



Dear Governor Patrick,

Two years ago, the PaceMakers Masters Swim Team in Great Barrington, MA decided to address the surprising lack of swim ability admitted by their friends, family members and acquaintances. As passionate adult swimmers, the team used the wide range of experience, knowledge and creativity within its ranks to develop a program to help community members learn to swim for safety and fun. After two years, the team has helped over 50 people learn to swim and enjoy the water with greater confidence. We believe it is time to expand their efforts!

The PaceMakers Swim Team is part of United States Masters Swimming, whose regional jurisdiction is the New England – Local Masters Swim Committee. The NE-LMSC has 3000 dedicated members spread throughout Massachusetts, Vermont, New Hampshire, Maine and Rhode Island. This year, the NE-LMSC has received a \$5000 grant from the Swimming Saves Lives Foundation to organize and run adult learn-to-swim programs taught by USMS volunteers during the month of April. In this, our inaugural year, our goal is to have at least 15 teams offering lessons throughout our five states. In the coming years, we expect this number to increase substantially.

We asked the USMS administration for assistance in having April recognized as Adult Learn to Swim Month in New England. Seeing this as a way to focus national attention on the Center for Disease Control's estimate that 37% of adults in the US cannot swim in water over their heads, the Executive Director has decided to invite every state in the Union to proclaim April as Adult Learn to Swim Month. Our homegrown idea will affect the health and wellbeing of millions across the country in the years to come.

So far, the governors of Washington and Indiana have adopted this proclamation and I hope you will join them and the four other states in our region. As the Chairman of the Board for the NE-LMSC, I ask for the support of the bully pulpit and the power of your pen. With the help of your state government in highlighting this effort, we can promise a sustained, comprehensive and compassionate attempt to make water available for fun, fitness and health to our fellow non-swimming neighbors.

Thank you for your help!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bill Meier".

Bill Meier

Chairman – NE-LMSC

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Dear Governor Patrick,

The Centers for Disease Control estimates that 37% of American adults could not save themselves if they fell in water over their heads. Considering that access to water is such a large part of our lifestyle, the inability to swim affects people's lives in a broad spectrum of ways that has direct implications on American's quality of life.

**ADULTS ASPIRE
TO SWIM
MORE THAN ANY OTHER
ACTIVITY...**

Teaching adults the basic lifesaving skill of swimming is an issue we can cure and the central cause of the Swimming Saves Lives Foundation, the charitable arm of U.S. Masters Swimming. We have provided a grant to The New England Local Masters Swim Committee, the regional arm of USMS, so that it may teach potentially thousands of adults who might not otherwise have the opportunity throughout Vermont, Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts and Rhode Island.

**...YET, 37% CAN NOT
SWIM THE LENGTH
OF A POOL**

We are seeking your help. We are requesting a proclamation from the state of Massachusetts, along with the four other states in the region, designating April as Adult Learn to Swim Month. April is the ideal month for this proclamation as pools have more available space at this time as programs prepare for the summer season. We are not asking for money as our adult learn-to-swim program is funded and operated by the charitable contributions of USMS 60,000 members and supporters.

With the help of state governments in highlighting this lifesaving effort, our goal of making water available for fun, fitness and health to our fellow non-swimming neighbors can be attained.

Thank you for your consideration of this proclamation.

Sincerely,
Rob Butcher
Executive Director
Swimming Saves Lives Foundation

About U.S. Masters Swimming

U.S. Masters Swimming, founded in 1970, is a 501(c)(3) organization that promotes health, wellness, fitness, and competition for adults through swimming. We do so by partnering with more than 1,000 adult swim programs across the country; promoting information via member magazine, [SWIMMER](#), monthly e-newsletters, [STREAMLINES](#), and website, [usms.org](#); and by sanctioning and promoting pool, open water, and virtual events and competitions. Our Swimming Saves Lives Foundation solicits contributions so it may provide grants to our local provides that are providing adult learn to swim programs.

DRAFT PROCLAMATION FOR THE GREAT STATE OF MASSACHUSETTS

- WHEREAS U.S. Masters Swimming (USMS), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that is headquartered in Sarasota, Florida; and*
- WHEREAS USMS represents 60,000 USMS adult members who swim with its more than 1,000 local adult swim programs across the country; and*
- WHEREAS The Centers for Disease Control estimates that 37% of American adults could not save themselves if they fell in water over their heads. With the inability to swim affecting people's lives in a broad spectrum of ways with direct negative implications on American's quality of life; and*
- WHEREAS Adult drowning is a problem we can solve—teaching adults to swim is the central cause of the Swimming Saves Lives Foundation, the charitable arm of USMS.*
- WHEREAS The Swimming Saves Lives Foundation has provided grant resources to New England adult swimming programs so they may teach potentially thousands of adults who might not otherwise have the opportunity especially in Massachusetts; and*
- WHEREAS The grants to the adult swimming programs for the Adult Learn to Swim program is privately provided by the charitable and generous contributions of 60,000 USMS members and supporters; and*
- WHEREAS April is the ideal month for this designation as indoor pools have the greatest availability for such programs before the summer season; and*
- WHEREAS Nationally, April is being recognized as Adult Learn to Swim Month, and with the help of state governments throughout our great nation highlighting this lifesaving effort, the commendable goal of making water available for fun, fitness and health to our fellow non-swimming neighbors can be attained.*

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Deval Patrick, Governor of the State of Massachusetts, do hereby declare April 2014 as Adult Learn to Swim Month in the great State of Massachusetts.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Massachusetts to be affixed at Boston, the Capital, this _____, in the year two thousand fourteen.

Governor Deval Patrick