

Appendix A: Press Releases and Speeches

PATRICK-MURRAY ADMINISTRATION CREATES THE GOVERNOR'S ADVISORY COUNCIL ON VETERANS' SERVICES

Council to advise Governor and Secretaries of Health and Human Services and Veterans' Services

BOSTON- Sunday, April 15, 2007 - Governor Deval Patrick and Lieutenant Governor Timothy Murray today announced the creation of the Governor's Advisory Council on Veterans' Services to guide the Commonwealth on how best to assist Massachusetts veterans.

"The citizens of Massachusetts were among the first to take up arms in defense of our liberty and the Commonwealth today remains extremely proud of our men and women who continue to answer the nation's call to arms," said Governor Patrick. "We recognize that our veterans, particularly those with service-related disabilities, have particular needs as a result of the sacrifices of military service. The establishment of this Council will assist us in better understanding and responding to the immediate needs of our veterans of all wars, including recent conflicts such as the Gulf War, Afghanistan and Iraq."

The Governor's Advisory Council, created by executive order, is meant to review and assess state and federal statutes and programs relating to veterans, and the delivery of services to veterans, including health care, education, housing, outreach, training and retraining. The Council also will educate the people of the Commonwealth and their elected and appointed officials regarding issues of importance to the Commonwealth's veterans.

The council, which is to consist of up to 35-members, will be chaired by Lieutenant Governor Murray and work closely with the Department of Veterans' Services.

"It is always important for us to honor our veterans and to respond to their needs," Lieutenant Governor Murray said. "This is especially so at a critical time such as now, when we are welcoming home a large number of combat veterans from Iraq and Afghanistan. This council will be a tremendous help in ensuring that state government is fully aware of, and responsive to, the needs of our veterans of all ages and of all wars."

"Governor Patrick, Lieutenant Governor Murray and I believe that this council is the best way to hear from veterans and learn about both their met and unmet needs. We look forward to input from a broad cross-section of veterans who will be able to advise the council about the service improvements needed and deserved by those who have served us so well," said Tom Kelley, Secretary of the Department of Veterans' Services.

The civilian council members will be unpaid and selected by the governor from the numerous organizations serving veterans in Massachusetts, including the American Legion, AMVETS, Disabled American Veterans, Employer Support for the Guard and Reserve, Gold Star Mothers, Gold Star Wives, Governor's Advisory Committee on Women Veterans, Marine Corps League, Massachusetts Municipal

Association, National League of Families, Organization of Afro-American Veterans, Paralyzed Veterans of America, providers of veterans homelessness services, provider of veterans outreach services, veterans of Operation Enduring Freedom and/or Iraqi Freedom, the Veterans Benefits Clearinghouse, Veterans of Foreign Wars, and Veterans Service Officers.

The following officials, or their designees, shall serve as members of the Council: The Secretaries of Elder Affairs, Health and Human Services, Housing and Economic Development, and Labor and Workforce Development; the Commissioners of Education, Mental Health and the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission; the Chancellor of the Board of Higher Education or another official representing education and training issues; the Commandant of the Massachusetts Soldiers' Home in Chelsea and the Superintendent of the Holyoke Soldiers' Homes; the Adjutant General of the Massachusetts National Guard; and the Director of the Division of Career Services.

Additional members may be appointed as the governor deems appropriate. The United States Department of Veterans Affairs and the United States Department of Labor also will be invited to participate.

PATRICK-MURRAY ADMINISTRATION AND ATTORNEY GENERAL COAKLEY TO ENSURE VETERANS RECEIVE BENEFITS THEY DESERVE

Letters sent to all MA cities and towns reminding them of their obligations to advise veterans of their rights and benefits

BOSTON - Wednesday, January 30, 2008 - Continuing the Commonwealth's commitment to providing some of the most comprehensive veterans' benefits in the country, Lieutenant Governor Tim Murray, Secretary of Veterans' Services Thomas Kelley and Attorney General Martha Coakley are reminding municipal leaders of their obligations to veterans in their communities.

In a letter sent to municipal leaders, the Administration and Attorney General Coakley are notifying cities and towns of the obligations they have under Chapter 115 of the Massachusetts General Laws to appoint a Veterans' Service Officer (VSO).

A full-time VSO, whose duties include locating veterans, advising them of their rights and benefits, and helping them apply for and receive state and federal benefits, is required in cities and towns with populations over 12,000; towns with populations under 12,000 may employ a part-time VSO.

"With our nation at war, we must do all we can to thank and support these brave men and women when they return home," said Lieutenant Governor Murray. "Since the Civil War, Massachusetts has had a long history of supporting our veterans. This begins in our cities and towns with the local Veterans' Service Officer."

Regardless of full or part-time status, VSOs are the primary contact for veterans and their families with questions about benefits such as housing, fuel assistance, employment and vocational opportunities, medical care, education, and burial expenses. They are also responsible for pro-actively and regularly seeking out veterans to advise them of all benefits to which they are entitled, and posting and holding regular office hours.

"The Commonwealth provides some of the most comprehensive veterans' benefits in the country in areas such as housing, fuel assistance, employment and vocational opportunities, medical care, and education," said Attorney General Coakley. "We are grateful to the men and women who have made tremendous sacrifices to serve our country and want to ensure that veterans and their families receive the benefits and assistance to which they are entitled when they return home."

"Massachusetts is known nationwide as a leader for the care and support we provide to our veterans. A critical component of that effort is the Veterans' Service Officer representing every city or town who acts as the primary point of contact for veterans in that community," said Thomas G. Kelley, Secretary of Veterans' Services. "We appreciate the hard work and dedication that these veteran service officers bring to their posts and we strongly encourage all of our local governments to support them and ensure that

their municipality is in compliance with all of the laws and regulations of the Commonwealth regarding our veterans."

The Commonwealth is asking Mayors, City and Town Managers, and Selectmen to ensure that their city or town is in full compliance with Chapter 115 and to provide the Massachusetts Department of Veterans' Services (DVS) with the name of their VSO by March 1, 2008. The DVS is available to assist with compliance issues in this area. For any questions about bringing your city or town into compliance, please contact the DVS at 617-210-5480.

PATRICK-MURRAY ADMINISTRATION SIGNS LEGISLATION ESTABLISHING COMMISSION TO IMPROVE MENTAL HEALTH CARE FOR VETERANS

First of its kind commission will study effects of war on the mental health of Massachusetts Veterans

BOSTON- Friday April 18, 2008-The Patrick-Murray Administration has signed legislation creating the Commission to Study the Hidden Wounds of War on Returning Massachusetts Service Members, a group that will study and investigate the mental health effects of war on those citizens of Massachusetts returning from active duty. A study released this week by the RAND Corporation estimates that 300,000 U.S. troops are suffering from depression or post-traumatic stress from serving in Iraq and Afghanistan. "We cannot allow the brave men and women who serve our country to struggle with treatable mental health problems," said Lieutenant Governor Tim Murray, who chairs Governor's Advisory Council on Veteran Services. "This Administration is committed to ensuring that our veterans are cared for completely. We have already started to put the necessary supports in place including the recent launch of the Statewide Advocacy for Veterans' Empowerment (SAVE) program, and now, through this Commission."

In addition to studying the effects of war, the Commission will also establish a mental health treatment program for Massachusetts National Guard members, a state military family leave policy for caregivers and a statewide education training program to assist first responders in recognizing the early warning signs of post-traumatic stress disorder. The Department of Veterans' Services SAVE team is currently in the early stages of training first responders.

"At a time when our Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom veterans are returning not only with physical injuries, but with many unseen, hard to diagnose Post Traumatic Stress Disorders and Traumatic Brain Injuries, we will stand with our veterans and their families to ensure the veterans are treated with the dignity and respect they have earned," said Department of Veterans' Services Secretary Tom Kelley.

The Administration worked collaboratively with Representative Anthony Verga (D-Gloucester) and Senator Thomas McGee (D-Lynn), as well as other legislative leaders to establish this Commission.

The Governor will appoint five members to the 15-member Commission. Other members will include representatives from the Massachusetts Senate and House, the Adjutant General of the Massachusetts National Guard, the Commissioner of Probation, the Secretary of Veterans' Services, the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), the Massachusetts Veterans' Service Officers Association, the Massachusetts District Attorneys Association, and the Massachusetts Chiefs of Police Association.

"I applaud the Governor for recognizing the need to take Legislative action to provide the best possible mental health care to soldiers," said Representative Anthony Verga (D-Gloucester), House Chairman of the Veterans & Federal Affairs Committee and chief sponsor of House Bill 4526. "Through this Commission, Massachusetts could become one of a handful of states to permanently legislate a comprehensive post-deployment care program for both our Wounded Warriors and their families."

"Our men and women returning from war in Iraq and Afghanistan have faced incredible challenges abroad, and will also be faced with incredible challenges at home," said Senator Thomas McGee (D-Lynn). "We know that many soldiers coming back struggle with emotional and psychological wounds, in addition to physical ones. The commission, championed by Senator Stephen Brewer (D-Barre) and Representative Verga, will ensure that policy-makers are well informed of the extent to which our veterans are struggling with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, and make certain that those afflicted by PTSD receive the treatment and support they deserve."

Patrick-Murray Administration Announces Home Loan Program for Massachusetts Military Veterans

"Home for the Brave" program will provide safe, affordable mortgages and special services for qualified veterans

BOSTON- July 2, 2008 - The Patrick-Murray Administration announced "Home for the Brave" today, a new mortgage program that will offer safe, affordable home loans for Massachusetts veterans. The program will include mortgage insurance that will pay a veteran's monthly mortgage payment for up to six months in the event he or she becomes unemployed or is deployed on active duty. Closing cost assistance will be provided through a grant by Fannie Mae (FNM/NYSE).

"Brave men and women from Massachusetts are serving their country overseas to fight for our freedom and to protect our way of life," said Governor Patrick. "They deserve every opportunity to live the American Dream, and this program will help deserving veterans do just that."

"For all the sacrifices they make on our behalf, it is critical that we do everything we can to help Massachusetts' veterans reach the dream of home ownership," said Lieutenant Governor Tim Murray, who chairs the Governor's Advisory Committee on Veterans Services. "The Home for the Brave mortgage shows our appreciation to our veterans while also providing them with the peace of mind of knowing they will have assistance if they are redeployed."

The "Home for the Brave" program was developed by MassHousing, the state's affordable housing bank, in consultation with the Veterans Housing Sub-Committee of the Governor's Advisory Committee on Veterans Services.

Veterans will have access to a low- or no-down payment mortgages from participating banks and credit unions. So far forty-two lending institutions have committed \$187 million in private funding to the program. Fannie Mae has provided a \$300,000 grant to assist with closing costs for the first 200 veterans who take advantage of the program.

The "Home for the Brave" program mortgage offers qualified veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces living in Massachusetts:

- 100-percent financing with no down payment required for single-family homes or condominiums, 97-percent financing for two, three and four-family properties.
- Discounted interest rates fixed for a minimum of 10 years.
- Loans come with MassHousing's MI Plus™ mortgage insurance, which will pay the principal and interest on a veteran's mortgage for up to six months in the event of a job loss or deployment.

- Disabled veterans can access funds from the U.S. Veterans Administration for accessibility upgrades to their homes.
- Borrowers can earn up to 135 percent of the median income for the city or town in which they are purchasing a home. Income limits vary, but may be as high as \$111,240.

MassHousing will also insure veterans' loans with its MI Plus™ mortgage insurance, which will allow veterans to receive 100-percent financing with no down payment for single-family homes and condominiums. MI Plus™ will also pay the principal and interest on a veteran's mortgage for up to six months in the event of a job loss or deployment.

To be eligible for a Home for the Brave mortgage, one must be a veteran as defined under M.G.L. c. 4, sec. 7, cl. 43rd as amended by the Acts of 2005, ch. 130. Borrowers must also have good credit and meet other underwriting standards. There are an estimated 400,000 veterans in Massachusetts, according to the Department of Veterans Services.

"Taking the burden of worry from the shoulders of the service men and women who are serving this great nation of ours is the right thing to do. We've read about military families losing their homes because they can't make their mortgage payments. This program will lessen the chance that it will happen here in Massachusetts. We welcome the Home for the Brave mortgage program as another state benefit in this great Commonwealth," said Secretary Tom Kelley of the Department of Veterans' Services.

The MassHousing-approved lenders participating in the "Home for the Brave" program are:

Avidia Bank

Bank of Canton

BankFive of Fall River

BayStateSavings

Bank Belmont Savings Bank

Cape Ann Savings Bank

Cape Cod Five Cents Savings Bank

Chicopee Savings Bank

Community Bank

Country Bank for Savings

Crescent Credit Union

Danvers Bank

Dedham Savings Bank

East Boston Savings Bank

Fall River Five Cents Savings Bank

Fidelity Cooperative Bank

First Citizen's Federal Credit Union

Greenfield Cooperative Bank

Greylock Federal Credit Union

Haverhill Bank

Hoosiac Bank

Meetinghouse Cooperative Bank

Metropolitan Credit Union

Middlesex Savings Bank

Milford National Bank

MilfordFederal

Monson Savings Bank

Mt. Washington Bank

North Easton Savings Bank

Norwood Cooperative Bank

Peoples Bank of Holyoke

Randolph Savings Bank

Rollstone Bank and Trust

Saugus Bank

Scituate Federal Savings Bank

South Shore Bank

St. Mary's Credit Union

Stoneham Bank

Watertown Savings Bank

Webster Five Cents Saving Bank

Weymouth Bank

Winter Hill Federal Savings Bank

"Our veterans are the backbone of our state and our nation," said MassHousing Executive Director Thomas R. Gleason. "We commend Governor Patrick and Lieutenant Governor Murray for their dedication in creating quality affordable housing for our veterans and commend the numerous lending institutions that immediately stepped forward to commit their private funding to make this very important program a reality for the hundreds of thousands of Massachusetts men and women who have served on our behalf."

"Home for the Brave is another example of the affordable housing leadership Massachusetts residents have come to expect from the Patrick Administration. Providing our veterans with access to affordable homeownership opportunities isn't just good business, it's the right thing to do for people who've made huge sacrifices for our country." said Jeff Hayward, SVP of Fannie Mae's Community Lending group. "Fannie Mae commends Governor Patrick and MassHousing for developing such a unique and comprehensive program, combining preferred financing and mortgage terms with additional benefits from key banking partners. We are honored to participate."

For more information, go to www.masshousing.com.

Patrick-Murray Administration Honors Women Veterans in State House Ceremony

BOSTON-Friday, November 7, 2008 - To honor the sacrifice, bravery, and dedication of women who have served in the military, the Massachusetts Women Veterans' Network hosted its fourth annual "Women Are Veterans Too!" ceremony, Friday, November 7, in the State House's Memorial Hall of Flags.

"Today, thousands of Massachusetts women are actively defending our nation. We owe these women - and those who have come before them - our heartfelt thanks and support," said Governor Deval Patrick.

"I applaud the good work being done by the Department of Veterans' Services and the Women Veterans' Network to serve these brave individuals."

The keynote address at this year's ceremony was given by Brigadier General Marie. T. Field who retired last year as the highest ranking woman to serve in the Massachusetts Air National Guard. The "Outstanding Woman Veteran Award" was presented to this year's honorees, Phyllis Santangelo Galeaz of Lynn and Kathleen M. Splinter of Fall River.

"It is an honor to recognize the bravery of the many extraordinary women veterans who have served our country," said Lieutenant Governor Timothy Murray, Chair of the Governor's Advisory Council on Veterans' Affairs. "Our appreciation and gratitude for their deeds of courage is immense."

"Outstanding Woman Veteran" award recipient Phyllis Santangelo Galeaz entered the Army Nurse Corps program in 1941. She was stationed for three years in the jungles of New Guinea during World War II. She is an active member of her community and the American Legion Post in her town.

"Outstanding Woman Veteran" award recipient Kathleen M. Splinter joined the Army Nurse Corps in 1966. She served in Vietnam for a year and received the Bronze Star. She is currently the president of Welcome Home Housing, which purchases, builds, and develops apartments for disabled veterans. Nominations for this award were collected from across Massachusetts and were reviewed based on military service, contributions to the community, participation in veterans' organizations, and special efforts to enhance the lives of women.

"Today is a great day to show our appreciation for the Massachusetts women who have served our country and for those who continue to serve today," said Massachusetts Department of Veterans' Services Secretary Thomas Kelley. "The Department of Veterans' Services works with veteran and community organizations throughout the state to assure that our veterans are being honored and receiving the benefits and services that they have earned. Women veterans are a special group, and through the excellent work of the Women Veterans' Network we are given the chance to reach out to women veterans in the Commonwealth."

About the Women Veterans' Network:

The Women Veterans' Network of the Massachusetts Department of Veterans' Services, established in 1997, acts as the central resource for women veterans in Massachusetts. The Women Veterans' Network

has a database of 13,000 women veterans who receive a biannual newsletter with information on benefits, programs, and events for women veterans.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR MURRAY ANNOUNCES A TWO WEEK STATEWIDE TOUR ON MILITARY AND VETERANS ISSUES

The Chairman of the Governor's Advisory Council on Veterans' Services seeks to raise awareness of the needs of the more than 430,000 veterans living in the Commonwealth

 [Read about the Governor's Advisory Council on Veterans' Services](#)

BOSTON- Monday, June 15, 2009 - Lieutenant Governor Timothy P. Murray today announced the details of the Patrick-Murray Administration's 2009 MASS Veterans Tour: Massachusetts Awareness for Support and Services. Over the course of two weeks, he will participate in various meetings, tours and events relative to military and veterans issues.

Starting on Monday June 15th and continuing through Monday June 29th, the Lieutenant Governor will continue and expand his work on behalf of the Patrick-Murray Administration as an advocate for veterans and their families. As the Chairman of Governor Patrick's Advisory Council on Veterans' Services, he has led a group of veterans and veterans' advocates for the last two years as they have worked to promote and improve the Administration's outreach and service delivery to veterans and their families.

"Those who have served to protect the ideals of the United States of America and keep us safe deserve to be taken care of when they return home," said Lieutenant Governor Murray. "Over the next two weeks, I will travel across the Commonwealth to meet with veterans and their family members to hear about their needs and how we can better support them."

