

## **World Vesak Day 2025 celebrated at the Massachusetts State House and the announcement of a New England Buddhist Council**

On Tuesday, May 13, 2025, the Massachusetts State House for the second time hosted a historic celebration of Vesak, drawing nearly 65 attendees to honor the most sacred occasion in the Buddhist calendar. Observed on the full moon day in May, Vesak commemorates the birth, enlightenment, and passing away of the Buddha and his message of compassion and peace.

The event was co-organized by State Representative Carmine Gentile of the Middlesex 13th District, Bhante Pannasiri of the New England Buddhist Vihara and Meditation Center, and the Asian Caucus of the Massachusetts State House. A key highlight of the celebration was the adoption of a resolution by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts officially recognizing Vesak Day 2025, honoring the cultural and spiritual contributions of the Buddhist community across the state.

Monks, nuns, and lay practitioners from many Buddhist traditions in the Greater Boston area participated in the historic event. Communities represented included those from Cambodia, India, Japan, Lao, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Tibet and Vietnam. The program featured speeches on the timeless teachings of the Buddha, reflections on loving-kindness, and aspirations for global peace.

During the event, Bhante Pannasiri announced the establishment of the New England Buddhist Council (NEBC). The aim of NEBC is to foster unity and collaboration among the many Buddhist institutions and organizations in the New England area with the collaboration of many Buddhist institutions represented at the celebratory event. The NEBC will bring together the wisdom of spiritual leaders, academics, and social leaders into one forum, enriching all communities especially the younger generations through shared wisdom.”

