

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
STATE HOUSE • BOSTON, MA 02133
(617) 725-4000

DEVAL L. PATRICK
GOVERNOR

TIMOTHY P. MURRAY
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

July 31, 2012

The Honorable John Boehner
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Harry Reid
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Speaker Boehner, Leader Pelosi, Majority Leader Reid and Minority Leader McConnell:

There appears to be rare bipartisan agreement about the need to avoid sequestration - the \$1.2 trillion automatic spending reductions that are scheduled to begin taking effect in January. While all parties agree that sequestration should be avoided, the debate over how highlights two contrasting visions for our nation. We believe in a balanced solution, one that begins to address our nation's deficit while ensuring that struggling individuals and families are not making all the sacrifices.

Based on Congressional Budget Office estimates, under sequestration Massachusetts is scheduled to lose over \$152 million in non-defense federal funding in FY 2013, which would have a devastating impact on our communities. Our school systems would lose a total of over \$22 million in special education funding relative to FY 2012 levels. Head Start in Massachusetts would see almost \$10 million in cuts, as would our Low Income Home Energy Assistance program, which helps families and individuals in need heat their homes. Federal funding for public housing in Massachusetts would be reduced by over \$15 million. Finally, the Massachusetts

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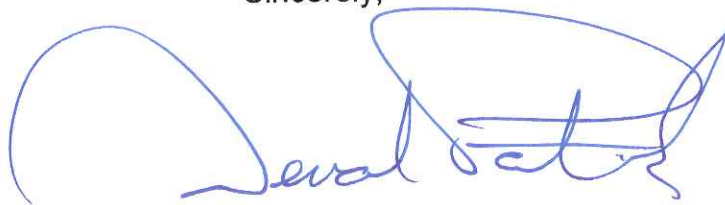
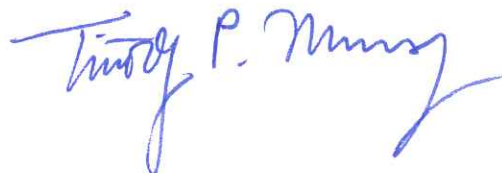
defense industry would face an estimated \$1.4 billion in cuts. In total, these reductions would lead to job loss and economic uncertainty.

For these reasons, we support responsible plans, such as President Obama's FY2013 budget, that avoid sequestration through a combination of fair revenue increases and responsible spending reductions. The President's plan would promote economic growth and reduce the deficit by more than \$4 trillion, a far greater reduction than under sequestration.

Republicans, on the other hand, have offered a decidedly different vision for working families. Congressional Republicans plan to eliminate sequestration solely through cuts to the safety net and other vital non-defense discretionary programs. For instance, the House Republican plan would cut the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) which provides food stamps to low-income families, people with disabilities, and older Americans, by \$36 billion. While asking working families to make all the sacrifices, Republicans continue to resist any effort to raise additional revenues by returning tax rates to the levels of the booming 1990s.

Sequestration threatens to derail the steady economic improvement that we continue to see in Massachusetts and across the country. It is clear that the time to act is now, yet it would be short-sighted to address our fiscal problems with an unbalanced approach that solely relies on cuts to programs that help struggling families. We urge you to work together to enact a responsible and balanced alternative.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Deval Patrick". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping initial "D" and a long, horizontal flourish extending to the right.A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Timothy P. Murray". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent "T" and "M".