"The Commonwealth of Massachusetts, under the Patrick-Murray administration, supports and advocates on the behalf of our over 430,000 veterans and families. While Massachusetts leads the nation in offering comprehensive benefits and services to our veterans, unfortunately many still do not know all of the benefits available to them," said Secretary of Veterans' Services Thomas Kelley. "Over the next two weeks, Lieutenant Governor Murray will be taking the time to promote these services, while listening to veterans and advocates about what else needs to be done. I am grateful to the Lieutenant Governor for his continued commitment to those of us that have served this Nation and our families."

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

 [View the Tour's Website and get Maps and Directions to Each Event](#)

MASS Veterans' Tour Schedule

June 15

- Announcement and discussion of the tour on the Jordan Levy Show, 580 AM, WTAG, 5:30 - 6:00 p.m.

June 16

- Meets with recently returned veterans and their family members, UMASS-Boston, Campus Center, 5:00 p.m.
- Participates in the Department of Veterans' Services "We Owe You" Webcast, UMASS-Boston, Campus Center, 7:00 p.m.

June 19

- Visits the Woburn Career Center and meet with Veterans Employment Representatives, Woburn, 12:00 p.m.

June 20

- Attends the First Annual 65th Puerto Rican Infantry Regiment Commemoration Ceremony, Worcester, 12:00 p.m.

June 22

- Participates in the National Guard Readiness Center Groundbreaking, Methuen, 11:00 a.m.
- Visits the Veterans Northeast Outreach Center Visit, Haverhill, 10:00 - 10:30 a.m.

June 23

- Attends the Grand Opening of the National Guard Military and Family Support Center, Wellesley, 11:00 a.m.

June 24

- Chairs the Governor's Advisory Council on Veterans' Services Meeting, State House, Boston, 9:30 a.m.
- Joins MA Local Heroes Care Packages for Troops packing event, Knights of Columbus, Wilmington, 7:00 p.m.

June 25

- Visits the Massachusetts National Cemetery, Bourne 2:00 p.m.

June 26

- Welcomes returning troops at the Hanscom Airforce Base Homecoming Heroes Celebration, 2:30 p.m.

June 27

- Speaks at the First Annual Conference for Women Veterans, Holyoke Community College, Holyoke, 9:00 a.m.
- Visits the Agawam State Veterans Cemetery, 10:20 a.m.

June 28

- Attends the National Guard Post Mobilization Event, Natick, 12:30 - 1:00 p.m.
- Participates in the U.S. Post Office Dedication for Lance Corporal Eric Valdepenas, Seekonk, 2:00 p.m.

June 29

- Tour Wrap-Up Meeting with Department of Veterans' Services staff, DVS Offices, Boston, 11:00 a.m.

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 have led to affordable, no-downpayment mortgage financing for veterans run by MassHousing, a 24 hour suicide prevention and benefit referral hotline run by the Department of Veterans' Services, and a pilot program to help veterans and their family members quit smoking run by the Department of Public Health. For more information or to request free patches before June 30th, visit <http://makesmokinghistory.org/veterans/> or call 1-800-Try-To-Stop.

The Commonwealth is a nationwide leader in the services provided for veterans and is continuing its commitment to advancing their opportunities. Every city and town in the state is required by law to have a Veterans Services Officer who is available to meet with all veterans to discuss what opportunities they qualify for. Also, through Chapter 115 Benefits, the Commonwealth provides financial and medical assistance for veterans and their family members. Those eligible receive financial assistance for food, shelter, clothing, housing supplies, and medical care.

PATRICK-MURRAY ADMINISTRATION ANNOUNCES AWARD OF FEDERAL GRANT TO MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' SERVICES TO ASSIST UNEMPLOYED VETERANS

WORCESTER - Thursday, July 02, 2009 - The Patrick-Murray administration today announced that the Massachusetts Department of Veterans' Services has been awarded a \$300,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Labor to address the problem of homelessness among Massachusetts veterans.

The grant is part of the U.S. Department of Labor's Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Program (HVRP), which works to expedite the reintegration of homeless veterans into the labor force. The HVRP program is the only federal program whose sole focus is the employment of homeless veterans. The grant will be used to fund programs that involve emergency shelter, job counseling and referrals, and employment assistance.

"This funding will help us provide services for some of our bravest men and women," said Lieutenant Governor Timothy P. Murray. "I am grateful for the work our Department of Veterans' Services and the federal delegation have done to make this funding available."

DVS has partnered with Veterans, Inc. in Worcester for the Urban Homeless Veterans' Employment Initiative. This program will work to accomplish three key objectives in the Worcester, Fall River, New Bedford and surrounding areas: 1) assisting homeless veterans as they reintegrate back into the workforce; 2) assisting veterans in obtaining more independent housing; and 3) stimulating the development of effective service delivery systems to address the issues facing homeless and unemployed veterans in the Commonwealth.

Massachusetts will utilize its extensive network of veterans' programs and services to outreach and promote awareness of these new programs to veterans throughout the Commonwealth. DVS has successfully managed and administered HVRP grants in prior years and, as a result, expects to begin outreach of these services within weeks of the start date.

"For decades, MVI has been providing critical services to our veterans," said U.S. Congressman Jim McGovern. "During this 4th of July holiday, we must remember that there are Americans who served our country that need - and deserve - our help. I'm very pleased that the federal government is providing this financial support."

"Employment and housing are two of the biggest challenges facing veterans," said Tom Kelley, Secretary of Veterans' Services. "These grants will help meet these challenges by assisting veterans to live independently and demonstrate skills learned through the training and work ethic demonstrated in their

military service. Working in conjunction with our partners at the local, state, and federal levels we will see to it that this is no longer just a dream for our service members, but can become a certainty."

PATRICK-MURRAY ADMINISTRATION ANNOUNCES AWARD OF U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR GRANT TO ASSIST UNEMPLOYED VETERANS AND PROMOTE "GREEN" INDUSTRY PRACTICES

WORCESTER - Thursday, August 20, 2009 - The Patrick-Murray Administration today announced that the Massachusetts Department of Veterans' Services (DVS) has been awarded a \$500,000 U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) grant to assist veterans in training and employment in green industry professions. This grant was one of only 17 awarded nationwide, totaling more than \$7.5 million dollars, to provide approximately 3,000 veterans with job training to help them succeed in civilian careers. The grants are administered by DOL's Veterans' Workforce Investment Program (VWIP).

"This funding will allow us to train some of our most deserving men and women for the jobs of the future," said Lieutenant Governor Timothy P. Murray, who chairs the Governor's Advisory Council on Veterans' Services. "After the great service they've given to us, we must make every effort to ensure a smooth transition back into civilian work and life and this is one way to do that."

The VWIP grant awarded to DVS provides funds to assist veterans in obtaining "green" jobs. Fields of employment include energy efficiency and renewable energy, modern electric-power development and clean vehicles. The Green TEAM (Training and Employment Access for Massachusetts) Veterans Initiative will utilize prior military experiences while training veterans for licensing, certifications and credentialing to help them become dutifully employed in this growing sector of our state and national economy.

"Providing training that leads to green industry jobs for veterans is a win-win," said DVS Secretary Tom Kelley. "This grant awarded by the U.S. Department of Labor demonstrates that the Commonwealth continues to be a leader in veterans' services while providing effective stewardship of our resources, which will yield a sustainable, greener future for our citizens."

"The transition from service in the military to civilian employment can be a challenging one, and I am thrilled to see such a substantial grant going towards the reemployment of our Commonwealth's veterans," said Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development Secretary Suzanne M. Bump. "These funds enable us to provide a comprehensive approach, including skills assessment, job counseling, and retraining, which is necessary to ensure rapid and sustainable job placements for our service men and women."

DVS has partnered with the Veterans' Northeast Outreach Center (VNOC) in Haverhill, Massachusetts to assist eligible veterans along the I-495 corridor to include Boston, Lawrence, Lowell, Fall River, and New Bedford. DVS and VNOC will work to reintegrate veterans into meaningful employment while also

stimulating the development of effective service delivery systems that will address some of the employability problems facing veterans.

"This opportunity for the veterans we serve to receive training in green technology and placement in green technology jobs is huge," said Veterans' Northeast Outreach Center Director John Ratka. "We are proud to be partnering with the Department of Veterans Services to offer these services. Combining this with the mainstream services we are currently providing through other DVS contracts and Federal grants certainly will improve the quality of life for our veterans and their families."

The VWIP grants will help veterans from targeted groups overcome employment barriers and ease their transition into unsubsidized jobs. Through this program, veterans receive skills assessments; individual job counseling; labor-market information; classroom or on-the-job training; skills upgrading and retraining; and placement assistance and follow-up services. Under this program DVS will network and coordinate efforts with various local, state and federal social service providers, including the Massachusetts Department of Workforce Development and local career centers, when appropriate.

PATRICK-MURRAY ADMINISTRATION ANNOUNCES \$200,000 FEDERAL AWARD PROVIDING ASSISTANCE TO HOMELESS VETERANS

BOSTON - Thursday, August 27, 2009 - The Patrick-Murray Administration has announced that the Massachusetts Department of Veterans' Services (DVS) has been awarded a U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) grant for \$200,000 to provide training, job placement, and housing assistance to eligible veterans living in the South Shore area of Massachusetts. The grant was awarded through the DOL Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program (HVRP).

"This funding will allow us to train some of our most deserving men and women for the jobs of the future," said Lieutenant Governor Timothy P. Murray, who chairs the Governor's Advisory Council on Veterans' Services. "After the great service they've given to us, we must make every effort to ensure a smooth transition back into civilian work and life and this is one way to do that."

DVS has collaborated with Father Bills & MainSpring (FBMS), the leading provider of services to prevent and assist homelessness in southeastern Massachusetts, to assure effective delivery of services to eligible veterans. The HVRP grant will target specialized employment services to homeless veterans living in non-urban areas of the state including Quincy, Brockton, Plymouth, and surrounding communities.

DVS and FBMS, together with the extensive network of veterans programs and services Massachusetts has in place, will work to achieve three key objectives: assisting homeless veterans re-integrate into meaningful employment; providing assistance and support to move veterans toward more independent housing; and working to stimulate the development of effective delivery systems addressing the problems and issues facing homeless veterans.

"Through the award of this grant and working with Father Bills we are able to reach out to disadvantaged veterans who are out of work and in need of assistance," said Massachusetts Secretary of Veterans' Services Tom Kelley. "Through job training, employment, and housing assistance we are now able to serve the deserving men and women who so bravely served our country."

While working to identify the employment and housing needs of veterans, comprehensive assessments will be given to identify other medical, mental health, or substance abuse issues that may exist. If other issues are identified, veterans will be referred and given assistance through the proper service providers including the Federal Department of Veteran Affairs, peer counseling, or other state programs and agencies.

"Massachusetts continues to be recognized as a national leader in veterans' services. With the addition of this new program, we have an opportunity to further our efforts on their behalf," said Representative Harold P. Naughton, Jr., Co-chair of the Joint Committee on Veterans and Federal Affairs. "These are the

men and women who have granted us the privilege of living a 'better, richer, and happier life.' It is time for us to do what we can to assure that they have this same privilege."

"This is really great news for veterans who are struggling in the community with the recession," said John Yazwinski, President and CEO of Father Bills & MainSpring. "This will allow us to get veterans back into the work force. We are going to end their homelessness and provide employment opportunities for people who deserve it and have put their life on the line for us."

ON VETERANS DAY, GOVERNOR PATRICK SIGNS BILL EXPANDING BENEFITS AND SERVICES TO VETERANS ACROSS MASSACHUSETTS

QUINCY - Wednesday, November 11, 2009 - The Patrick-Murray Administration today recognized the service and sacrifice of Massachusetts veterans with the signing of a bill that will expand the benefits and services available to veterans and their families in the Commonwealth.

"The least we can do for our veterans is to provide them the very best opportunities when their service is done," said Governor Patrick. "This law serves as a pledge to Massachusetts veterans that we will continue in our efforts to secure for them the benefits they have earned."

The bill expands on the services presently offered to the Commonwealth's veterans and their families, including increasing the cash bonus available to service members who serve multiple tours in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Currently, service members are eligible to receive a one-time \$1,000 "Welcome Home" bonus upon returning from a deployment to Iraq or Afghanistan (\$500 if deployed elsewhere in a non-combat area or after six-months of active duty state-side). This has always been a one-time payment. The bill expands this bonus to provide an additional \$500 bonus for each additional overseas deployment. The bill also allows service members stationed abroad to cast electronic ballots for elections.

Additionally, the bill includes a provision citing that service-disabled veterans will be included within the existing preferences for hiring of veterans for construction and public-works contracts. The bill also calls for an establishment of a "Medal of Liberty" that would be awarded to the next of kin of any Massachusetts service member killed in action or who dies as a result of wounds received while in action.

"As the national leader in providing veterans' benefits and services, Massachusetts continues to give our veterans and their families the very best," said Lieutenant Governor Tim Murray, Chair of the Governor's Advisory Council on Veterans' Services. "Today, we continue this tradition and give thanks to all of our brave service men and women."

"Our veterans and service members make the selfless decision to stand between us and danger, and it is our job to recognize, remember and support their efforts," said Senate President Therese Murray. "This legislation will allow the Commonwealth to ensure that veterans' and service members' rights are protected, service is acknowledged and benefits are accessible."

"This Veterans Day, we wanted to send a message to our veterans that we care about them and appreciate what they do for our country," said Speaker Robert DeLeo.

"This legislation carries on Massachusetts's tradition of offering the best treatment and services to our veterans," said Representative Harold Naughton, House Chairman of the Joint Committee on Veterans and Federal Affairs.

"I want to thank the Governor, Speaker and Senate President for their united support for this strong bill that will keep our commitment as a Commonwealth to our veterans," said Representative Garret Bradley, a sponsor of the bill.

"It is very important that we fight to help our men and women that have served and fought for us overseas; that we help them on housing issues, job opportunities, mental health issues and honor the families of those who have made the ultimate sacrifice," said Senator Ken Donnelly, Senate Chair of the Joint Committee on Veterans and Federal Affairs.

About the Department of Veterans' Services

The Department of Veterans' Services (DVS) advocates on behalf of the nearly 500,000 veterans in Massachusetts, their families, and survivors. DVS works to secure federal compensation and other benefits for which veterans may be eligible. The Department also administers needs-based benefits program through Veterans' Service Officers throughout Massachusetts and provides state funding to organizations offering homeless shelter, transitional housing, and outreach services to veterans.

GOVERNOR PATRICK FILES LEGISLATION TO HONOR DECORATED SOLDIERS

Bill will ensure active military qualify for specialty license plates

BOSTON - Tuesday, April 6, 2010 - Moved by the story of a New Bedford soldier who lost his leg while serving in Iraq, Governor Deval Patrick has that eliminates the restriction against active military from qualifying for a free military medal license plate. Currently, only those who have been discharged from duty are entitled to plates representing the Silver Star, Bronze Star, Distinguished Flying Cross or Purple Heart.

"We want to recognize the heroic service of all individuals who have earned these distinctions," said Governor Patrick. "For Purple Heart recipients and other awarded soldiers who remain on active duty, their bravery and continued service deserves acknowledgement."

"Through this proposed legislation, Massachusetts has a great opportunity to recognize and honor our brave men and women who serve and protect our country every day," said Lieutenant Governor Timothy Murray, Chair of the Governor's Advisory Council on Veterans' Services.

"I was really happy to hear that this was happening - I think it's great," said Sgt. Christopher Gomes, U.S. Army, who met Governor Patrick at the Freetown Veterans of Foreign Wars last month. The Purple Heart recipient and New Bedford resident explained to the Governor that he does not qualify for the Purple Heart license plate because he remains on active duty. "The men and women who continue serving in the military should not be excluded from these privileges. This new legislation ensures that active duty service members will be recognized for their service and sacrifice now rather than having to wait until they are veterans."

"It's the right thing to do," said Secretary of Veterans' Services Tom Kelley. "If a son or daughter of Massachusetts has been wounded in combat, we should offer them the same opportunity and distinction while they are on active duty to proudly display the plate reflecting the medal they have earned as a result of their service."

MassDOT Registrar of Motor Vehicles Rachel Kaprielian said once the bill passes, the RMV will design a new license specialty plate for active duty soldiers who have been awarded military medals. Until the new plate is in production, about 12 to 14 weeks, eligible soldiers can get a temporary veterans medal plate upon application.

"We don't want this inequity in honoring all who serve our country to stand another minute," said Registrar Kaprielian. "They shouldn't have to wait to be discharged from service to be eligible for these special plates and they shouldn't have to wait until the new plate is produced to display the honor on their vehicles."

Currently, there are 6,619 veterans who display military medal plates on their vehicles. Disabled veterans, in addition to free license registrations, are also eligible for an exemption in paying sales and excise taxes on one vehicle.

The chairs of the Legislature's Veterans and Federal Affairs Committee voiced their support for the Governor's legislation. "It is the least we can do to honor those who have distinguished themselves in service to our country," said Senator Kenneth Donnelly.

Representative Harold Naughton said, "Distinguished heroes should not have to wait until they are discharged to be recognized this way. As our country is still engaged in two wars, it is an appropriate time to allow active duty servicemen and women to receive this honor."

Since taking office, the Patrick-Murray Administration has honored veterans while increasing the benefits and services available to them. In July 2009, the Administration announced plans for the official state memorial for Massachusetts servicemembers killed in Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom. The Home of the Brave bill, signed into law February 11, 2009, increased the cash bonuses for veterans serving multiple tours in Iraq and Afghanistan and established a "Medal of Liberty" to be awarded to the next of kin of Massachusetts servicemembers who have died due to wounds received while serving in the armed forces. Most recently, the Governor's budget preserved programs and services for veterans, providing an \$8 million increase to the Department of Veterans' Services.

Lieutenant Governor Timothy Murray presented a resolution to assist families of servicemen and women across the country during the National Lieutenant Governors Association (NLGA) Winter Meeting in Washington, D.C. The resolution will expand services by Strategic Outreach to Families of All Reservists (SOFAR), calling for SOFAR's helpful guide, a written resource for education professionals to help students with a family member that has been deployed, be distributed to schools and employees under the jurisdictions of the states and territories of NLGA members.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR MURRAY ANNOUNCES 2nd ANNUAL TWO WEEK STATEWIDE TOUR ON MILITARY AND VETERANS ISSUES

As Chairman of the Governor's Advisory Council on Veterans' Services, Murray seeks to raise awareness of the needs of the more than 409,000 veterans living in the Commonwealth

Watch a two minute video recapping the 2009 Tour and Learn More about the 2010 Tour (www.mass.gov/governor/vetstour)

BOSTON - Friday, June 18, 2010 - Lieutenant Governor Timothy P. Murray today announced the details of the Patrick-Murray Administration's 2nd Annual MASS Veterans Tour: Massachusetts Awareness for Support and Services. Over the course of two weeks, Lt. Governor Murray will participate in various meetings, tours and events relative to military and veterans issues.

