

# The Boston Globe

## State law a step forward in ensuring safe drinking water for all

LETTERS

December 4, 2024

Governor Maura Healey's signing of the Statewide Accelerated Public Health for Every Community (SAPHE 2.0) Act into law marks an important step forward for Massachusetts ("[Law aims to shore up services for public health.](#)" Metro, Nov. 25). The legislation sets new performance standards and provides resources to help the state's patchwork of 351 local boards of health carry out core public health services.

Robbie Goldstein, the state public health commissioner, rightfully said, "Where you live in the state should not determine the access you have to public health resources." Where you live also should not determine the access that you have to [safe drinking water](#).

Currently, residents connected to a public water system can access drinking water that is regulated by the state and routinely monitored for contaminants. Yet about 500,000 residents without access to a public water supply, usually in rural areas, rely on private wells, which are not subject to state standards. Contaminants such as E. coli, PFAS, and uranium can have significant health impacts. Some local health boards have enacted their own regulations; others have not. This piecemeal approach subjects many to contaminated drinking water.

A MassINC poll we sponsored found that [92 percent of residents surveyed](#) believe that state government should play a role in ensuring safe drinking water for all. The passage of SAPHE 2.0 provides the foundation and the momentum with which we can tackle this next frontier.

Amie Shei  
President and CEO  
The Health Foundation of Central Massachusetts  
Worcester