

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

MASSACHUSETTS SENATE
STATE HOUSE, BOSTON 02133-1054

James B. Eldridge

STATE SENATOR
Middlesex & Worcester District
ROOM 413-A, STATE HOUSE
TEL. (617) 722-1120

**Chair, Joint Committee on
Housing**

Vice Chair, Global Warming and
Climate Change
Committees on Mental Health and
Substance Abuse
& Telecommunications, Utilities &
Energy

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

CONTACT: Megan Montgomery

(617) 722-1120, megan.montgomery@masenate.gov

5/31/2013

SENATOR ELDRIDGE ANNOUNCES HELP4OK CHALLENGE FOR NATIONAL DAY OF CIVIC HACKING

*Challenge to Tap into Local Efforts for Crisis Management Response and Inspire
Civic Engagement*

BOSTON-- Senator Eldridge (D-Acton) will join federal government departments, agencies and other national partners to take part in a National Day of Civic Hacking this weekend as cities across the nation band together to promote transparency, participation and collaboration among government, startups and citizens. The Help4OK project proposed by Senator Eldridge will build on local efforts for crisis management response based on a website for Oklahoma tornado victims to connect victims in need of food, shelter, medical supplies and other emergency resources.

"I'm pleased to take part in the National Day of Civic Hacking to enrich the collaboration between technology leaders and community activists and improve the efficiency of data sharing and transparency in government," said Senator Eldridge. "This easy-to-use website will be a reusable resource that will provide others in urgent need of food, shelter and medical supplies with relief during natural disasters and other statewide emergencies such as the Boston Marathon bombings and Hurricane Irene and Sandy."

The goal of the Help4OK challenge is to design a website that is 100% mobile friendly and hosted publicly on drupal.org. The site should be easy to install and set up quickly after a disaster without additional custom code or significant technical expertise. The Help4OK challenge proposal is available at <http://hackforchange.org/challenge/help4ok-0>.

Random hacks of Kindness, Code for America, and Innovation Endeavors, an investment firm, are partnering with the U.S. Census Bureau, NASA, and the U.S. Department of Labor to lead the event. Civic Hacking Day's website lists events are currently planned for 27 cities. A showcase of projects that emerge from the National Day of Hacking will be featured at an event at the White House at the end of July in tandem with President Obama's focus on STEM education.

National Civic Hacking Day will tap into the talents of citizens of all skillsets throughout the country to work together to make a positive impact in their town or city during the weekend-long celebration of civic engagement and technology. The event will begin on Saturday at 10:00 a.m. at Kanter Media on the 6th floor located at 501 Boylston Street and end approximately at 4:00 p.m. on Sunday.