The tour will officially kick off on Saturday, June 19th with a series of events featuring U.S. Department of Veterans' Affairs Assistant Secretary L. Tammy Duckworth, who will be visiting Massachusetts to promote veterans services in the Commonwealth. In the morning, Assistant Secretary Duckworth will provide the keynote address at the 2nd Annual Conference for Women Veterans at UMass-Medical School in Worcester. Sponsored by the Patrick-Murray Administration's Department of Veterans' Services, the conference will also feature Governor Deval L. Patrick, Lieutenant Governor Timothy P. Murray, Congressman James P. McGovern, and several state and local officials. Following this conference, Assistant Secretary Duckworth and Lieutenant Governor Murray will tour the WPI Center for Neuroprosthetics, and hold roundtable forums with veterans and their family members at Framingham State College and UMass-Boston.

With the tour ending on July 4th, Lieutenant Governor Murray will build off of the 2009 inaugural two-week tour, while continuing and expanding upon his work on behalf of the Patrick-Murray Administration as an advocate for veterans and their families.

"Massachusetts leads the nation in providing services and benefits to our veterans," said Governor Deval Patrick. "With Lt. Governor Murray's leadership, the second annual tour will be a great opportunity to increase awareness of available benefits and also thank our brave men and women for their service."

"As Chair of the Governor's Advisory Council on Veterans' Services, I have worked closely with the veteran community to promote and improve our administration's outreach and service delivery to veterans and their families," said Lieutenant Governor Timothy Murray. "With over 400,000 veterans living in Massachusetts, I look forward to travelling across the state, and continuing our administration's work to

support veterans and military families."

As the Chairman of Governor Patrick's Advisory Council on Veterans' Services, Lt. Governor Murray has led a group of veterans and veterans' advocates for the last three years as they have worked to promote and improve the Administration's outreach and service delivery to veterans and their families.

Massachusetts leads the nation in offering the most comprehensive benefits and services to veterans and their families. The 2nd annual tour is an opportunity to not only increase awareness of available state and federal benefits, but also express thanks to those who have served in the military and their families for their support, and acknowledge their commitment to defending the country.

"The second annual MASS Veterans Tour exemplifies the Patrick-Murray Administration's continued commitment to veterans in the Commonwealth," said Secretary of Veterans' Services Tom Kelley. "This will give us an opportunity to hear the views and concerns of veterans and their families so that we can strengthen our programs."

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

2nd Annual MASS Veterans' Tour Schedule

[Visit the 2010 Veterans' Tour Website](#)

June 19

2nd Annual Massachusetts Conference for Women Veterans

9:00 a.m.

UMass-Medical School, Main Building, Amphitheater, 2nd Floor, 55 Lake Avenue, Worcester
With Special Guest Assistant Secretary of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Tammy Duckworth

Tour of the WPI Center for Neuroprosthetics

11:00 a.m.

WPI Bioengineering Institute, 3rd Floor, Room GP3101, 60 Prescott Street, Worcester
With Special Guest Assistant Secretary of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Tammy Duckworth

Roundtable Discussion on Veterans Education and Services with Veterans and Family Members

1:00 p.m.

Framingham State College, D. Justin McCarthy College Center, Forum Room, 100 State Street, Framingham
With Special Guest Assistant Secretary of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Tammy Duckworth

Roundtable Discussion on Veterans Education and Services with Veterans and Family Members

3:30 p.m.

UMass-Boston, Quinn Administration Building, Chancellor's Conference Room, 3rd Floor, 100 Morrissey

Boulevard, Boston

With Special Guest Assistant Secretary of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Tammy Duckworth

Vietnamese Veterans Day Ceremony

6:30 p.m.

Empire Garden, 690 Washington Street, Boston

June 21

Webster Square Veterans Memorial Swimming Pool Ribbon Cutting and Grand Opening

10:00 a.m.

1260 Main Street, Worcester (Next to Bennett Field)

June 22

Employment Roundtable with Veterans at the North Shore Career Center of Salem

2:00 p.m.

70 Washington Street, Salem

Interagency Council on Housing and Homelessness Meeting with Presentations on Workforce Investments, Homelessness Services, and Integration Programs for Veterans

3:15 p.m.

Salem State College, Bertolon School of Business, Room 112, 352 Lafayette Street, Salem

June 23

Military Friends Foundation's Announces New "Massachusetts Cares! Grant" For Deployed National Guard and Reserve

12:30 p.m.

State House, Room 157, 24 Beacon Street, Boston

June 25

Hanscom Heroes Celebration

2:30 p.m.

Hanscom Air Force Base, Memorial Park, 81 Grenier Street, Hanscom

June 29

Visit and Tour of Soldier On's Shelter and Transitional Facility

8:15 a.m.

Soldier On, Northampton VA, 421 North Main Street, Leeds

Quarterly Meeting of Governor's Advisory Council on Veterans' Services and Roundtable on Veterans

Education and Services with Veterans and Family Members

9:15 - 10:30 a.m.

Northampton VA, Building One, The Learning Center, 421 North Main Street, Leeds

Employment Roundtable with Veterans at the Franklin/Hampshire Career Center of Northampton

11:00 a.m.

Franklin/Hampshire Career Center, 178 Industrial Drive, Suite 1, Northampton

July 1

Meeting with Chief Naval Officers, the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development and Business Leaders during Navy Week Boston

(CLOSED PRESS)

3:00 p.m.

UMass-Boston, Venture Development Center, Wheatley Hall, 3rd Floor, 100 Morrissey Blvd., Boston

GI Bill Benefits Briefing with the Department of Higher Education and the Department of Veterans' Services

6:00 - 6:30 p.m.

LeLacheur Park, 450 Aiken Street, Lowell

Military Appreciation Night at the Lowell Spinners Game

Field Ceremony: 6:40 - 7:00 p.m.

Game: 7:00 - 10:00 p.m.

LeLacheur Park, 450 Aiken Street, Lowell

July 4

Tour Wrap Up - Visit on Independence Day

To Be Scheduled

About Massachusetts Veterans' Services

The Commonwealth is a nationwide leader in the services provided for veterans and is continuing its commitment to advancing their opportunities. Last year, Governor Patrick signed into law on Veterans' Day legislation that will expand on the services presently offered to the Commonwealth's veterans and their families, including increasing the cash bonus available to service members who serve multiple tours in Iraq and Afghanistan. The law also calls for an establishment of a "Medal of Liberty" that will be awarded to the next of kin of any Massachusetts service member killed in action or who dies as a result of wounds received while in action.

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. Most recently, through the Department of Veterans'

Services, Massachusetts was recently awarded by the U.S. Department of Labor's Veterans' Workforce Investment Program and Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program six different veterans' workforce grants totaling \$2,047,342, which has been allocated to outreach centers to begin training and job placement. Massachusetts has also received three grants, totaling approximately \$1 million, for Homeless reintegration and Workforce Investment.

For more information about the Department of Veterans' Services, including affordable, no-down payment mortgage financing for veterans run by MassHousing, Chapter 115 Benefits, and a 24 hour suicide prevention and benefit referral hotline run by the Department of Veterans' Services, visit www.mass.gov/veterans.

PATRICK-MURRAY ADMINISTRATION JOINS UMASS LOWELL, LOWELL SPINNERS TO URGE MASSACHUSETTS VETERANS TO USE POST-9/11 GI BILL BENEFITS

"Serve Your Country & Your Dreams" Public Service Campaign & Outreach Kicks off at Lowell Spinners Game

LOWELL - Friday, July 2, 2010 - Building on the Patrick-Murray Administration's commitment to honor and support Massachusetts veterans, Lieutenant Governor Timothy Murray, Veterans Affairs Secretary Thomas G. Kelley, Higher Education Commissioner Richard Freeland, and University of Massachusetts Lowell Chancellor Martin T. Meehan yesterday evening urged thousands of Massachusetts veterans to learn about the "use it or lose it" provision within the federal law for the Post-9/11 GI Bill. Veterans, whose service to the nation entitles them college tuition benefits, may be unaware of this provision, forfeiting their right to educational assistance.

As part of the Lowell Spinners' Military Appreciation Night, Administration officials joined UMass Lowell to announce a public service campaign that will alert veterans of the benefits they are eligible for at approved colleges and universities statewide. The campaign will feature MBTA subway advertising, a radio public service announcement, movie theatre announcements and a full schedule of summer information sessions at fairs and other seasonal events.

"There is a proud tradition across the country to honor military service with educational opportunity," said Governor Deval L. Patrick. "I want every Massachusetts resident who has served in uniform to know that we stand prepared to assist them as they transition from combat to classroom and focus on obtaining a diploma."

"As Massachusetts continues to be a national leader in offering comprehensive benefits and services to our service men and women, it is critical for our veterans to be aware of these available state and federal resources," said Lieutenant Governor Timothy Murray, chair of the Governor's Advisory Council on Veterans' Services. "We urge our veterans to take advantage of the GI Bill, which will help veterans as they return home from service and transition into the state's skilled workforce and economy."

"The new GI Bill can have a life changing impact on our veterans, but it won't if word doesn't reach them about the benefits they're due," said Senator John Kerry. "We need to spread the word and make sure every eligible veteran gets the educational opportunities they've earned."

"Votes in Washington unfortunately prevent me from being in Lowell to help celebrate military appreciation night and the launch of this excellent new veterans outreach initiative," said Congresswoman Niki Tsongas. "The GI Bill provides our newest veterans with the same benefits that veterans a

generation ago used to build a better life for themselves and to quite literally transform this country. As those who have served our country so skillfully and selflessly in recent years return home it is essential that they know that this benefit is available to them and know how to take advantage of it."

"Our brave men and women who have served overseas have earned the benefits in the G.I. Bill," Congressman Stephen F. Lynch said. "I am pleased to see that this outreach program will help our returning veterans take advantage of the benefits and services available to them."

"It is great to see so many of our returning veterans come home and continue on to college," said Secretary of Veterans' Services Thomas G. Kelley. "The transition from combat to campus may not always be an easy one, but it is always a worthwhile one. Massachusetts is proud of the programs and services we have in place to assist our returning service members, both on and off campus."

Of the 35,000 veterans who have returned to Massachusetts after serving in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, approximately 6,000, including dependents, are currently using Post-9/11 GI Bill Benefits. Depending on a veteran's eligibility tier, the benefit covers all or a portion of tuition and fees, a housing allowance, and books.

"Throughout our history, the GI Bill in its various forms has transformed the lives of millions of servicemen and women," said Massachusetts Commissioner of Higher Education Richard Freeland. "These benefits also enable veterans to contribute to our campus communities. Their presence as students sends a powerful message to other young people about service and civic responsibility."

Joining state leaders to announce the GI Bill outreach campaign were student veterans from the UMass Lowell including Ted Serozynsky, a 6 year Navy veteran who served on the USS Newport News nuclear submarine. He graduated from UMass Lowell this spring with an undergraduate degree in Criminal Justice and will continue his education at UMass Lowell to earn a graduate degree in his chosen field. He is the past president of the Student Veterans Organization, a member of the Salute Veterans Honor Society and also sits on the standing committee on Veterans Affairs.

Like all of Massachusetts' public higher education institutions, UMass Lowell is approved to certify students for all chapters of the GI Bill. They also offer a Veteran's Tuition Waiver for all legal residents of Massachusetts who are in an undergraduate degree program for on-campus classes. The school also works closely with the VA's Vocational Rehabilitation program, and offers Tuition Assistance programs for active duty military and the National Guard. UMass Lowell has recently been ranked in the top 15% of all colleges nationwide as a military-friendly school by G. I. Jobs Magazine.

Veterans seeking more information on benefits under the Post-9/11 GI Bill are encouraged to call 617-994-6914 or visit www.mass.edu/veterans.

GOVERNOR PATRICK SIGNS LEGISLATION TO EXPAND VETERANS HOUSING AND SERVICES IN WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS

Division of Capital Asset Management will transfer land in Agawam to Soldiers On to develop additional housing and services for veterans

Governor Patrick signed " [An Act Authorizing the Commissioner of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance to Convey Certain Land in the Town of Agawam](#)" at a State House Ceremony today. (Photo Credit: Holland Hinman/Governor's Office)

BOSTON - Saturday, July 31, 2010 - Governor Deval Patrick today signed into law legislation that will transfer a parcel of state owned land to the United Veterans of America, also known as "Soldier On," in Agawam. The law, "An Act Authorizing the Commissioner of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance to Convey Certain Land in the Town of Agawam," will lead to increased services and the construction of limited equity cooperative housing for homeless veterans.

"Our military service men and women deserve the very best support upon their return," said Governor Patrick. "I want to thank our partners in the Legislature, as well as Soldier On, for their support of this legislation that will build upon the existing services for veterans and offer benefits they have rightfully earned."

"As Massachusetts continues to lead the nation in services for veterans, this legislation provides a unique opportunity to transfer state land to support housing for our veteran community," said Lieutenant Governor Timothy Murray, chair of the Governor's Advisory Council on Veterans Services. "We appreciate the opportunity to partner with the Legislature and Soldier On to enhance housing and critical services for our military service men and women as they transition home."

"Today marks a great win for Massachusetts Veterans," said Secretary of Veterans' Services Tom Kelley. "Soldier On has a proud history of providing services to veterans in need, and the passing of this bill means even more veterans will benefit. I applaud their efforts and the Patrick-Murray Administration for seeing to it that this works continues. Together, we will ensure that Massachusetts continues to lead the nation in veterans' services."

The property, formerly the State Police Training Academy, is currently underutilized. By transferring this state owned land, Soldier On has agreed to purchase 6.9 acres of the total 50-acre property for \$1 with plans to break ground on a \$12 million housing construction project in the fall or spring. The first phase of this project will create approximately 40 525-square foot studio apartments with the potential to create up to 100 housing units for veterans. Additionally, once redeveloped, veterans will have the opportunity to buy shares in a cooperative, paying real estate taxes to the town, adding a boost to the local property tax

base. Soldier On will finance this project through a mix of state and federal grants, as well as loans dedicated to affordable housing.

"We are very grateful to Governor Patrick and Lieutenant Governor Murray, as well as Senator Buoniconti and Representative Sandlin for their leadership to end veteran homelessness," said John F. Downing, President and CEO of Soldier On. "Today, Massachusetts is the first state in the nation to donate a building and land for homeless veterans, which will allow Soldier On to build permanent housing that they will own and manage. This project will become a national model on how we end veteran homelessness."

"I am very pleased and truly honored that the Governor is signing the legislation allowing Agawam to be the host community for the much needed Soldier On program. It's a great opportunity for veterans who are in need of services," said Mayor Richard A. Cohen.

"This legislation presents a terrific opportunity to reuse an abandoned building and surplus state land to create much-needed housing opportunities for our returning veterans. The addition of 125 housing units will add to the town's property tax base, provide construction jobs in the near future and help stimulate our local economy. Today's ceremony is the culmination of more than 18 months of legislative effort. I'm thrilled to be here today," said Representative Rosemary Sandlin.

Soldier On currently serves homeless veterans of U.S. military service at shelters in Leeds and Pittsfield, with a mission to end homelessness among veterans by providing permanent, sustainable, safe, affordable housing with support services that veterans will own and operate. On average, Soldier On supports 500 homeless veterans in 170 emergency, transitional and permanent supported housing units. As part of their mission, Soldier On is committed to providing an environment of integrity, dignity and hope that will help veterans regain physical and mental stability, housing and employment, economic stability and become contributing members of their community.

The Patrick-Murray Administration has made Massachusetts a national leader in veterans' services. The Commonwealth is the only state in the nation to offer local financial assistance - for food, clothing, shelter, housing and medical care - to its veterans and dependants in need. Massachusetts also provides workforce training assistance and one of the highest "Welcome Home" bonuses in the nation to veterans who return from overseas deployments and active duty military service. In addition, the state issues additional bonuses for multiple deployments - an improvement Governor Patrick signed into law on Veterans' Day 2009.

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. For more information about the Department of Veterans' Services, including affordable, no-down payment mortgage financing for veterans run by MassHousing, Chapter 115 Benefits, and a 24-hour suicide prevention and benefit referral hotline run by the Department of Veterans' Services, visit www.mass.gov/veterans.

PATRICK-MURRAY ADMINISTRATION ANNOUNCES \$1 MILLION IN RENEWED EMPLOYMENT GRANTS FOR MASSACHUSETTS VETERANS

Workforce training grants awarded to 187 cities and towns across the Commonwealth

QUINCY - Thursday, September 9, 2010 - Continuing the Patrick-Murray Administration's commitment to supporting Massachusetts servicemen and women, Lieutenant Governor Timothy P. Murray today announced \$1 million in renewed workforce grants for Massachusetts veterans from the U.S. Department of Labor's Veterans' Employment and Training Service under the Veterans' Workforce Investment Program. The \$1 million awarded to the Massachusetts Department of Veterans' Services (DVS) includes two Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Program (HVRP) Grants totaling \$500,000 and one Workforce Investment Program (VWIP) Grant for \$500,000 that will be allocated to 187 cities and towns across the Commonwealth.

"I am proud of Massachusetts' position as a national leader in providing veterans' services," said Governor Deval L. Patrick. "So many of our servicemen and women have fought tirelessly to protect the Commonwealth and it's our responsibility to ensure the fight ends upon coming home. Providing the opportunity for job training and gainful employment is an important step in that direction."

"Putting people back to work continues to be our top priority, and this federal funding will allow us to train some of the most deserving men and women in Massachusetts," said Lieutenant Governor Timothy Murray, chair of the Governor's Advisory Council on Veterans' Services. "We thank our Congressional Delegation for their support as we work together to make every effort to ensure a smooth transition back into civilian work and life for our veterans."

"We have a sacred and lifelong obligation to our nation's veterans who have served and sacrificed on our behalf," said Congresswoman Niki Tsongas. "This measure of federal funding will help veterans in our communities who now find themselves in difficult circumstances, transition back into the workforce and civilian life."

