

**DECLARATION OF RECESS AND CONTINUANCE
CONCORD ANNUAL TOWN MEETING 2020**

Pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 39, §10A, I declare the Concord Annual Town Meeting scheduled for April 27, 2020 recessed and continued, this 15th day of April, 2020. Following consultation with the Select Board Chair, Town Manager, Police Chief, Fire Chief, Public Works Director, and Director of Public Health, pursuant to the Town Meeting Weather or Public Safety Emergency Protocol jointly adopted by the Moderator and the Select Board on March 19, 2020, I have determined that a public health and safety emergency may prevent voters from attending the meeting on April 27.

The nature of the emergency is the outbreak of the 2019 novel Coronavirus ("COVID-19"). In making this Declaration, I note that on March 10, 2020, Governor Charles D. Baker declared a state of emergency in the Commonwealth and prohibited gatherings of more than 250 people throughout Massachusetts. On March 15, 2020, the Governor reduced the number constituting a prohibited gathering to more than 25 people. Although the Governor's orders explicitly exempt municipal legislative bodies (in other words, town meetings), turnout for Concord town meetings regularly exceeds 250 voters, and the exemption does not diminish the health risk to voters in attending the meeting on April 27. Moreover, on March 19, the Select Board and Director of Public Health recognized the public health threat posed directly to the Town of Concord by the outbreak in the issuance of a Declaration of Emergency for the Town intended to facilitate and expedite the timely, efficient and effective use of public and private resources to protect persons and the community from the impacts of COVID-19.

In addition to consulting with Town Officials, I have reviewed guidance from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Given the rapid spread of the disease, the limited testing conducted to date, the present lack of containment, and the risk to vulnerable populations inherent in public gatherings, I conclude that delaying the Annual Town Meeting is in the best interest of the Town and its citizens.

M.G.L. Ch. 39, §10A, as amended by H4598, signed into law by the Governor on April 3, 2020, mandates that the moderator "shall announce the declaration of recess and continuance as far in advance of the town meeting being continued as possible." It also requires that "any such recess and continuance period shall not exceed 30 days." Thus, under the statute, I do not have the authority to continue the Annual Town Meeting for longer than 30 days from its originally posted date, April 27, 2020, but I do have the authority to issue further continuances, if appropriate. I therefore declare that the continued date of the Annual Town Meeting shall be May 29, 2020, to convene at 7:00 p.m. at the Concord-Carlisle Regional High School. It is highly unlikely that the COVID-19 emergency will have abated by May 29. I intend to declare at least one additional continuance to June 22, 2020, and additional continuances of up to 30 days each as necessary to defer the meeting until it can be held safely. In considering further deferrals, I will continue to follow the Town Meeting Weather or Public Safety Emergency Protocol.

Issued in Concord, Massachusetts at 2:30 p.m.,
this 15th day of April, 2020.



Carmin C. Reiss
Town Moderator