



## CLIMBING WALL ASSOCIATION, INC. PRESS RELEASE

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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#### **Massachusetts Department of Public Safety -- Delay in Regulatory Enforcement**

Boulder, Colorado June 23, 2006 Massachusetts Department of Public Safety delays enforcement of amusement regulations on climbing facilities until January 1, 2007.

The CWA attended a meeting of the Massachusetts Amusement Advisory Board on June 6th, 2006 in Boston. The meeting was called by the Commissioner of the Department of Public Safety, Thomas Gatzunis, to discuss draft regulations regarding the inspection and licensure of climbing facilities in the Commonwealth. The CWA, and CWA members in attendance, lodged a number of objections to the draft regulations under consideration. The proposed regulations contained a number of technical errors and would have regulated all indoor climbing facilities as challenge courses. Despite significant input from affected constituencies, including the CWA, the DPS has failed to propose a workable set of draft regulations for the climbing industry to date.

As a result of the objections to the existing draft regulations the Department of Public Safety has again postponed the enforcement of any regulations on climbing facilities until January 1, 2007 and has agreed to further revise the draft regulations. This is the second delay in enforcement of regulations on climbing facilities; the initial target date was April 1, 2006, then September 1, 2006. Until new regulations are in effect, challenge courses and climbing facilities may continue to operate without a license or permit from the DPS. A number of organizations had representatives at the June 6th meeting including: the Climbing Wall Association, the American Alpine Club, the Association for Challenge Course Technology, the Boy Scouts of America, Massachusetts YMCA's, REI, school districts, manufacturers such as Brewer's Ledge, and local gyms such as Metro Rock and the Boston Rock Gym. A strong showing from the climbing community helped to contribute to the result.

The Massachusetts Department of Public Safety (DPS) now intends to regulate artificial climbing structures and challenge courses, in all settings, as amusements in the Commonwealth as of January 1st, 2007. The CWA opposes this regulatory approach: our position is that recreational sports facilities are outside of the ambit of amusement licensing statutes. Most states, with the exception of Massachusetts, acknowledge the difference between sporting venues and amusement venues. You can view a copy of the Massachusetts DPS announcement here: <http://www.mass.gov/dps>

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We encourage you to familiarize yourselves with this issue in your state or province, your local regulations, and to share your views about this topic with your public officials.

***About the Climbing Wall Association***

The CWA is a 501(c)(06), non-profit, industry trade association for manufacturers of climbing wall equipment, builders of climbing walls, operators of climbing facilities, and others involved in the climbing industry. Our mission involves providing services, standards, support, and advocacy for our members.

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