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**Common Cause Presents 2009 e-Government Award to 118 Cities and Towns  
Releases Latest Audit of Local Websites**

**BOSTON** – At a State House event today, Common Cause Massachusetts presented the 2009 e-Government Award to 118 cities and towns from across the Commonwealth. The event is part of Common Cause’s on-going Massachusetts Campaign for Open Government, which annually reviews the Internet presence of all 351 cities and towns in the state. The awards ceremony is also a part of the group’s efforts to honor “Sunshine Week” where media outlets highlight issues of open government.

Communities receiving the 2009 E-Government award were: *Amesbury, Amherst, Andover, Arlington, Ashburnham, Ashland, Barnstable, Becket, Bedford, Bellingham, Belmont, Bolton, Boston, Boxborough, Brookline, Burlington, Cambridge, Carver, Charlton, Chatham, Chelmsford, Chelsea, Chilmark, Concord, Dalton, Dedham, Dennis, Dudley, Dunstable, Duxbury, East Longmeadow, Eastham, Easton, Egremont, Everett, Falmouth, Fitchburg, Freetown, Gardner, Gill, Gloucester, Haverhill, Holden, Holland, Holliston, Holyoke, Hopkinton, Hudson, Ipswich, Kingston, Lakeville, Leominster, Littleton, Longmeadow, Lowell, Malden, Manchester-by-the-Sea, Marlborough, Mashpee, Maynard, Melrose, Methuen, Millbury, Milton, Monterey, Nantucket, Needham, Newburyport, Newton, Norfolk, North Andover, North Reading, Northampton, Northborough, Northbridge, Orange, Orleans, Otis, Paxton, Pembroke, Pepperell, Provincetown, Reading, Rockland, Rockport, Salem, Salisbury, Sandwich, Saugus, Scituate, Sharon, Sheffield, Somerville, South Hadley, Southwick, Springfield, Sterling, Sturbridge, Sudbury, Sutton, Tewksbury, Topsfield, Upton, Walpole, West Boylston, West Springfield, Westford, Westminster, Weston, Westwood, Weymouth, Wilbraham, Williamstown, Winchester, Winthrop, Woburn, Worcester, and Wrentham.*

Of these, 49 qualified for added distinction for also posting a document archive of agendas and minutes, school committee agendas and minutes and those from at least one more committee or board in the municipality, a community calendar listing meetings of boards and commissions, and zoning by-laws. Those municipalities were: *Amherst, Andover, Arlington, Bolton, Boston, Burlington, Chatham, Chelmsford, Concord, Dedham, Duxbury, East Longmeadow, Easton, Falmouth, Freetown, Gardner, Gill, Gloucester, Haverhill, Ipswich, Kingston, Lakeville, Littleton, Lowell,*

*Maynard, Monterey, Nantucket, Needham, Newton, North Andover, North Reading, Provincetown, Reading, Salem, Salisbury, Sandwich, Springfield, Sterling, Sturbridge, Sudbury, Sutton, Tewksbury, West Boylston, Westford, Weston, Westwood, Weymouth, Worcester, and Wrentham.*

“We are pleased to be able to honor so many towns this year,” said Common Cause Massachusetts’ Executive Director Pam Wilmot. “Many communities rose to the challenge and significantly improved their websites over the past year.”

“The foundation of our democracy is built on public access to information about our government,” added Karla de Steuben, a Common Cause board member and founder of the project. “The easier it is to obtain key information, the more likely it is that people will have the tools necessary to effectively participate in government—and hold our elected leaders accountable.”

Common Cause launched the Massachusetts Campaign for Open Government in 2006. At that time, only 24 communities met the campaign’s minimum standards and posted essential governance records, which it defines as: the community governing body’s agenda, the governing body’s minutes, current fiscal year budget, the municipality’s bylaws, code or ordinances, and if applicable, town meeting warrant and town meeting results or minutes.

In addition to the awards presented, Common Cause released a full audit of the Internet presence of all 351 cities and towns. 30 communities, many of them small towns, had no website at all. 25 municipalities have websites but none of the documents posted. 39 communities came very close to earning an award and only had one document missing.

“The Internet is an easy and cost effective way to get information into the hands of citizens. Posting these six key records takes only minutes and costs virtually nothing”, said Wilmot. “Communities that make this information available on the web are providing an important service to their citizens, and we are delighted to be able honor them.”

A copy of the full audit is available at [www.maopengov.org](http://www.maopengov.org) and pictures of the event will be posted on March 20<sup>th</sup>.

#### ABOUT COMMON CAUSE

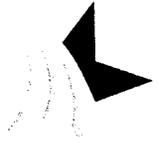
Common Cause Massachusetts is a nonpartisan, nonprofit, government watchdog, dedicated to citizen participation in an open, honest, and accountable government. An independent, member-supported organization, Common Cause has more than 200,000 members nationwide and 10,000 in Massachusetts.

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MASSACHUSETTS CAMPAIGN FOR OPEN GOVERNMENT  
2009 E-GOVERNMENT AWARD

presented to the  
TOWN OF DALTON

*In recognition of its commitment to open government by posting key governance records on its website. To wit: governing body's agenda and minutes, budget, by-laws or ordinances, and town meeting warrant and results.*

  
Signature  
*Rachel S. Gowerleau*  
Date 3.19.09  
Massachusetts  
COMMON CAUSE  
  
Date March 19, 2009