"I want to commend the hard working staff at Father Bill's & Mainspring as well as Commissioner Kelley and the MA Department of Veterans Services for their dedication to assisting returning veterans with both their housing and job training," said Congressman William Delahunt. "These young men and women put their lives on the line for us and the least we can do is lend a helping hand to those struggling to get back on their feet during these tough economic times."

Within the HVRP program, the only federal program solely focused on the employment of homeless veterans, \$300,000 of the grant will fund programs that involve emergency shelter, job counseling and referrals, and employment assistance in 30 cities and towns in the Central and South Coast regions. In

Fiscal Year 2010, as a result of the Urban HVRP Grant, 103 veterans were employed. For this year's grant, DVS has partnered, again, with Veterans, Inc. in Worcester for the Urban Homeless Veterans' Employment Initiative.

This program will work to accomplish three key objectives: 1) assisting homeless veterans as they reintegrate back into the workforce; 2) assisting veterans in obtaining more independent housing; and 3) stimulating the development of effective service delivery systems to address the issues facing homeless and unemployed veterans in the Commonwealth.

"We have seen great success through our veterans' workforce grants over the past year," said Secretary of Veterans' Services Tom Kelley. "The Department of Veterans' Services is looking forward to continuing to work with our community partners to provide veterans with the training and assistance they need to rejoin the workforce."

Also within HVRP, an additional \$200,000 will serve 14 cities and towns in the South Shore region as part of the HVRP Non-Urban Grant. DVS has collaborated with Father Bill's & MainSpring (FBMS) for a consecutive year to assure effective delivery of services to eligible veterans. In FY 2010, DVS and FBMS employed 41 veterans with HVRP funding.

John Yazwinski, President & CEO, Father Bill's & MainSpring, said, "We are proud of the work we have done thus far with veterans under this grant. The renewal of funding will allow us continue to help all veterans, but particularly those of more recent conflicts, who are finding it particularly challenging to find work and housing in this frail economy. We are grateful to be a partner with the state in this effort."

"Through this HVRP grant from DVS, Veterans Inc. can now invest \$265,000 in helping homeless veterans find employment, which helps end the vicious cycle of homelessness due to lack of income. In addition, Veterans Inc. recently was awarded \$544,220 for VWIP, Non-Urban and a new Women and Families HVRP grant from the Department of Labor. Working with our partners including DVS, we continue to attack the insidious problem of homelessness among our military veterans," said Vincent J. Perrone, president and CEO of Veterans Inc.

The \$500,000 VWIP Grant awarded to DVS will provide funding to assist veterans in obtaining "green" jobs. Through this grant, 143 cities and towns will be served as DVS partners with the Veterans' Northeast Outreach Center (VNOC) in Haverhill to assist eligible veterans along the I-495 corridor. In Fiscal Year 2010, the VWIP Grant employed 200 veterans, including 63 veterans placed in green job sector. The Green TEAM (Training and Employment Access for Massachusetts) Veterans Initiative will utilize prior military experiences while training veterans for licensing, certifications and credentialing to help them become dutifully employed in this growing sector of our state and national economy.

"This grant is not just about finding veterans jobs, it is much more than that," said John Ratka, Director, Northeast Veterans' Outreach Center. "We are able to work with these veterans and facilitate comprehensive community services which prevent homelessness, keep families together, and provide the support these veterans may need. We are proud to be a part of this program which is helping to enrich the lives of some of our most deserving men and women."

"Rutland Nurseries has proudly employed 15 to 20 Veterans Inc. residents every year for the past 15 years, on landscaping and snow removal jobs. The veterans have a tremendous work ethic and I recommend them to any employer. While serving in the military, these men went above and beyond on behalf of their countrymen. They deserve any assistance we can give them now," said Brent Besse, Vice President of Rutland Nurseries, an employer in Rutland that has worked with Veterans Inc. to hire veterans through the HVRP grant.

As part of the Obama Administration's commitment to "green energy jobs," the VWIP grants will help veterans from targeted groups overcome employment barriers and ease their transition into unsubsidized jobs and projects, which propose a clear strategy for training and employment in the renewable energy economy. Through this program, veterans receive skills assessments; individual job counseling; labor-market information; classroom or on-the-job training; skills upgrading and retraining; and placement assistance and follow-up services.

Massachusetts will utilize its extensive network of veterans' programs and services to outreach and promote awareness of these new programs to veterans throughout the Commonwealth. DVS will network and coordinate efforts with various local, state and federal social service providers, including the Massachusetts Department of Workforce Development and local career centers, when appropriate. DVS has successfully managed and administered HVRP and VWIP grants in prior years and, as a result, expects to see continued results as veterans gain training and employment.

PATRICK-MURRAY ADMINISTRATION CELEBRATES \$4.1 MILLION FOR BROADBAND ASSISTANCE TO HELP MASSACHUSETTS VETERANS & SMALL BUSINESSES

\$1 million to provide technical assistance for veterans, \$1 million to small businesses

WELLESLEY - Friday, October 1, 2010 - Continuing the Patrick-Murray Administration's commitment to supporting long-term economic growth and streamlining government services, Lieutenant Governor Timothy P. Murray today joined the Massachusetts National Guard and members of the veterans community to celebrate Massachusetts' receipt of \$4.1 million in federal stimulus funding that will provide broadband assistance for veterans and small businesses, and also enhance mapping efforts to expand broadband infrastructure.

In partnership with the Massachusetts congressional delegation, the Patrick-Murray Administration worked to secure this federal stimulus funding that will create new broadband adoption programs for both veterans and small businesses and also provide continued support for the state's broadband availability mapping program. The funding was awarded to the Massachusetts Broadband Institute (MBI), a division of the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative, through the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA).

"The expansion of broadband access for unserved and underserved communities has been a priority of this Administration since day one," said Governor Deval Patrick. "We look forward to helping small businesses and veterans connect to the resources they need."

The first of the two new broadband adoption programs is a comprehensive web portal for veterans and family members to make online access of veterans' services more streamlined, safe and effective. Lieutenant Governor Murray highlighted this specific funding today at an event with the veterans community hosted by the Massachusetts National Guard in Wellesley.

"Through this federal stimulus funding, Massachusetts will enhance critical services and resources for several communities in the Commonwealth," said Lieutenant Governor Murray, who chairs the Governors Advisory Council on Veterans Services. "We thank our congressional delegation for their support to help not only expand broadband services but also develop innovative ways to support our veterans and small businesses in Massachusetts."

"The Massachusetts National Guard is enhanced by its many veterans and their experience; therefore, I am extremely grateful that our veterans and families will have the opportunity to access this amazing, comprehensive Internet service," said Major General Joseph C. Carter, The Adjutant General,

Massachusetts National Guard. "Making online access to veterans' services more streamlined, safe and effective will result in increased benefits to veterans, families and communities throughout Massachusetts.

In addition to streamlining veterans' services, this federal funding will also allow the state's community development corporations to provide technical assistance for local small businesses. The MBI will work closely with approximately 40 small businesses and non-profit organizations interested in growing and creating jobs, while also fully integrating broadband use and computer ownership into their organizations and the programs they run.

"Reliable broadband service is an essential building block for the Massachusetts economy. This investment will help bridge the technological divide in the western and north-central regions, and help veterans and small businesses compete and win in the job market," said Senator John Kerry.

"Internet access is not only a matter of competitive advantage for large businesses, it is also becoming a necessary and critical component of everyday life," Congressman Stephen F. Lynch said. "Improving broadband benefits cities and towns throughout Massachusetts and I am pleased to see that Governor Patrick has targeted these stimulus funds to help our veterans and small businesses while expanding broadband access in underserved communities."

"This federal funding creates two new vital programs and enhances our state's ability to identify and bring high-speed Internet connections to unserved and underserved communities. The online portal for veterans and their families is an excellent use of funding in support of the heroes to whom our country owes so much. The funding to assist small businesses will spark growth, while the mapping funds are key to closing the digital divide. I congratulate the Patrick Administration for its tremendous work to bring this federal funding to the Commonwealth," said Congressman Edward Markey.

"I'm very pleased that the Massachusetts Broadband Institute will receive this funding," said Congressman James McGovern. "In order to fully compete in the 21st Century economy, we must do everything we can to provide access to high-speed broadband to all of our communities. I'm particularly pleased that these funds will target small businesses and our veterans."

"These additional funds are crucial for identifying the households and businesses where broadband is most urgently needed. This will allow for a more effective roll-out of broadband across western Massachusetts," said Congressman John Olver. "This funding will also provide technical assistance to our veterans and our small businesses. I am excited to see this project continuing to move forward."

Today's announced funding also included an award of \$2 million for broadband mapping. These mapping funds will be used to develop address level data files to pinpoint broadband availability in communities that are underserved or unserved by broadband. These files will help Internet service providers identify effective ways to bring affordable, high-speed broadband Internet access to these communities.

Governor Patrick designated the MBI to lead the state's efforts to increase broadband deployment. The MBI previously received \$2.1 million in mapping funds in November 2009. This funding has been used to

create the first statewide map of broadband infrastructure.

"The MBI is committed to bringing broadband to the unserved and underserved areas of the Commonwealth, and putting an end to the digital divide in western and north central Massachusetts," said Judith Dumont, MBI Director. "This funding will enhance the MBI's ability to expand broadband to those areas that are unconnected, and will help veterans and small businesses take advantage of online resources."

In July 2010, the MBI was awarded \$45.4 million in federal stimulus funding to increase broadband access in north central and western Massachusetts. The funding was awarded through the highly-competitive NTIA Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP). The Commonwealth is providing \$26.2 million in matching funds, bringing the total investment in the project to \$71.6 million.

The MBI's network, MassBroadband 123, will be a 1,338 mile fiber-optic network that will connect 123 communities in western and north central Massachusetts. The robust network provides the necessary broadband infrastructure to foster economic growth, improve health care and education and strengthen public safety.

In 2008, Governor Deval Patrick signed into law the Broadband Act, legislation he introduced after becoming Governor, which created the MBI. The MBI is investing \$40 million in state funds in long-lived, carrier-neutral infrastructure assets to promote broadband expansion to unserved and underserved areas, primarily in western Massachusetts, where the digital divide is most acute. Since then, the MBI has successfully competed for and leveraged an additional \$83.5 million in federal stimulus funding for related broadband infrastructure and improvement in Massachusetts, including MassBroadband 123 and OpenCape. Through these investments and others, the Patrick-Murray Administration is laying the essential groundwork necessary for business and institutions to collaborate and expand, to boost the innovative capacity, and to spur overall economic growth in the Commonwealth.

For more information on the Massachusetts Broadband Institute, please visit www.massbroadband.org.

PATRICK-MURRAY ADMINISTRATION CELEBRATES VETERANS DAY

BOSTON - Thursday, November 11, 2010 - Lieutenant Governor Timothy Murray and Secretary of Veterans' Services Tom Kelley honored Massachusetts Veterans and service members past and present at the Commonwealth's official Veterans' Day ceremony today at the State House. Massachusetts continues to be a national leader in providing benefits and services offered to veterans and their families.

Inspired by requests from Massachusetts residents, Lt. Governor Murray led a two-minute moment of silence during today's ceremony to honor all veterans.

"Veterans past and present deserve recognition and respect each and every day for their bravery and service," said Lt. Governor Murray, chair of the Governor's Advisory Council on Veterans' Services. "On this day of observance, we honor the many servicemen and women who have fought and continue to fight to protect our nation's safety and freedom."

Today's Veterans Day program included a special tribute to women veterans, led by Gail Cavanugh-McAuliffe, a U.S. Army veteran and employee of the Department of Veterans' Services. Tim Sullivan, Cdr. USN (Ret.) Former POW, and Maureen Dunn, National League of Families of POW/MIA, led a candle lighting ceremony for those who have been held prisoner or are missing. Gold Star Families were paid tribute with a rose presentation.

"Every year, the country gathers on November 11 to mark Veterans' Day," said Secretary of Veterans' Services Tom Kelley. "Today, we honor the men and women of generations past and those who are currently serving overseas in defense of our nation. To all of our Veterans, I say 'thank-you' for your service."

"Today is a day when the nation pauses in a moment of silence with solemn pride in the remembrance of the heroism of those who have served, those who are currently serving, and those who died in our country's service," said Major General Joseph C. Carter, The Adjutant General, Massachusetts National Guard. "The National Guard doesn't mark this day each year as a celebration of victory; but rather, as a celebration of those who made victory possible. It's a day we keep in our hearts and minds the brave men and women of this young nation -- generations of them -- who above all else believed in and fought for a set of ideals that makes our country strong and free."

Lt. Governor Murray also acknowledged Richard Jones, a student veteran recently elected by his peers to serve as the student representative to the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education. Jones, a 28-year-old native of Chicopee, is a first-generation college student at Holyoke Community College who served in two tours in Afghanistan.

"I was proud to serve my country in Afghanistan but now I'm serving back on the home front - serving my fellow students," said Richard Jones. "It was awesome winning election to the Board of Higher Education. There are so many veterans coming into our colleges and universities right now. They need support and

it's a privilege to be able to help state officials think through what vets need as they move from combat to campus."

"Every year on Veterans' Day we recognize the enormous sacrifices our veterans have made to make possible all the freedoms and liberties that we have today. We need to continue to do everything we can to ensure that the people of our armed forces are as safe as possible when they are in combat, and as supported as possible when they return home," said Senator Kenneth J. Donnelly, Chair, Joint Committee on Veterans' and Federal Affairs.

"Veterans Day allows all of us to recognize our service members and veterans for what they've done and continue to do for this country," said Representative Harold P. Naughton, Jr. Chair, Joint Committee on Veterans' and Federal Affairs. "However, it is important that we continue to recognize the enormous sacrifices our soldiers make everyday for the sake of freedom, and to ensure that our veterans and service members have the support they need both in combat and upon returning home. We may never be able to repay our veterans for what they've done for us, but we can do everything in our power to make sure they receive the greatest care and services possible."

The ceremony concluded with a 21-gun salute by the Massachusetts Army National Guard followed by Taps played by the Navy Band Northeast.

Massachusetts is a national leader for veterans' services, and the Patrick-Murray Administration continues to support the Commonwealth's veterans and their families. Within the last year, Governor Patrick authorized into law expanded benefits for veterans. Among major provisions included in this law, cash bonuses available to service members who serve multiple tours in Iraq and Afghanistan have increased from a one-time \$1,000 "Welcome Home" bonus to an additional \$500 bonus for each additional overseas deployment, service members stationed abroad are now allowed to cast electronic ballots for elections, service-disabled veterans are now included within the existing preferences for hiring of veterans for construction and public-works contracts, and a "Medal of Liberty" has been established that will be awarded to the next of kin of any Massachusetts service member killed in action or who dies as a result of wounds received while in action.

This year, Governor Patrick also joined four other governors for a five-day trip sponsored by the U.S. Department of Defense to meet with Massachusetts servicemen and women in a show of gratitude and appreciation for their courageous service. The Governor visited with troops stationed in Iraq, Afghanistan and Kuwait.

About the Department of Veterans' Services The Department of Veterans' Services (DVS) advocates on behalf of over 400,000 veterans in Massachusetts, their families, and survivors. DVS works to secure federal compensation and other benefits for which veterans may be eligible. The Department also administers needs-based benefits program through Veterans' Service Officers throughout Massachusetts and provides state funding to organizations offering homeless shelter, transitional housing, and outreach services to veterans.

PATRICK-MURRAY ADMINISTRATION ANNOUNCES FREE PROGRAM TO HELP VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES QUIT SMOKING

Smoking rate among veterans remains higher than the state average

BOSTON - March 7, 2011 - The Patrick-Murray Administration today launched its second, free statewide smoking cessation program designed to help Massachusetts veterans and their families live healthier and longer lives. Lieutenant Governor Timothy Murray joined Department of Veterans' Services (DVS) Secretary Coleman Nee and Department of Public Health (DPH) Commissioner John Auerbach at the New England Center for Homeless Veterans in Boston to announce the inter-agency partnership.

"We value the brave men and women who have proudly served our country and we want to provide them with the opportunity to live long, healthy lives," said Lieutenant Governor Murray, Chair of the Governor's Advisory Council on Veterans' Services. "I am proud that Massachusetts is once again providing support to our veterans and their families in their battle to quit smoking."

Massachusetts veterans and their family members can now call the Massachusetts Smokers Helpline at 1-800-QUIT NOW (1-800-784-8669) or go to www.makesmokinghistory.org/veterans to receive free telephone support and a two-week supply of nicotine patches to help them quit smoking.

In 2008, DVS and DPH partnered to launch its first smoking cessation program for veterans. Nearly 4,000 veterans and family members called the Massachusetts Smokers' Helpline to obtain free support and nicotine patches over the course of the seven month program.

"Our veterans and their families have sacrificed so much on behalf of the Commonwealth and our country, and the Patrick-Murray Administration is committed to supporting them in their efforts to live healthier lives," said Secretary Nee. "Services like free phone counseling and nicotine patches will help them in their efforts to eliminate smoking from their lives."

"Smoking is a major factor in many chronic diseases," said Commissioner Auerbach. "This promotion gives our veterans tools to help them quit smoking for good, helping them live healthier, longer lives."

The smoking rate among Veterans remains higher than the state average, even as Massachusetts' overall smoking rate continues to decline. The age-adjusted smoking rate for Massachusetts veterans is 23.5 percent, well over the average for all Massachusetts adults. A recent study from the Institute of Medicine showed that 32 percent of active-duty military personnel smoke, and that the prevalence of smoking may be over 50 percent higher in military personnel returning from Iraq and Afghanistan than for those who were not deployed there.

Smoking remains the number one cause of preventable death and disease in the Commonwealth, accounting for over \$4.3 billion in health care costs annually. Studies have shown that using products like the nicotine patch to help quit smoking can double the chance of quitting successfully. Using medication and support together makes it three times as likely that a smoker will be able to quit for good.

"This smoking-cessation program for veterans is a demonstration of our state's commitment to helping serve those who have served us," said Representative James E. Vallee, House Chairman of the Joint Committee on Veterans and Federal Affairs. "Quitting smoking is a significant step toward a healthy, productive lifestyle, and I encourage our veterans to take advantage of this opportunity to make that positive change in their lives."

