

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR MURRAY TO LAUNCH 4TH ANNUAL VETERANS TOUR ON INDEPENDENCE DAY

Lieutenant Governor Murray scheduled to participate in July 4th Watch Festivities aboard the USS WASP; 9 day Veterans Tour will continue in local communities across Massachusetts

BOSTON – Monday, July 2, 2012 – Lieutenant Governor Timothy Murray will launch the Patrick-Murray Administration's 4th Annual Massachusetts Awareness for Support and Services (MASS) Veterans Tour on Independence Day. Lieutenant Governor Murray will join U.S. Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus for festivities aboard the USS WASP currently docked in the Boston Harbor. After the Fourth of July and War of 1812 Bicentennial commemoration events, Lieutenant Governor Murray will continue the 9 day tour in local communities across Massachusetts. *(Full tour schedule follows.)*

"Massachusetts is proud to support newly returning Veterans as well as Veterans of all eras, and I am especially honored to lead our annual Veterans tour to promote resources available to our servicemen and women," said Lieutenant Governor Murray, Chair of the Governor's Advisory Council for Veterans' Services. "As we continue to expand the range of services in Massachusetts, we need to take the extra step to raise awareness and ensure our Veterans and their families gain access to the resources and benefits they have rightfully earned. This upcoming tour will highlight these resources, and we remain committed to increasing awareness for Veterans' services throughout the year."

Building on the success of three previous tours, the 4th Annual MASS Veterans Tour will promote services offered by the state as well as local and federal government and private and non-profit organizations for Veterans and their families. Among the range of services to highlight, Lieutenant Governor Murray will especially promote new initiatives launched within the last year including the work of the Military Asset and Security Strategy Task Force to protect the jobs and mission at the Commonwealth's six military bases. As part of the comprehensive plans to increase employment opportunities for Veterans announced last November, Lieutenant Governor Murray will join the Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce on July 12 for an announcement supporting the hiring Veterans in Massachusetts. During the tour, Lieutenant Governor Murray will also join the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to highlight a partnership which has successfully provided increased housing assistance to help end homelessness for Veterans and transition Veterans back to the workforce.

"I am proud to join Lt. Governor Murray on the 4th Annual MASS Veterans tour," said Department of Veterans' Services Secretary Coleman Nee. "Massachusetts provides the most comprehensive and innovative benefits and services for veterans and their families. The continued support of the Patrick-Murray administration ensures the Commonwealth will remain a national leader and this tour brings attention to the issues facing our returning veterans while highlighting the extensive programs and services available to assist our veterans and their families."

Most recently, Governor Deval Patrick signed enabling legislation known as the VALOR Act (Veterans' Access, Livelihood, Opportunity and Resources) on May 31. Among other provisions, the VALOR Act provides greater access to financial assistance for small businesses; affords greater opportunities for service-disabled Veterans to participate in public projects; makes it easier for children of military personnel to transfer between school districts and states; and expands supports from the Massachusetts Military Family Relief Fund to Gold Star Families.

The Department of Veterans' Services and the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative recently launched a new web portal, www.MassVetsAdvisor.org, providing Veterans and military families with a one-stop shop and improved access to services such as employment, education, and medical services. During the tour, Lieutenant Governor Murray will lead two roundtable discussions with Veterans and military families in Newton and Chicopee for the Department of Veterans' Services to demonstrate the benefits of the new web portal.

As the Chairman of the Governor's Advisory Council on Veterans' Services, Lieutenant Governor Murray has led a group of Veterans and advocates for the last five years to promote and improve the Administration's outreach and service delivery to Veterans and their families.

Staff from the Department of Veterans' Services or Lieutenant Governor Murray's Office will be available at each event during the tour to answer questions about Veterans' programs and benefits in the Commonwealth.

[Watch a two minute video recapping the 2009 Inaugural Tour.](#)

4th Annual MASS Veterans Tour Schedule:

Additional events will be added between the launch and July 12. For up to date details, please contact the Lieutenant Governor's Office at ltgovoffice@state.ma.us 617-725-4005.

