50.74 Million Gallons (MG) untreated**
 - Upper Mystic River CSO: 67.57 MG treated
 - Mystic/Chelsea Confluence CSOs: 220.62 MG; of those **9.35 MG untreated**
 - Upper Inner Harbor CSOs: 466.58 MG; of those **22.44 MG untreated**
 - Lower Inner Harbor CSOs: **18.34 MG untreated**
 - Fort Point Channel CSOs: 124.04 MG; of those **52.47 MG untreated**
 - Reserved Channel CSOs: **1.12 MG untreated**
 - Upper Charles CSOs: **11.12 MG untreated**
 - Lower Charles CSOs: 108.30 MG; of those **20.2 MG untreated**
 - Back Bay Fens CSO: **5.24 MG untreated**

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