The Department of Veterans' Services is committed to spreading the word about the free nicotine patch program and will engage local Veterans' Service Officers, Veteran Service Organizations, Veterans' Outreach Centers, VA hospitals and affiliated clinics, and National Guard facilities to raise awareness about the initiative.

Veterans and their families are encouraged to learn more about the program by calling 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669) or visiting www.makesmokinghistory.com/veterans.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR MURRAY ANNOUNCES 3rd ANNUAL STATEWIDE VETERANS TOUR

Events across the Commonwealth to raise awareness and promote resources for more than 390,000 MA veterans

BOSTON - Friday, May 27, 2011 - Lieutenant Governor Timothy P. Murray today announced the Patrick-Murray Administration's 3rd Annual MASS Veterans' Tour: 'Massachusetts Awareness for Support and Services.' Over the next three weeks, Lieutenant Governor Murray, who serves as Chairman of the Governor's Advisory Council on Veterans' Services, will tour the state with veterans and lead events to highlight Massachusetts' position as a national leader in veterans' services. *(Full tour schedule follows.)*

Later today, Lieutenant Governor Murray is expected to join Governor Deval Patrick and Secretary Coleman Nee of the Massachusetts Department of Veterans' Services to officially kick off the tour during a State House ceremony to unveil the Moving Memorial dedicated to Massachusetts servicemen and women who have fallen in Iraq and Afghanistan. The interactive memorial, which will be displayed in Memorial Hall at the State House through the end of June, includes a searchable database of Massachusetts service members who made the ultimate sacrifice defending our nation's freedom in Operation Iraqi Freedom or Operation Enduring Freedom. The Moving Memorial is organized by the Massachusetts Iraq and Afghanistan Fallen Heroes Memorial Fund.

"Massachusetts is proud to support more than 390,000 veterans across the state as we lead the nation in providing services and benefits for veterans and their families," said Governor Patrick. "With Lieutenant Governor Murray's leadership, this annual tour brings to focus the needs of the veterans community as well as the chance to thank the brave men and women who have served our country."

"Over the last four years, through the work of the Council, it has been a great opportunity to work side by side with veterans and their families," said Lieutenant Governor Murray. "I look forward to visiting regions across the state to thank our veterans for their service, promote available resources and benefits for veterans and their families, and hear directly from our veterans for how to expand upon current services."

As the Chairman of the Governor's Advisory Council on Veterans' Services, Lieutenant Governor Murray has led a group of veterans and veterans' advocates for the last four years as they have worked to promote and improve the Administration's outreach and service delivery to veterans and their families. Building on the success of the 2009 and 2010 tours, the 3rd Annual MASS Veterans Tour is an opportunity to promote services offered by the state as well as local and federal government and private and non-profit organizations for veterans and their families.

"I am proud to join Lieutenant Governor Murray on his third annual MASS Veterans' Tour and for the unveiling of this beautiful and touching memorial to those that have made the ultimate sacrifice," said Secretary of Veterans' Services Coleman Nee. "Massachusetts continues to be a national leader in

veterans' services. The Patrick-Murray administration's continued commitment to veterans will ensure that we continue this proud legacy. Each year, this tour draws attention to the issues facing our veterans here in the Commonwealth while highlighting the extensive programs and services in place to assist and support our veterans and military families."

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

[Watch a two minute video recapping the 2009 Inaugural Tour and Learn More about the 2011 Tour.](#)

3rd Annual MASS Veterans' Tour Schedule:

Friday, May 27, 2011

State House Veterans Memorial Unveiling with Governor Patrick

3:30 p.m.

State House, Memorial Hall

Monday May 30, 2011 - Memorial Day

Worcester's 124th Memorial Day Observance and Remembrance Ceremony

8:45 a.m.

Hope Cemetery, 119 Webster St, Worcester

Tuesday May 31, 2011

MA State Defense Force Re-Activation Ceremony

3:30 p.m.

National Guard Museum, 44 Salisbury Street, Worcester

Wednesday, June 1, 2011

Mass Maritime Visit with Assistant Secretary of the Navy Juan Garcia

1:30 p.m.

Mass Maritime Academy, Buzzards Bay

Thursday June 2, 2011

Ribbon Cutting for the Holyoke Soldiers' Home Dental Clinic

3:00 p.m.

Holyoke Soldiers' Home, 110 Cherry Street, Holyoke

Friday June 3, 2011

An announcement relative to e-health technology at VA Hospitals followed by a Cabinet Meeting

10:30 a.m.

Vecna Technologies, 36 Cambridgepark Drive, Cambridge

* Announcement is OPEN PRESS; Cabinet Meeting is CLOSED PRESS.

Monday June 6, 2011

Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company June Day Event

2:30 p.m.

Boston Common, Boston

Tuesday June 14, 2011

Quarterly Meeting of the Governor's Advisory Council on Veterans' Services

3:00 p.m.

Chelsea Soldiers' Home, 91 Crest Avenue, Chelsea

Wednesday June 15, 2011

Veterans Roundtable at the Boston Career Center

2:30 p.m.

JobNet, First Floor, 210 South Street, Boston

Friday June 17, 2011

6th Annual Central MA Stand Down

3:00 p.m.

Veterans, Inc.'s Independence Hall, 59 South Street, Shrewsbury

About Massachusetts Veterans' Services :

The Commonwealth is a nationwide leader in the services provided for veterans and is continuing its commitment to advancing their opportunities. In 2009, Governor Patrick signed into law on Veterans' Day legislation that expanded the services offered to the Commonwealth's veterans and their families, including increasing the cash bonus available to service members who serve multiple tours in Iraq and Afghanistan. The law also called for an establishment of a "Medal of Liberty" that will be awarded to the next of kin of any Massachusetts service member killed in action or who dies as a result of wounds received while in action.

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. Over the past two years, Massachusetts has been awarded three grants, totaling approximately \$1 million, from the U.S. Department of Labor's Veterans' Workforce Investment Program and Homeless Reintegration Program to support training and job placement opportunities for veterans. In September 2010, Massachusetts was also the recipient of \$4.1 million in federal stimulus funding to support broadband infrastructure, including the creation of a comprehensive web portal for veterans and family members to make online access of veterans' services more streamlined, safe and effective.

For more information about the Department of Veterans' Services, including affordable, no-down payment mortgage financing for veterans run by MassHousing, Chapter 115 Benefits, and a 24 hour suicide prevention and benefit referral hotline run by the Department of Veterans' Services, visit www.mass.gov/veterans.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR MURRAY, ATTORNEY GENERAL COAKLEY AND THE MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' SERVICES URGE ALL CITIES AND TOWNS TO ENFORCE LAW FOR LOCAL VETERANS AGENTS

Veterans' agents are local contacts providing assistance to veterans seeking access to resources and benefits including employment, housing, clothing and education

BOSTON - Thursday July 21, 2011 - Lieutenant Governor Timothy P. Murray, Attorney General Martha Coakley and Secretary Coleman Nee of the Department of Veterans' Services (DVS) today contacted municipal managers in all 351 cities and towns, reminding municipalities that state law requires cities and towns in the Commonwealth to enforce Chapter 115 of the Massachusetts General Law by providing local veterans' agents.

Though most cities and towns have appointed a veterans' agent, in an effort to ensure Massachusetts veterans receive available benefits and services and that all cities and towns properly abide by Chapter 115, Lieutenant Governor Murray, Attorney General Coakley and Secretary Nee urged municipal managers in a written letter to fully comply with Chapter 115 of the Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 471 of the Acts of 1972 and Title 108 of the Code of Massachusetts Regulations.

"Massachusetts is proud to support our brave military servicemen and women by providing benefits and services for veterans and their families," said Lieutenant Governor Murray, Chair of the Governor's Advisory Council on Veterans' Services. "Engaging and partnering with cities and towns is critical to ensure that veterans receive the benefits they need and have earned. To that end, we have improved tools that will assist local agents in all municipalities, and we look forward to working with them in support of Massachusetts veterans and their families."

"We are grateful to our troops who have made tremendous sacrifices and put their lives on the line in order to protect our country," said Attorney General Coakley. "We want to ensure that veterans and their families understand the full range of benefits the Commonwealth offers them, especially as they return home from deployment."

Massachusetts currently provides some of the most comprehensive veterans' benefits in the country, serving the more than 390,000 veterans across the state. Through DVS, Massachusetts provides veterans with critical resources upon their return home, including financial assistance for food, shelter, clothing, home heating fuel and medical care, as well as employment and vocational assistance,

education and counseling. Local veterans' agents partner with DVS to better inform veterans in the community of the range of resources available to veterans and their families.

"As we begin another fiscal year, we recognize the hard work of our Veterans' Services Officers who are on the front lines as well as the commitment from their cities and towns in assisting our Veterans and families every day," said Secretary Nee. The message that we have shared to Veterans' Service Officers offers guidance to assist them in their important work, as well as provides standard guidelines moving forward."

Along with today's request, DVS has recently implemented an electronic benefit tracking and certification system, Web-VSMIS (Veterans Services Management Information Systems), to reduce the paperwork submission process and also increase efficiency and accuracy for veterans' agents and accounting departments in cities and towns. This additional assistance will provide municipalities with an improved system as they work to comply with Chapter 115.

According to Massachusetts law, cities and towns with a population of 12,000 or more must either appoint a full-time veterans' agent, or a full-time director of veterans' services district if the municipality is a constituent member of a veterans' services district. Municipalities with a population of less than 12,000 which are not constituent members of a veterans' services district must appoint a part-time veterans' agent.

Lieutenant Governor Murray, Attorney General Coakley and Secretary Nee emphasized, in today's letter, that "we are proud of the excellent work that our municipal counterparts do each and every day to provide the nation's very best benefits and services for veterans." As the state continues its work to remain a national leader in providing veterans' services and benefits, all cities and towns are required to provide DVS with the name, hours and office of a municipality's veterans' agent on or before September 1, 2011.

To learn more about the Department of Veterans Services, visit www.mass.gov/veterans

PATRICK-MURRAY ADMINISTRATION ANNOUNCES COMPREHENSIVE PLAN TO INCREASE VETERANS' SERVICES AND EMPLOYMENT

Plan includes new business partnerships designed to boost employment opportunities for returning vets



Governor Patrick joins Secretary Coleman Nee to announce a series of initiatives to support Massachusetts veterans. (Photo: Matt Bennett/Governor's Office)

BOSTON – Wednesday, November 2, 2011 – Governor Deval Patrick today declared November 2011 as “Hire a Veteran Month” and announced new initiatives and resources to support the hiring of Massachusetts veterans, while increasing access to health care, transportation, education and housing services.

“Massachusetts is proud to support our veterans, and these new initiatives will increase access to jobs and critical services,” said Governor Patrick. “By partnering with the business community, we can

encourage and increase the hiring of more Massachusetts veterans, including those returning from Iraq and Afghanistan.”

Governor Patrick today also launched an Interagency Task Force on Hiring Veterans and directed all Executive Branch agencies to promote the benefits of hiring veterans. The announcement builds on existing partnerships and business collaborations initiated by Lieutenant Governor Timothy Murray, who chairs the Governor's Advisory Council on Veterans' Services.

“As Massachusetts continues to lead the nation in providing services to our veterans, we’re still thinking of new ways to further support returning veterans and veterans of all eras,” said Lieutenant Governor Murray. “Hiring veterans is not only the right thing to do, it’s good for business because veterans are reliable, diligent, and always ready to get the job done.”

As part of the initiatives, the Patrick-Murray Administration is partnering with major trade associations to encourage them to hire veterans and circulate information on veterans benefits. The Massachusetts Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives (MACCE), the Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce, the Massachusetts Business Roundtable, the Associated Industries of Massachusetts, the Massachusetts Biotechnology Council, the Mass High Tech Council, the Defense Technology Initiative, and the Retailers Association of Massachusetts are among the growing list of major trade associations committed to working with the Administration and the Massachusetts veteran community.

“Collectively MACCE members represent thousands of employers in Massachusetts,” said MACCE President Thomas J. O’Rourke. “We encourage them to take advantage of the Administration’s initiatives for returning service men and women. There is no better way to thank our veterans for their service than by hiring them to meaningful employment.”

Governor Patrick plans to file legislation as part of the Fiscal Year 2013 budget proposal to provide the Massachusetts Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MassMEP) with \$500,000 in funding to train and employ veterans who qualify for state benefits. Through the Mobile Outreach Skills Training (M.O.S.T) program, MassMEP also plans to immediately use \$200,000 in existing state funds to offer a new training class for veterans during this fiscal year.

“Programs like M.O.S.T. are vitally important to our communities and to our returning veterans,” said Jack Healy, Director of Operations at the Massachusetts Manufacturing Extension Partnership. “While the national unemployment rate, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics is 9.1%, the unemployment rate for returning veterans between the ages of 18-24 is about 21.1%. This high percentage of unemployment is due partly to stereotyping veterans’ fitness for employment, such as inadequate technology skills and lack of education. M.O.S.T. training helps veterans overcome such stereotypes and equips them to fill unmet skills needs in our advanced manufacturing sector.”

The Administration will also offer Massachusetts businesses an option to post an official state logo designating the company as a “Proud Employer of Massachusetts Veterans,” if the company employs a certain percentage of their workforce with Massachusetts veterans.

"Massachusetts leads the country in veteran services, and I am proud to say we never take that fact for granted," said Senate President Therese Murray. "These latest proposals by the Administration will add to the valuable resources and opportunities available to our veterans. From the Welcome Home Bill, which provides affordable life insurance and college tuition waivers, to property tax exemptions and increased pay for military families, we will continue to do what's right for our veterans and service members."

"Whether they served decades ago or more recently, in Iraq and Afghanistan, the veterans of the Commonwealth deserve our help and support wherever and whenever we can be of assistance," said House Speaker Robert A. DeLeo. "We need to show our veterans we care about them when they come home and that we won't forget them even years after they return."

"This comprehensive package will ensure continued access to employment, housing, benefits and services for our veterans and their families," said Secretary of Health and Human Services Dr. JudyAnn Bigby. "Our initiative reflects the Patrick-Murray Administration's commitment to ending homelessness and achieve and sustaining health individuals and communities."

"These initiatives affirm that Massachusetts is a national leader in providing services and supports to our veterans and families," said Secretary of Veterans' Services Coleman Nee. "With Veterans' Day approaching, we are going beyond parades and memorials by insuring access to the important benefits and services our veterans have earned through their service and sacrifice."

"We are pleased to work across agencies and with employers to bolster resources for Veterans as they transition into the civilian workforce," said Secretary of Labor & Workforce Development, Joanne F. Goldstein. "At the state's One-Stop Career Centers, Local Veterans' Employment Representatives provide Veterans with individualized career development and training drawing on the career center and other resources to maximize employment opportunities."

Governor Patrick will recognize the hiring efforts of a Massachusetts based company during a Veterans Day ceremony November 11 at the State House. Going forward, the Governor will then recognize companies annually through the newly created "Governor's Outstanding Massachusetts Veterans Employer Award" and to honor companies that show initiative, commitment, and proven hiring records for veterans and military families.

Along with the Patrick-Murray Administration's plans to partner with the business community, Governor Patrick also announced plans to propose up to \$2.86 million in his upcoming budget proposal for Fiscal Year 2013. In addition to proposing \$500,000 in funding to MassMEP, Governor Patrick will file legislation that will allow the Administration to:

- Provide \$700,000 per year to support the Department of Public Health's Veterans Quit Smoking Patch Initiative, building on the success of two previous rounds of patch giveaways to veterans and their families.
- Fully fund the annuities account so that DVS can eliminate the pro-rating on the first payments to 100% disabled veterans and gold star parents. With more than \$20 million included in current Fiscal Year 2012

budget, an additional \$652,000 above the projected Fiscal Year 2013 funding for annuity payments will end pro-rating payments.

- Reimburse cities and towns 100% for the homeless shelter benefits DVS provides, relieving the burden on cities and towns that currently cover the cost. An additional estimated cost of \$872,000 will be included in the Fiscal Year 2013 budget proposal to fully fund these benefits.
- Extend the property tax abatement for Gold Star Spouses. Currently spouses are only exempt for the first five years with a cap of \$2,500 for the remaining years; however, this bill, estimated to cost \$135,000 in the first year, would make the tax exemption permanent until the Gold Star dies or remarries.

Today's announcement also included a \$325,000, two year, annual grant to DVS that will provide community based outreach treatment to veterans in the Metro Boston area, which complements Lt. Governor Murray's work as chair of the Governor's Advisory Council on Veterans' Services, Interagency Council on Substance Abuse and Prevention, and the Interagency Council on Housing and Homelessness. Awarded by the U.S. Department of Veterans' Affairs, this grant will provide support to veterans who are in need of psychiatric evaluation, mental health services, peer support, and emergency shelter. With this funding, four Peer Outreach Specialists will be hired to work at DVS and perform one-on-one outreach to homeless veterans.

Included in the comprehensive plans released today, the Patrick-Murray Administration plans to:

- Partner with the Massachusetts Registrar of Motor Vehicles to provide an optional veteran designation on the front of all driver's licenses and state identification cards to increase awareness about available resources and benefits. With this feature, first responders will be alerted of all veterans and DVS will notify veterans of the benefits they may not have accessed.
- Support the collaboration of military, state, and community resources to establish a Military Child Educational Awareness Program, which is an expansion of the Massachusetts National Guard's successful pilot program for military children in the Massachusetts school system.
- Create a Student Veterans sub-committee of the Governor's Advisory Council on Veterans' Services.
- Create a Veterans' Re-Employment and Training sub-committee of the Governor's Advisory Council on Veterans' Services.

"I want to commend the Patrick-Murray Administration and Veterans Secretary Nee for their continued efforts in providing services and programs to our veterans," said John Regan, chief of staff to Senator Mike Rush, co-chair of the Joint Committee on Veterans and Federal Affairs. "This employment initiative comes at a critical time for both our veterans and the economy as a whole. This program is another example of why Massachusetts leads the nation in supporting our veterans."

"I applaud the Patrick-Murray Administration for taking steps to put our veterans back to work," said Representative James E. Vallee, House chairman of the Joint Committee on Veterans and Federal Affairs. "A steady job can play an integral role in a veteran's transition to civilian life. These initiatives are

efficient and effective ways to create a public-private partnership that will incentivize hiring veterans and celebrate local businesses that do so.”

As part of this comprehensive plan, the Executive Office of Health and Human Services and the Office of Disability Policy and Programs will work to ensure that disabled veterans receive access to employment, training, retraining, and an accessible workplace.