JULY 4

8:30 a.m. Lieutenant Governor Murray joins U.S. Secretary of the Navy Mabus for a breakfast ceremony at the Constitution Museum and offers remarks commemorating Independence Day and the Bicentennial Anniversary of the War of 1812.

USS Constitution Museum, Pier One, Building 22, Charlestown Navy Yard, Charlestown

11:00 a.m. Lieutenant Governor Murray joins U.S. Secretary of the Navy Mabus aboard the USS WASP to watch July 4th festivities and the Blue Angels, the U.S. Navy's flight demonstration squadron. USS WASP (LHD 1)

North Jetty Pier, Boston Marine Industrial Park, 40 Fid Kennedy Avenue, South Boston

JULY 9

9:00 a.m. Lieutenant Governor Murray tours the Northeast Veteran Training and Rehabilitation Center.

Maclachlan Way (Directly behind Mount Wachusett Community College), Gardner

11:00 a.m. Lieutenant Governor Murray participates in a bridge dedication ceremony for Army PFC Jonathan Roberge in Leominster.

Leominster Veterans Center, 100 West Street, Leominster

JULY 10

11:00 a.m. Lieutenant Governor Murray offers remarks at a meeting of the Interagency Task Force on Veterans Hiring (CLOSED PRESS).

One Ashburton Place, 10th Floor, Video Conference Room, Boston

3:30 p.m. Lieutenant Governor Murray leads a Roundtable Discussion on services and benefits for Veterans and Military Families.

Newton Free Library, Druker Room, 330 Homer Street, Newton Center

JULY 11

10:00 a.m. Lieutenant Governor Murray tours the Veterans Center at Bunker Hill Community College and highlights opportunities in higher education for Veterans.

Bunker Hill Community College, 250 New Rutherford Avenue, Charlestown

JULY 12

7:30 a.m. Lieutenant Governor Murray joins the Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce for an announcement relative to hiring Veterans.

Boston Harbor Hotel, 70 Rowes Wharf, Boston

2:00 p.m. Lieutenant Governor Murray joins the Associated Industries of Massachusetts to highlight Veterans' employment initiatives.

Holyoke

3:30 p.m. Lieutenant Governor Murray leads a Roundtable Discussion on services and benefits for Veterans and Military Families.

Chicopee

War of 1812 Navy Week Celebration

From June 28th through July 5th, the US Navy, Coast Guard, Coalition navies, OpSail, Harborfest, and the City of Boston are joining forces to celebrate the rich legacy and continuing contributions of our sea services with Boston Navy Week. Boston Harbor is the host of visiting ships from across the world. The primary locations for visiting ships are the Charlestown Navy Yard and the South Boston Waterfront. In addition to the visiting ships, the United States Navy's Blue Angels will provide an aerial demonstration over Boston Harbor during the USS Constitution's annual Fourth of July turnaround. This aerial

demonstration is scheduled to start at noon on Wednesday, July 4th while Lieutenant Governor Murray and Secretary Mabus are on the USS WASP. For more information regarding the Boston events celebrating the Bicentennial of the War of 1812 please visit: www.navyweek.org.

Massachusetts Veterans' Services

More than 385,000 Veterans currently live in Massachusetts, including 37,000 men and women who have served in Iraq and Afghanistan since 9/11. The work of the Governor's Advisory Council on Veterans' Services and its partnership with the Massachusetts Department of Veterans' Services, other state agencies, and Veterans' organizations has led to many services and benefits for Veterans. Together the Patrick-Murray Administration has worked to ensure newly returning Veterans, as well as Massachusetts' aging Veteran population, continue to receive quality health, education benefits, housing and employment services to honor their service.

To learn more about resources and services for Massachusetts Veterans and military families, visit the Patrick-Murray Administration's Department of Veterans' Services: www.mass.gov/veterans or visit the new web portal: www.MassVetsAdvisor.org.