Click [here](#) learn more about the Governor’s Advisory Council on Veterans’ Services. Click here to learn more about the Massachusetts Department of Veterans’ Services.

PATRICK-MURRAY ADMINISTRATION TO OFFER 'VETERAN' DESIGNATION ON DRIVER'S LICENSES AND ID CARDS

New initiative part of Administration's comprehensive plan to enhance veterans services



Lieutenant Governor Murray joins Department of Veterans Services Secretary Coleman Nee and RMV Registrar Rachel Kaprielian to announce a new ID initiative for Massachusetts veterans, Tuesday, November 8, 2011. (Photo: Matt Bennett/Governor's Office)

BOSTON – Tuesday, November 8, 2011 – Lieutenant Governor Timothy Murray today announce that the Patrick-Murray Administration's Registry of Motor Vehicles (RMV) will begin offering Massachusetts veterans the option to have the word "Veteran" appear on their driver's license or ID card, starting in January 2012.

“With over 393,000 veterans across the Commonwealth, we need to do our part to increase awareness about available resources for military servicemen and women,” said Lieutenant Governor Murray, chair of the Governor’s Advisory Council on Veterans Services. “With the RMV already designating ‘Veterans’ on

license plates, we're now extending that designation to include state identification cards and licenses as a means to better inform these deserving men and women of services and benefits they have rightfully earned."

The "Veteran" designation is designed to increase awareness about available resources and benefits. The feature will provide valuable information to first responders and will help the Department of Veterans' Services notify veterans of benefits they are eligible to receive.

"The Registry of Motor Vehicles is excited about the new veteran designation, which is a free service upon license renewal," said Registrar Kaprielian. "Veterans who have not accessed Department of Veterans' Services will find a wide of array of benefits are available."

There is no additional cost for the "Veteran" designation, as long as it is added during an individual's license renewal process. Standard license renewal and duplication fees apply.

"Having an official 'Veterans' designation on Massachusetts licenses and IDs has been a long-standing request of the Commonwealth's veterans community," said Secretary of Veterans' Service Coleman Nee. "This designation will not only make it easier for veterans to take advantage of special discounts and incentives offered to them by the private industry, but it will also help our first-responders and benefits specialists to identify and coordinate veterans with resources and services that they have earned, especially in times of crisis. On behalf of the veteran community, I thank Secretary of Transportation Rich Davey and Registrar Rachel Kaprielian for their hard work and dedication in making this proposal a reality."

Massachusetts joins a series of states that offer a "Veteran" designation, including: North Dakota, Utah and Georgia. The RMV expects this designation to be available to customers by mid-January 2012.

Last week, Governor Deval Patrick declared November 2011 as "Hire a Veteran Month," and the Patrick-Murray Administration announced a series of new initiatives and resources to support the hiring of Massachusetts veterans, while increasing access to additional services. Governor Patrick also launched an Interagency Task Force on Hiring Veterans and directed all Executive Branch agencies to promote the benefits of hiring veterans. The announcements build on existing partnerships and business collaborations initiated by Lieutenant Governor Murray.

As part of the comprehensive series of veteran-related initiatives launched last week, the Patrick-Murray Administration also announced it will:

- Propose up to \$2.86 million in additional funding for enhanced veterans services in the Fiscal Year 2013 budget.
- Partner with major trade associations to encourage them to hire veterans and circulate information on veterans benefits.
- File legislation as part of the Fiscal Year 2013 budget proposal to provide the Massachusetts Manufacturing Extension Partnership with \$500,000 in funding to train and employ veterans who qualify for state benefits.

- Support the collaboration of military, state, and community resources to establish a Military Child Educational Awareness Program, an expansion of the Massachusetts National Guard's successful pilot program for military children in the Massachusetts school system.
- Create a Student Veterans sub-committee of the Governor's Advisory Council on Veterans' Services.
- Create a Veterans' Re-Employment and Training sub-committee of the Governor's Advisory Council on Veterans' Services.

"As we look forward to honoring our veterans on November 11th, we should remember what John F. Kennedy once said: 'As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them,'" said John Regan, Chief of Staff to Senator Mike Rush who is currently serving in Iraq. "Massachusetts, led by the Patrick-Murray Administration and Veteran Services Secretary Coleman Nee, continues to provide services and programs for our veterans, which makes Massachusetts the envy of the nation when it comes to caring for our veterans. This RMV program, directed by Registrar Kaprielian, is yet another example of this."

"In August of this year, I filed similar legislation allowing distinguished veterans whom reside within the Commonwealth a way to effortlessly prove their service," said Senator Michael Rodrigues. "I offer my highest praise, and commend the Administration for launching this initiative to expand and continue supporting Veterans within our state."

"Massachusetts is a leader in veterans' benefits and a veteran designation will ensure that our service men and women are connected with the many services available to them," said Senator Stephen M. Brewer. "I am pleased to team up with the Patrick-Murray Administration on this important initiative. Our veterans have advocated for this and I am pleased that action has been taken to initiate this practice."

"An optional 'Veteran' designation on identification cards is a small but significant way to help veterans receive the benefits they've earned," said Representative James E. Vallee. "I hope this initiative will help us better serve those who have served our country and Commonwealth."

"As the House Chairman of the Joint Committee on Transportation, I think this is a great idea and I'm proud to have supported legislation in our Committee that would accomplish the same goal to allow veterans to have their status recorded on their identification cards and licenses," said Representative William Straus. "I'm hopeful that this status designation leads to an increase in support for veterans in need."

For more information about the Department of Veterans Services: <http://www.mass.gov/veterans>

For more information on the Massachusetts Department of Transportation
RMV: <http://www.massdot.state.ma.us/rmv/>

PATRICK-MURRAY ADMINISTRATION HONORS MASSACHUSETTS VETERANS AND FAMILIES

Governor Patrick announces more than \$1 million in additional veteran-specific funding



Governor Patrick speaks at the Veterans' Day celebration at the State House on November 11, 2011.
(Photo: Holland Hinman/Governor's Office)

BOSTON – Friday, November 11, 2011 – Governor Deval Patrick, Lieutenant Governor Timothy Murray and Department of Veterans Services (DVS) Secretary Coleman Nee today honored Massachusetts service members past and present at the Commonwealth's annual Veterans' Day ceremony at the State House. Earlier today, Governor Patrick signed a supplemental budget which includes more than \$1 million in funding for Welcome Home Bonus payments and additional veterans benefits.

"Today is a day to express our gratitude, pride and enduring support to the Massachusetts military personnel protecting our interests abroad, and to all of our veterans and their families," said Governor Patrick. "Here in the Commonwealth, our commitment to our returning servicemen and women has never wavered. To truly honor our heroes, we must focus on expanding access to jobs and services for veterans -- and that's what we are striving to accomplish every day."

"As citizens of this Commonwealth and this country, we have an obligation to ensure all veterans have access to the range of services they have rightfully earned," said Lieutenant Governor Timothy Murray, chair of the Governor's Advisory Council on Veterans' Services. "Our Administration is committed to working with municipalities, businesses, educational institutions and other organizations as we continue to build partnerships to enhance and deliver services to the brave men and women who have proudly served our country."

\$700,000 in funding from the Governor's latest supplemental budget will be invested in additional Welcome Home Bonus payments for veterans returning from service abroad, including increasing payments to veterans with multiple tours of duty. \$308,000 in funding will be directed to DVS to help coordinate services to veterans and their families and link veterans to federal and state benefits programs.

Last week, the Patrick-Murray Administration announced a comprehensive plan to enhance services for veterans, including re-employment and training of veterans of all eras, especially those returning from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Declaring November as "Hire A Veteran Month", the Administration is also partnering with a number of trade associations committed to encouraging their member employers to hire veterans for open positions and educate companies of available financial benefits for hiring veterans. Following today's State House ceremony, Lieutenant Governor Murray and Secretary Nee will join the U.S. Small Business Administration and the International Franchise Association to promote opportunities for veteran-owned small businesses in Massachusetts.

"On Veterans Day, we come together collectively to honor the brave men and women who have served in our armed forces" said Secretary Nee. "We honor the men and women of generations past and those who are currently serving overseas helping our nation stay safe. To all of our veterans, we say thank you for your service."

Governor Patrick today also presented an award to Smith & Wesson, recognizing the company's long-standing commitment to support re-employment and training opportunities for Massachusetts veterans. By working with the Massachusetts Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MassMEP), Smith & Wesson has hired veterans who have graduated from MassMEP's workforce training program to work at Smith & Wesson's Springfield-based manufacturing facility.

The program also included a special tribute to women veterans, led by Captain Mary Jo Majors, who has been an officer in the U.S. Navy Nurse Corps for more than 42 years; Captain Majors was Massachusetts' 2010 Outstanding Woman Veteran of the Year. Tim Sullivan, Commander in the United States Navy (Ret.), a former POW, and Maureen Dunn, of the National League of Families of POW/MIA, led a candle lighting ceremony for those who have been held prisoner or are missing. Gold Star Families were paid tribute with a rose presentation.

"This is the day to remember our country's veterans, past and present, and the service they have given our country," said Secretary of the Commonwealth William F. Galvin. "But beyond this day, we must all work to ensure that the needs of our veterans are met and their sacrifices are never forgotten."

"We celebrate the partnership between the Treasury and the Department of Veterans' Services," said Treasurer Steven Grossman. "The Welcome Home Bonus and our efforts to reunite veterans with their unclaimed property are examples of our profound gratitude toward those who have worked to preserve and protect our freedoms and American values."

"We can and should honor our veterans," said Auditor Suzanne Bump. "Caring for the wounded and employing our returning veterans are two things to do, but we can also show respect and gratitude by actively participating in the democracy that they have sacrificed to protect. People across the globe are struggling right now to obtain the precious right to elect their own leaders. We honor our veterans by exercising the right which their military service secures for us."

"On behalf of the Senate, and the Plymouth and Barnstable District, I wish all our veterans and their families the very best," said Senate President Therese Murray. "Thank you for the sacrifices you've made, and for your faithful service to the Commonwealth and the nation. Here in Massachusetts, every day is Veterans' Day and we will continue to fight for you, as you have fought for us."

"This Veterans' Day, the legislature wants to send the message to all of our veterans that we appreciate the bravery that they have shown, the sacrifices made by their families and loved ones, and the positive impact that they've made on our nation and its history," said House Speaker Robert A. DeLeo. "We will stand by them when they first come home and remain by their side years after they have returned."

"Veterans' Day is a tribute to our service members and an opportunity for us as citizens to affirm our commitment to the values they defend," said Representative James E. Vallee, House chairman of the Joint Committee on Veterans and Federal Affairs. "It is a reminder to us, as elected officials, to affirm our commitment to upholding Massachusetts' place in the vanguard of states who recognize, compensate, and celebrate our veterans."

About the Department of Veterans' Services:

The Department of Veterans' Services advocates on behalf of the Commonwealth's nearly 500,000 veterans, family members, and survivors. DVS works to secure federal compensation and other benefits for which veterans may be eligible. The Department also administers needs-based benefits program through Veterans' Service Officers throughout Massachusetts and provides state funding to organizations offering homeless shelter, transitional housing, and outreach services to veterans

\$1.5 MILLION IN FEDERAL FUNDING TO END HOMELESSNESS AMONG VETERANS

Commonwealth expands innovative SHARP program with U.S. Department of Veterans' Affairs funding to help end veteran homelessness

NORTHAMPTON-- Thursday, October 4, 2012 – Lieutenant Governor Timothy Murray today announced the awarding of \$1.5 million by the Obama Administration to provide street level outreach, peer support services and case management to chronically homeless veterans in Massachusetts. Joined by Massachusetts Department of Veterans' Services Secretary Coleman Nee, officials from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), the Massachusetts Interagency Council on Housing and Homelessness (ICHH) and Veteran service providers at a forum to address housing for homeless veterans in Western Massachusetts, Lieutenant Governor Murray outlined the announced funding as part of a new contract from the VA New England Health Care System. The Massachusetts Department of Veterans' Services (DVS) will use this funding to apply the 'Statewide Housing Advocacy for Reintegration and Prevention' (SHARP) model to the Housing & Urban Development – VA Supported Housing (HUD-VASH) program.

"By working across agencies and in partnership with many advocates and service providers, Massachusetts continues to make great strides in providing resources for our military servicemen and women," said Lieutenant Governor Murray, Chair of the Governor's Advisory Council on Veterans' Services and Chair of the Interagency Council on Housing and Homelessness. "We welcome this great news, but there is plenty more work to be done. This increased funding will complement our ongoing work with local, state and federal partners as we address a statewide plan to help individuals and families, including our veteran population, transition to affordable and stable housing."

The SHARP model, which is administered by DVS, offers peer support, mental health services, psychiatric evaluation and linkages to emergency shelter to veterans recently placed in supportive housing at a veteran-centric facility. The team also identifies and enrolls new homeless veterans in the HUD-VASH program. This new funding was specifically designated to hire 9 new peer support specialists, 12 new case managers, and be accompanied by 320 new HUD-VASH vouchers.

Lieutenant Governor Murray announced the \$1.5 million in federal funding at a meeting organized by the ICHH, "Drafting the First Statewide Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness among Veterans in Massachusetts: Western MA Forum." In December 2011, under the leadership of Lieutenant Governor Murray, the ICHH and DVS jointly launched the statewide steering committee. Since December, the steering committee has been researching the current scope of the problem, examining plans from other states, identifying promising practices, and articulating goals and targets for significantly reducing veterans' homelessness in the next two years.

“Expanding the reach and effectiveness of the Statewide Housing Advocacy for Reintegration and Prevention (SHARP) program will help get more veterans the services and help they need to escape homelessness,” said Congressman Edward Markey. “I welcome this vital funding, and look forward to working with Governor Deval Patrick, Lieutenant Governor Tim Murray and Secretary of Veteran Services Coleman Nee to continue and improve this critical support for our veterans.”

“We have a responsibility to ensure that those who served our country receive the very best services that we, as a nation, can offer,” Congressman Stephen F. Lynch said. “I am pleased to see that this funding will help the S.H.A.R.P. program end homelessness among veterans here in Massachusetts and I want to commend Lieutenant Governor Murray and Secretary Coleman Nee for continuing to make our veterans a priority.”

“One of the greatest challenges facing our nation is the number of veterans returning home from their service only to find that they are now alone in a different type of personal struggle,” said Congressman William Keating. “A direct result of not being able to reach these men and women is the increasing number of homeless veterans. That is why the SHARP program is so critical – it is the link helping veterans receive the services and support they need. I congratulate Lt. Governor Murray, DVS Secretary Coleman Nee, the Massachusetts Interagency Council on Housing and Homelessness and veteran service providers across the Commonwealth in their tireless efforts to help these dedicated men and women who have given us so much to protect our country.”

“The SHARP model reflects Massachusetts’ unparalleled commitment to supporting veterans,” said Secretary of Health and Human Services Dr. JudyAnn Bigby. “The peer-to-peer approach has been extremely effective in other veterans’ initiatives, and this new partnership will help support veterans transitioning back into civilian life. We appreciate the strong support and generous funding that the VA has provided to Massachusetts to support this important work.”

“Massachusetts leads the nation in providing benefits and services to our veterans and their families,” said Secretary Nee. “By coordinating the resources of federal, state, local and not-for-profit entities working with veterans, we have been able to serve more people, establish better outcomes and maximize public dollars to their fullest potential. Fully utilizing all existing resources as well as employing new methods, such as peer-to-peer outreach, will help us dramatically reduce the number of homeless veterans in Massachusetts and take great strides toward ending veterans’ homelessness in the Commonwealth.”

Building on the work of the SHARP model and the ICHH steering committee, the Patrick-Murray Administration anticipates releasing a statewide plan later this year, which will outline strategies for integrating federal, state, and private sector resources. The plan will also be aligned with the Department of Veterans’ Affairs 5 Year Plan to End Veterans’ Homelessness and the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness plan, Opening Doors.

“Together, the U.S. Department of Veterans’ Affairs and the Department of Veterans’ Services are capitalizing on the unprecedented federal, state, local, and nonprofit collaborations, while building on best practices that make a real difference for homeless veterans,” said Massachusetts Interagency Council on Housing and Homelessness Executive Director Liz Rogers. “Programs such as this are exactly what we

will work into a statewide plan to provide the housing and supports necessary to ensure all our veterans have a safe, affordable home.

The SHARP model is a collaborative effort between the Massachusetts Department of Veterans' Services; the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; VA New England Health Care System (Network 1); the National Center for Homelessness Among Veterans; the VA Health Center in Bedford; the VA Quality Enhancement Research Initiative; the University of Massachusetts Medical School; and the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness.

Since 2009, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and HUD have worked with more than 4,000 community agencies across the country to successfully house 33,597 veterans in permanent, supportive housing with dedicated case managers and access to high-quality VA health care. In Massachusetts, DVS works with the VA and more than 30 contracted providers to offer emergency beds, transitional beds and permanent beds on VA campuses and elsewhere. The Commonwealth also applied for and was awarded 1,035 HUD-VASH vouchers between 2008 and 2011. The VASH program combines Housing Choice Voucher rental assistance for homeless veterans with case management and clinical services provided by the VA, which offers these services for participating veterans at VA Medical Centers and community-based outreach clinics.

"We are extremely grateful for our partnership with the Massachusetts Department of Veterans' Services and so many other expert community and federal organizations," said Craig Coldwell, MD, Director of Mental Health Services at the VA New England Healthcare System. "Ending and preventing homelessness among Veterans requires full collaboration. Together we are dramatically advancing our systems of social support and health care to deserving veterans and their families."

"We are grateful for the opportunity to serve the veteran population of Massachusetts in partnership with the Department of Veterans' Services and the Department of Veterans Affairs and other community based agencies working together to eliminate veteran homelessness," said Soldier On President and CEO John Downing. "As we implement these new systems and tools, the veterans of Massachusetts should be more effectively served and protected from falling into homelessness."

Ending homelessness, particularly among veterans, is a top priority of the Patrick-Murray Administration. Governor Patrick and Lieutenant Governor Murray have instituted a number of policy changes, new collaborations and strategies to accomplish this mission. DVS funds more than 30 shelter and transitional housing non-profit organizations, providing housing services to eligible veterans ranging from Emergency Homeless Shelters, group residences, to Single Room Occupancy quarters. In addition, the Massachusetts Interagency Council on Housing and Homelessness is leading a five-year strategic plan to end homelessness in the Commonwealth by 2013. Chaired by Lieutenant Governor Murray, the Council established a veterans' subcommittee designed to address the specific needs of homeless veterans in Massachusetts.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR MURRAY LAUNCHES TOUR OF MILITARY BASES TO UNIFY SUPPORT FOR MASSACHUSETTS MILITARY JOBS AND INVESTMENTS

Lieutenant Governor announces agreement to encourage regional partners, federal, state and local officials to protect and promote military sites across the state



Lieutenant Governor Murray visits with troops at Barnes Air National Guard Base in Westfield. View [additional photos](#).

WESTFIELD – Friday, February 3, 2012 – Lieutenant Governor Timothy Murray today launched a tour of military bases across the Commonwealth to build grassroots support to protect the missions, jobs and economic investments associated with the bases. At Barnes Air National Guard Base in Westfield, Lieutenant Governor Murray also announced the Administration's new "Military and Community

Enterprise Agreement” which communities and local officials can sign in solidarity to commit their local support for these military sites.

“Through proactive planning, Massachusetts has and will continue to position the state to protect our military bases,” said Lieutenant Governor Murray, chair of the Governor’s Advisory Council on Veterans’ Services. “The Department of Defense has outlined projected budget cuts over the next 10 years that could impact Massachusetts bases. The strong military presence and related defense industry in our Commonwealth are critical to our economy and our residents. The Patrick-Murray Administration will work tirelessly with our federal partners to keep Massachusetts military bases open and their missions intact.”

Lieutenant Governor Murray plans to visit at least six of the state’s military bases. In addition to Barnes Air National Guard Base in Westfield, the Lieutenant Governor will visit Hanscom Air Force Base in Bedford; Westover Air Reserve Base in Chicopee; Massachusetts Military Reservation / Otis Air National Guard Base in Falmouth; Natick Soldier Systems Center in Natick; and Fort Devens.

As a result of federal deficit reduction negotiations, the U.S. Department of Defense created a plan to reduce federal defense spending by approximately \$500 billion over the next decade. The Department of Defense explained that cuts would be achieved in part by reducing total force numbers and relying on technological advances to build a more streamlined military. The Pentagon will also request that Congress authorize a Base Realignment and Consolidation Commission (BRAC) to recommend the closure or consolidation of select military bases across the country.

Today’s tour kickoff follows a series of planning meetings that Lieutenant Governor Murray has held over the last year in anticipation of a BRAC round. The meetings have included the Massachusetts National Guard, MassDevelopment, cabinet secretaries and most recently the Massachusetts High Technology Council and the Defense Technology Initiative. During the visit at Barnes Air National Guard Base, Lieutenant Governor Murray was joined by chamber of commerce and local business leaders, education officials, municipal leaders, state agency staff and veterans’ services providers to plan the Commonwealth’s response to potential federal budget cuts. Lieutenant Governor Murray outlined plans for these community partners to join the Patrick-Murray Administration by signing a Military and Community Enterprise Agreement to unify efforts to promote, protect, and expand each base in the Commonwealth.

“We don’t know whether there will be another BRAC review, but forewarned is forearmed,” said Senator John Kerry. “That’s why we’re already prepping to get way ahead of things with a game plan. I’m grateful to the Lieutenant Governor for taking an active role. He knows first-hand the critical role that the 104th Fighter Wing at Barnes Airport plays in our strategic security. I’m not shy about pressing our case and I’m going to keep meeting and talking and preparing and I’ll be prepared to go toe to toe with the facts.”

“Barnes Air National Guard Base is an outstanding facility that not only provides jobs that are integral to our regional economy but also a service that is critical to our nation’s security,” said Congressman John Olver. “Over \$45 million in federal funding has been invested in the base over the last decade and it has clearly been money well spent. The base serves as an anchor to tax-generating related industries such as Gulfstream Aerospace, who recently committed to the construction of a \$23 million maintenance facility right next door.”

During his tour of Massachusetts military bases, Lieutenant Governor Murray will highlight recent initiatives in support of the state's veterans and defense industry. As part of the Patrick-Murray Administration's proposed FY 2013 budget, Lieutenant Governor Murray recently announced an \$11.25 million increased funding for vital veterans' services, including workforce training. The defense industry and its workforce is also a major part of Massachusetts' economy with thousands of employees working at the state's military bases and over \$14 billion in defense contracts awarded to Massachusetts firms in 2010.

"Lieutenant Governor Murray's tour of the Commonwealth's military bases reflects this Administration's commitment to supporting veterans, protecting the Massachusetts economy and keeping our communities safe," said Coleman Nee, Secretary of Veterans' Services. "Massachusetts' military installations provide jobs for veterans and the surrounding community, as well as provide essential services that veterans cannot access elsewhere. As the number of veterans continues to rise, these installations are a vital link between veterans and the vital services they deserve."

"I commend Lieutenant Governor Murray for taking the initiative to bring together business, education, government, and the community to support the important relationship that Massachusetts has with the defense industry," said Jack Wilson, chairman of the Defense Technology Initiative. "Massachusetts is home to a large number of jobs that directly and indirectly relate to the defense industry, and forging this partnership on the community level is critical to the Commonwealth and nation's economic and military security."

"The Greater Westfield Chamber of Commerce is very pleased to be included in the roundtable discussion with Lieutenant Governor Murray and other business and community partners," said Kate Phelon, executive director of the Greater Westfield Chamber of Commerce. "The Air National Guard Base in Westfield has a vital role in our community, for economic reasons as well as homeland security on the east coast. The Air National Guard has always been a great partner to the City of Westfield and losing this base would be detrimental to our local economy and security. We truly hope the powers in Washington will see the economic and community value this base brings to Western Massachusetts."

Since 2007, Lieutenant Governor Murray has led the Governor's Advisory Council on Veterans' Services and today's announcement tour builds on the Administration's commitment to the Massachusetts veterans' community, our regional economies, and the state's defense industry. To learn more about the Patrick-Murray Administration's commitment to Massachusetts veterans, visit www.mass.gov/veterans.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR MURRAY WELCOMES HOME MASSACHUSETTS TROOPS



Lieutenant Governor Timothy Murray and Major General Joseph C. Carther welcome home members of the Massachusetts National Guard. (Official U.S. Air Force Photo/2nd Lt. David J. Murphy).

BOSTON – Friday, February 3, 2012 – Lieutenant Governor Timothy Murray yesterday joined Major General Joseph C. Carter of the Massachusetts National Guard to welcome home Massachusetts troops from the 26th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade at the Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst in New Jersey.

Prior to the welcome home ceremony, Lieutenant Governor Murray was led on a tour of Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, which included a comprehensive overview of reintegration services on the base such as medical treatment and financial assistance provided to troops in preparation for their return to their home communities.

“I appreciate the invitation to join Major General Carter in welcoming Massachusetts troops back to the United States,” said Lieutenant Governor Murray, Chair of the Governor’s Advisory Council on Veterans’ Services. “These men and women have bravely protected our nation, some experiencing multiple tours overseas. Now, upon their return home, we have a moral obligation to ensure our veterans and their families receive the services they have rightfully earned as they integrate back into their communities and the Commonwealth.”

“It was a heartwarming honor to welcome home our citizen-soldiers from the 26th Maneuver Enhancement (Yankee) Brigade upon completion of their one year mobilization supporting Operation Enduring Freedom,” said Major General Carter, The Adjutant General, Massachusetts National Guard. “The Yankee Brigade has perpetuated the outstanding legacy of the 26th Yankee Division, contributing to the unit’s record of success that includes distinguished overseas service in both World Wars.”

Since 2007, Lieutenant Governor Murray has led the Governor’s Advisory Council on Veterans’ Services which coordinates interagency collaboration with the Massachusetts Department of Veterans’ Service (DVS) as well as local, state and federal agencies and organizations.

With more than 385,000 veterans currently living in Massachusetts, including 37,000 men and women who have served in Iraq and Afghanistan since 9/11, the Patrick-Murray Administration has worked to ensure newly returning veterans, as well as Massachusetts’ aging veteran population, continue to receive quality health, housing and employment services to honor their service. Last week, Lieutenant Governor Murray announced that the Patrick-Murray Administration’s Fiscal Year 2013 budget proposal includes \$11.25 million in increased funding to enhance vital services for Massachusetts veterans and their families.

Massachusetts leads the nation in providing services for veterans and military families. The Governor’s Advisory Council on Veterans’ Services and DVS advocates on behalf of the Commonwealth’s nearly 500,000 veterans, family members, and survivors. DVS works to secure federal compensation and other benefits for which veterans may be eligible. DVS also administers needs-based benefits program through Veterans’ Service officers across Massachusetts and provides state funding to organizations offering homeless shelter, transitional housing, and outreach services to veterans. To learn more about veterans’ services, visit www.mass.gov/veterans.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR MURRAY SIGNS EXECUTIVE ORDER ESTABLISHING THE COMMONWEALTH'S MILITARY ASSET AND SECURITY TASK FORCE

Lieutenant Governor Murray, industry, municipal, business and community leaders to advise on statewide initiative to support military jobs and investment and protect and promote military bases across the state



Lieutenant Governor Murray signed an Executive Order creating a task force focused on promoting and protecting military bases in Massachusetts. (Photo Credit: Eric Haynes/Governor's Office) For additional photos, [click here](#).

BOSTON – Monday, February 27, 2012 – Lieutenant Governor Timothy Murray today signed an executive order establishing the Commonwealth's Military Asset and Security Strategy Task Force. The Task Force, to be chaired by the Lieutenant Governor, will engage state agencies to work directly with stakeholders to develop and implement actions that will support military bases across the Commonwealth.

"I thank the Lieutenant Governor for his leadership working across state agencies and industry organizations to protect the military bases that serve as a vital part of the Massachusetts economy," said Governor Deval Patrick. "Massachusetts has a strong, innovation-based economy and our military presence is supported by world-class education, research and engineering institutions in regions throughout the state. This task force will bring together key resources to promote the strengths of Massachusetts' military."

The executive order builds on the work Lieutenant Governor Murray has led over the last year, including a series of strategy meetings with Administration cabinet secretaries and private sector groups such as the Massachusetts Defense Technology Initiative to gather current data and perspectives about each military base so Massachusetts can better position, promote and protect assets for each base. The Task Force will work towards completing a comprehensive strategic plan in the coming months.

"Massachusetts' defense and aerospace industries generate more than 120,000 jobs, fueling local and regional economies across the Commonwealth," said Lieutenant Governor Murray. "In working with our congressional delegation and this formalized Task Force, Massachusetts is ready to fight for the jobs and missions at our military base facilities which provide significant value to our economy as well as our national defense strategy."

Last month, the U.S. Department of Defense announced a plan to reduce federal defense spending by approximately \$500 billion over the next decade as a result of federal deficit reduction negotiations. The Department of Defense explained that cuts would be achieved in part by reducing total force numbers and relying on technological advances to build a more streamlined military. The Pentagon also requested that Congress authorize a Base Realignment and Closure Commission (BRAC) to recommend the closure or consolidation of select military bases across the country.

The creation of the Task Force complements Lieutenant Governor Murray's ongoing tour of the state's military bases, which began with a visit to Barnes Air National Guard Base in Westfield on February 3. The tour will help unify support for Massachusetts military jobs and investments as the Lieutenant Governor receives overviews and tours of the bases with regional partners and federal, state and local officials. In addition to visiting Barnes, Lieutenant Governor Murray plans to visit Hanscom Air Force Base in Bedford and Westover Air Reserve Base in Chicopee in March and Natick Soldier Systems Center in Natick, Massachusetts Military Reservation / Otis Air National Guard Base on the Cape and Fort Devens in April.

"I am grateful for the leadership position that Lieutenant Governor Murray has taken to preserve the presence of the United States Military in the Commonwealth," said Major General Joseph C. Carter, The Adjutant General of the Massachusetts National Guard. "I am looking forward to working with my colleague, Major General Scott Rice, Commander of the Massachusetts Air National Guard, to ensure that the Massachusetts National Guard remains in the future as it is today: a strong, ready and relevant force of Citizen-Soldiers and Airmen who contribute to the life and vitality of the Commonwealth and the defense of our Nation."

"Lieutenant Governor Murray's new task force is another important example that all hands are on deck to ensure that the mission and workers at Massachusetts military bases aren't hurt due to the fiscal

problems facing our nation,” said Senator John Kerry. “We have a good story to tell and we’re going to tell it, because technologies and equipment conceptualized, researched, developed and manufactured at facilities across our Massachusetts help the military execute its mission at the highest levels.”

“We must remember that protecting our military installations in Massachusetts is critical to our national security and to our economy,” said Senator Scott Brown. “As I’ve said before, this is a team fight. We must continue to identify new opportunities in Massachusetts to add new missions, like cyber warfare that meet our nation’s most pressing threats. I will continue to work with the congressional delegation and the Lieutenant Governor to realize these important objectives.”

“The creation of the Military Asset and Security Strategy Task Force is an example of how Massachusetts is not just the Bay State – we are the Brain State,” said Congressman Edward Markey. “We have the leading educational institutions and private companies whose innovation is critical to strengthening our national security in the 21st century. I applaud the Patrick-Murray Administration for building this coalition to develop plans for our vital military installations. I look forward to working with the Task Force to ensure that these intellectual and technical assets are protected and continue to support the protection of our nation’s defense.”

“I am partnering with my colleagues in the Massachusetts delegation and will be working with the Military Asset and Security Strategy Task Force to highlight the vital importance of Hanscom Air Force Base as well as other installations in the Commonwealth which play critical roles in protecting our service men and women,” said Congresswoman Niki Tsongas. “The missions at our military facilities are supported by the universities and innovative high-tech companies that are unique to Massachusetts and the presence of these institutions has helped the military confront current threats and prepare for future ones.”

In addition to engaging local and regional support to help promote and protect the state’s military bases, the Task Force will develop, coordinate and implement actions in the areas of workforce training, infrastructure improvements, environmental and utility savings, housing and transportation to support the missions at military bases across the Commonwealth. Additionally, the Task Force will identify steps the state can take to remedy problem areas before preliminary recommendations from the federal government are adopted and missions are implemented. Lastly, Lieutenant Governor Murray and members of the Task Force will advise the Governor, Executive and Legislative Branch officials regarding the ongoing efforts by the U.S. Department of Defense to close, realign, restructure, streamline, or in any way impact military bases in Massachusetts.

“I commend Lieutenant Governor Murray for taking the initiative to bring together business, education, government and the community to support the important relationship that Massachusetts has with the defense industry,” said Jack Wilson, chairman of the Defense Technology Initiative. “Massachusetts is home to a large number of jobs that directly and indirectly relate to the defense industry and forging this partnership on the community level is critical to the Commonwealth and nation’s economic and military security.”

“It is important that we expand the mission and operations of our military bases to keep them open and grow jobs,” Senate President Therese Murray said. “Our bases are essential to the state’s regional economies and our military families. That’s why, in 2006, I made sure we invested in homeland security

and other high-tech training at the Massachusetts Military Reservation on the Cape and it's why this new Task Force established by the Administration will help improve military programs and facilities across the Commonwealth."

"The Commonwealth's military assets play an important role in the economy of our state and in the defense of our nation," House Speaker Robert DeLeo said. "I look forward to the work of Lieutenant Governor Murray and the Patrick Administration on the Military Asset and Security Task Force."

As Chair of the Task Force, Lieutenant Governor Murray will convene regular meetings and work towards reaching identified goals of the Task Force joined by the following members or their designees: the Secretary of the Executive Office of Public Safety and Security; The Adjutant General of the Massachusetts National Guard; the Commander of the Massachusetts Air National Guard; the Secretary of the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development; the Secretary of the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development; the Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs; the Secretary of the Executive Office of Education; the Secretary of Administration and Finance; the Secretary of the Department of Transportation; the Chief Executive Officer of the Massachusetts Port Authority; the Secretary of the Department of Veterans' Services; the President and Chief Executive Officer of MassDevelopment; one member from the Massachusetts State Senate, recommended by the Senate President; and one member from the Massachusetts House of Representatives, recommended by the Speaker of the House.

Since 2007, Lieutenant Governor Murray has led the Governor's Advisory Council on Veterans' Services and the executive order establishing the "Commonwealth's Military Asset and Security Strategy Task Force" builds on the Administration's commitment to the Massachusetts veterans' community, our regional economies and the state's defense industry. To learn more about the Patrick-Murray Administration's commitment to Massachusetts veterans, visit www.mass.gov/veterans.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR MURRAY TOURS WESTOVER AIR RESERVE BASE; CONVENES MEETING OF NEW TASK FORCE TO UNIFY SUPPORT FOR MILITARY JOBS AND INVESTMENTS

CHICOPEE – Thursday, March 15, 2012 – Lieutenant Governor Timothy Murray today toured Westover Air Reserve Base as part of his tour of military bases across the Commonwealth to build grassroots support to protect the missions, jobs and economic investments associated with the bases. Lieutenant Governor Murray was joined on the tour by local, state and federal officials as well as Air Force base leaders, business association leaders and members of the community.

Following the tour, Lieutenant Governor Murray chaired a meeting of the newly created Military Asset and Security Strategy Task Force, which included a roundtable discussion at Westover Metropolitan Airport.

“Through proactive planning, Massachusetts has and will continue to position the state to protect our military bases,” said Lieutenant Governor Murray. “Massachusetts’ strong military presence and related defense industry is critical to our economy and our residents. Through the work of this Task Force, the Patrick-Murray Administration will work tirelessly with our congressional delegation and partners across the state to keep Westover Air Reserve Base and all of Massachusetts’ military bases open and their missions intact.”

Today’s visit to Westover Air Reserve Base is the third of at least six visits to the state’s military bases. In addition to Westover, Lieutenant Governor Murray has toured Barnes Air National Guard Base in Westfield and Hanscom Air Force Base, and plans to tour the Massachusetts Military Reservation / Otis Air National Guard Base in Falmouth, Natick Soldier Systems Center in Natick and Fort Devens in April.

“Each visit helps build the record and arms us to tell the real Massachusetts story in the BRAC process,” said U.S. Senator John Kerry. “Lieutenant Governor Murray’s visit to Westover helps highlight the work they’re doing there, and gives greater definition to the story we need to tell about the defense installations and industry in Massachusetts.”

“I don’t believe the lopsided cuts to the Air Reserve Components are in the best interest of our national security,” said U.S. Senator Scott Brown. “Westover Air Reserve Base is a valuable strategic defense asset and plays a valuable role in the Massachusetts economy. The Air Force’s proposal to halve the 439th Airlift Wing’s C-5 aircraft is ill-advised and will hurt our nation’s critical, global strategic airlift capabilities.”

“I’m grateful to the Patrick-Murray Administration – particularly the Lieutenant Governor – for their leadership on this issue,” said U.S. Congressman Jim McGovern. “The Task Force is an important part of

our efforts to grow and strengthen our economy and to help keep our country safe.”

On February 27, Lieutenant Governor Murray signed an executive order establishing the Commonwealth’s Military Asset and Security Strategy Task Force. The Task Force, chaired by the Lieutenant Governor, engages state agencies to work directly with stakeholders to develop and implement actions that will support military bases across the Commonwealth. Today’s visit to Westover is just one example of the work the Task Force is leading.

The executive order builds on the work Lieutenant Governor Murray has led over the last year, including a series of strategy meetings with Administration cabinet secretaries and private sector groups such as the Massachusetts Defense Technology Initiative to gather current data and perspectives about each military base so Massachusetts can better position, promote and protect assets for each base. The Task Force will work towards completing a comprehensive strategic plan in the coming months.

“Our military bases are part of the fabric of the Commonwealth and we’re looking for new ways to maintain and enhance these facilities with investments in areas such as energy efficiency or clean energy, which create local jobs and upgrade existing infrastructure,” said Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs Richard K. Sullivan Jr.

In addition to engaging local and regional support to help promote and protect the state’s military bases, the Task Force will develop, coordinate and implement actions in the areas of workforce training, infrastructure improvements, environmental and utility savings, housing and transportation to support the missions at military bases across the Commonwealth. Additionally, the Task Force will identify steps the state can take to remedy problem areas before preliminary recommendations from the federal government are adopted and missions are implemented. Lieutenant Governor Murray and members of the Task Force will advise the Governor, Executive and Legislative Branch officials regarding the ongoing efforts by the U.S. Department of Defense to close, realign, restructure, streamline, or in any way impact military bases in Massachusetts.

In January, the U.S. Department of Defense announced a plan to reduce federal defense spending by approximately \$500 billion over the next decade as a result of federal deficit reduction negotiations. The Department of Defense explained that cuts would be achieved in part by reducing total force numbers and relying on technological advances to build a more streamlined military. The Pentagon also requested that Congress authorize a Base Realignment and Closure Commission (BRAC) to recommend the closure or consolidation of select military bases across the country.

“I commend Lieutenant Governor Murray for taking the initiative to bring together business, education, government and the community to support the important relationship that Massachusetts has with the defense industry – particularly here near Westover Air Reserve Base,” said Jack Wilson, chairman of the Defense Technology Initiative. “Massachusetts is home to a large number of jobs that directly and indirectly relate to the defense industry and forging this partnership on the community level is critical to western Massachusetts and nation’s economic and military security.”

“The Chicopee Chamber appreciates what the Lt. Governor is doing in his grassroots efforts to bring

awareness to the importance of our military bases in the Commonwealth,” said Gail A. Sherman, President of the Chicopee Chamber of Commerce. “Chicopee’s Westover Air Reserve Base is the largest reserve base in the nation.”

During today’s visit, Lieutenant Governor Murray also highlighted recent initiatives in support of the state’s veterans and defense industry. The Patrick-Murray Administration’s FY 2013 budget proposal includes \$11.25 million in increased funding for vital veterans’ services, including workforce training. The defense industry and its workforce is also a major part of Massachusetts’ economy with thousands of employees working at the state’s military bases and more than \$14 billion in defense contracts awarded to Massachusetts firms in 2010.

“As the nation’s largest Air Force Reserve base, Westover is an extraordinarily valuable asset to our country’s armed forces,” said Representative Joseph F. Wagner. “It is also a catalyst for our region’s economy, generating more than \$200 million in economic activity every year. I applaud Lieutenant Governor Murray and the Military Asset and Security Strategy Task Force for their work to protect and strengthen Massachusetts’ military installations.”

“Many of my constituents are in the military and are proud to serve their country,” said Representative Nicholas Boldyga. “I look forward to working with my colleagues in the legislature to protect and preserve jobs at military installations across the Commonwealth.”

Since 2007, Lieutenant Governor Murray has led the Governor’s Advisory Council on Veterans’ Services and today’s announcement tour builds on the Administration’s commitment to the Massachusetts veterans’ community, our regional economies and the state’s defense industry. To learn more about the Patrick-Murray Administration’s commitment to Massachusetts veterans, visit www.mass.gov/veterans.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR MURRAY EXPANDS MASSACHUSETTS' MILITARY ASSET AND SECURITY STRATEGY TASK FORCE

Murray announces four subcommittees to support state's efforts to protect military bases

NEWTON – Wednesday, March 16, 2012 – Lieutenant Governor Timothy Murray today announced the state's Military Asset and Security Strategy Task Force will expand to include four subcommittees: Business, Industry and Military Alignment; Education, Innovation and Workforce Development; Community and Municipal Support and Engagement; and Military Mission, Operations, Opportunities and Efficiencies.

The Military Asset and Security Strategy Task Force (the Task Force) was created by Executive Order on February 27 to work with stakeholders to develop and implement actions that will better position, promote and protect Massachusetts' six military bases: Barnes Air National Guard Base in Westfield; Westover Air Reserve Base in Chicopee; Hanscom Air Force Base in Bedford; U.S. Army's Soldier Systems Center in Natick; the Massachusetts Military Reservation on the Cape; and Fort Devens.

Lieutenant Governor Murray outlined specific goals of the Business, Industry and Military Alignment subcommittee at the Massachusetts High Technology Council's Annual Meeting today in Newton. The Business, Industry and Military Alignment subcommittee will include a partnership between MassDevelopment, an existing member of the Task Force, the Defense Technology Initiative (DTI) and the New England Council to establish a convener for local businesses and the defense industry.

"During my visits to each of the state's military bases, it became even more clear how critically important our military bases are to the state's local and regional economies," said Lieutenant Governor Murray, Chair of the Military Asset and Security Strategy Task Force. "By working closely with the Defense Technology Initiative and the New England Council, the Task Force now has an official partnership representing Massachusetts' defense industry and business community. With military bases and defense and aerospace industries generating more than 120,000 jobs in Massachusetts, we need the business community to stay engaged as we work together to protect the jobs, investment and missions in and around our military bases."

The DTI, created by the Massachusetts High Technology Council during the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC), is building a strong case to protect the defense industry across New England. In Massachusetts, DTI has assembled a team that includes local business and industry experts including:

MITRE, MIT's Lincoln Labs, Draper Labs, BAE Systems, Textron, Lockheed Martin, Dynamics Research Corporation, Oasis Systems, Northeastern University and the University of Massachusetts.

DTI created Science and Technology boards at the U.S. Army's Soldier Systems Center in Natick and Hanscom Air Force Base following the 2005 BRAC to demonstrate a strong and effective network across government, industry and academia to leverage resources and develop innovative technologies that support the state's military bases and the economy. As a leader of the Business, Industry and Military Alignment subcommittee, DTI will further advance this work on behalf of the Commonwealth.

"We appreciate the leadership of Lieutenant Governor Murray in formalizing and enhancing collaborative efforts to support our military installations and defense technology assets," said Christopher Anderson, president of the Defense Technology Initiative and the Massachusetts High Technology Council. "There are significant challenges facing the increasingly technology-oriented defense and homeland security priorities of the federal government. Our capacity to align premier defense technology cluster assets in Massachusetts and New England with those priorities is essential and employing a proven public-private model – led by DTI, MassDevelopment and other regional partners – is the best way to preserve and enhance the bases, create jobs and support the mission of the U.S. military."

The New England Council, another member of the Business, Industry and Military Alignment subcommittee, will work with businesses and the industry statewide to support Massachusetts' six military bases. The New England Council will act as a convener for chambers of commerce in Massachusetts, including chambers surrounding the state's military bases. The New England Council also has a long-standing relationship with the New England Congressional Delegation as well as the business community. With these relationships, the Council will increase partnerships among New England chambers of commerce to strengthen the entire region's message of protecting military assets and bases.

"New England's military installations play a critical role in our region's economy and it is crucial that the public and private sectors throughout the six states come together to support and protect them," said James Brett, President and CEO of The New England Council. "The New England Council looks forward to working with the Lieutenant Governor and DTI to make the strongest case for why these bases and facilities are so important to our region's economic wellbeing and security."

In 2011, DTI commissioned a study with the UMass Donahue Institute to evaluate defense contracting trends in New England and document the contributions that support defense missions in the region. The New England Council is partnering with DTI, the Task Force, MassDevelopment and the UMass Donahue Institute for the release of this data, expected in June 2012.

"The Patrick-Murray Administration has made strong investments in growing the Commonwealth's

innovation economy, further strengthening Massachusetts as a world leader in innovation and technology,” said Greg Bialecki, Secretary of Housing and Economic Development. “By expanding the Task Force to include the business and defense industry, we can work towards delivering the best resources, equipment, and technology for Massachusetts’ military bases.”

“I am honored to be a part of the commonwealth’s Military Asset and Security Strategy Task Force,” said Major General L. Scott Rice, The Adjutant General (Acting) of Massachusetts. “The men and women of the Massachusetts National Guard have been proudly serving the great people of Massachusetts both overseas and here at home for 375 years. I find it both humbling and extraordinary that the people we defend are now joining in an effort to defend and protect Massachusetts’ military missions. I support the Administration’s initiative to expand the Task Force into four specialized areas and look forward to continued collaboration with each subcommittee.”

The four newly created subcommittees will further engage the public with the state’s efforts to support Massachusetts’ military bases. DTI and the New England Council will lead the Business, Industry and Military Alignment subcommittee, which is intended to also include each regional chamber of commerce president or director in Massachusetts. Additionally, the Science and Technology boards at Natick Soldier Systems and Hanscom Air Force Base will be invited to appoint a liaison to serve on the Business, Industry and Military Alignment subcommittee. The Education, Innovation and Workforce Development subcommittee will be selected by the chair of the Task Force and secretaries of Education and Labor and Workforce Development. The Community and Municipal Support and Engagement subcommittee will include representation by each municipal manager in a base or surrounding community. The Military Mission, Operations, Opportunities and Efficiencies subcommittee will include representatives from various state agencies and retired military servicemen and women.

Additionally, state Senator Michael Rush and state Representative James Vallee, two appointed members on the Task Force, will create a Legislative Caucus within the Task Force to engage their colleagues in the legislature.

With the support of Governor Deval Patrick, Lieutenant Governor Murray signed Executive Order #541 creating the Task Force on February 27. As chair of the Task Force, Lieutenant Governor Murray leads regular meetings including tours and roundtable discussions in support of the state’s six military bases. The Executive Order authorizes the chair to expand the Task Force to “establishing working groups, meetings, forums and any other activity” in support of promoting and protecting Massachusetts’ military bases. To learn more about the Task Force, please visit: www.mass.gov/governor/militarytaskforce.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR MURRAY TOURS THE MASSACHUSETTS MILITARY RESERVATION; CONVENES MEETING OF NEW TASK FORCE TO UNIFY SUPPORT FOR MILITARY JOBS AND INVESTMENTS

BUZZARDS BAY – Monday, April 9, 2012 – Lieutenant Governor Timothy Murray today toured the Massachusetts Military Reservation (MMR) as part of his tour of military bases across the Commonwealth to build grassroots support to protect the missions, jobs and economic investments associated with the bases. Lieutenant Governor Murray was joined on the tour by local, state and federal officials as well as leadership from the Massachusetts National Guard, Otis Air National Guard, Camp Edwards, United States Coast Guard and the 6th Space Warning Squadron PavePAWS.

Following the tour, Lieutenant Governor Murray chaired a meeting of the Military Asset and Security Strategy Task Force, which included a roundtable discussion at Camp Edwards.

“Through proactive planning, Massachusetts has and will continue to position the state to protect our military bases,” said Lieutenant Governor Murray. “By touring the bases, including the Massachusetts Military Reservation, the Task Force is able to gather more information on each base to help promote the work of the missions and operations that protect our Commonwealth and national security. Our Administration will work tirelessly with our congressional delegation and partners across the state to keep the Massachusetts Military Reservation and all of Massachusetts’ military bases open and their missions intact.”

Today’s visit is the fourth of at least six visits to the state’s military bases. In addition to the MMR, Lieutenant Governor Murray has toured Barnes Air National Guard Base in Westfield, Hanscom Air Force Base, and Westover Air Reserve Base in Chicopee and plans to also tour Natick Soldier Systems Center in Natick in April and Fort Devens in May.

“Being on the ground at our bases will help the Governor, Lieutenant Governor and our congressional delegation make the case for why Massachusetts can and must continue to lead in our national defense strategy and industry,” said U.S. Senator John Kerry. “We’ve got a good story to tell and we’re going to tell it, because technologies and equipment conceptualized, researched, developed and manufactured at facilities across Massachusetts help the military execute its mission at the highest levels.”

“For over a century, the Massachusetts Military Reservation has played a defining role in the defense of our Commonwealth,” said U.S. Senator Scott Brown. “Today, it continues that tradition of excellence by meeting our nation’s most challenging security needs. It’s an irreplaceable installation whose joint mission represents a model for the future of inter-service cooperation and integration. But even more importantly, the Soldiers, Airmen and Coast Guardsmen assigned there make major sacrifices in both overseas operations and the security of our homeland on a daily basis. I will continue to work to ensure the MMR

has the tools necessary to do what it's done for over a century: deliver and project an enormous defense capability."

"The Massachusetts Military Reservation and the people who work there are not only important to our community and local economy, but also to our homeland security," said U.S. Congressman Bill Keating. "The jobs that I have been fighting to save at Otis are a critical component of our national defense, and I am encouraged that Lieutenant Governor Murray is touring the Reservation on Monday. The Patrick-Murray Administration have been great partners in promoting the importance of this facility and in working to preserve these jobs."

On February 27, 2012, Lieutenant Governor Murray signed an executive order establishing the Commonwealth's Military Asset and Security Strategy Task Force. The Task Force, which is chaired by Lieutenant Governor Murray, engages state agencies to work directly with stakeholders to develop and implement actions that will support military bases across the Commonwealth. Today's visit to MMR is just one example of the work the Task Force is leading.

The executive order builds on the work Lieutenant Governor Murray has led over the last year, including a series of strategy meetings with Administration cabinet secretaries and private sector groups such as the Massachusetts Defense Technology Initiative to gather current data and perspectives about each military base so Massachusetts can better position, promote and protect assets for each base. The Task Force will work towards completing a comprehensive strategic plan in the coming months.

"It is important that we expand the mission and operations of our military bases to keep them open and to help create jobs," said Senate President Therese Murray. "Our bases are essential to the state's regional economies and to our military families. In 2006, we invested in homeland security and other high-tech training at the Massachusetts Military Reservation on the Cape. And with the Administration's new Task Force, we will help improve military programs and facilities across the Commonwealth."

In addition to engaging local and regional support to help promote and protect the state's military bases, the Task Force will develop, coordinate and implement actions in the areas of workforce training, infrastructure improvements, environmental and utility savings, housing and transportation to support the missions at military bases across the Commonwealth. Additionally, the Task Force will identify steps the state can take to remedy problem areas before preliminary recommendations from the federal government are adopted and missions are implemented. Lieutenant Governor Murray and members of the Task Force will advise the Governor, as well as other executive and legislative officials, regarding the ongoing efforts by the U.S. Department of Defense to close, realign, restructure, streamline, or in any way impact military bases in Massachusetts.

"Our military bases are part of the fabric of the Commonwealth and we're looking for new ways to maintain and enhance these facilities with investments in areas such as energy efficiency or clean energy, which create local jobs and upgrade existing infrastructure," said Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs Richard K. Sullivan Jr.

In January, the U.S. Department of Defense announced a plan to reduce federal defense spending by approximately \$500 billion over the next decade as a result of federal deficit reduction negotiations. The

Department of Defense explained that cuts would be achieved in part by reducing total force numbers and relying on technological advances to build a more streamlined military. The Pentagon also requested that Congress authorize a Base Realignment and Closure Commission (BRAC) to recommend the closure or consolidation of select military bases across the country.

"I commend Lieutenant Governor Murray for taking the initiative to bring together business, education, government and the community to support the important relationship that Massachusetts has with the defense industry – particularly here near the Massachusetts Military Reservation," said Jack Wilson, chairman of the Defense Technology Initiative. "Massachusetts is home to a large number of jobs that directly and indirectly relate to the defense industry and forging this partnership on the community level is critical to this region, the Commonwealth, and the nation's economic and military security."

"The Cape Cod Chamber welcomes the Lieutenant Governor's leadership on the issue of retaining a vigorous defense industry in Massachusetts and on Cape Cod," said Wendy Northcross, CEO of the Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce. "We look forward to working with the Lieutenant Governor on a plan for the future of the Mass Military Reservation."

"The Massachusetts Military Reservation is the largest and most diverse military installation in the commonwealth; supporting not only critical military and homeland defense missions but also home to many non-military federal and public entities," said Colonel Anthony E. Schiavi, 102nd Intelligence Wing commander. "With the support of the local community and by exposing Lieutenant Governor Murray's Military Asset and Security Strategy task force to the MMR's yet untapped potential for growth, we can ensure the security of this vital installation for our national defense, support to the commonwealth and the economic security of the local community."

"I thank Lieutenant Governor Murray for his leadership and vision to find new and innovative ways to strengthen the bond between our military organizations and our communities across the commonwealth," said Colonel Richard Crivello, Commander, HQs, ARNG Training Site. "Since 1935, Camp Edwards has played a significant role in the defense of the United States of America. In times of war and in times of peace, the men and women of the Massachusetts Army National Guard have successfully trained at Camp Edwards for missions to protect the citizens of the commonwealth here at home and overseas. Today, more than ever, the importance of Camp Edwards cannot be underestimated. Since September 11, 2001, we have fostered the training of Soldiers, Sailors, Marines, Airmen and Coast Guardsmen for deployment overseas to Kosovo, Iraq, Afghanistan and many other locations around the world. We must recognize the importance of training responsibly to protect the natural resources and the drinking water supply of the entire Upper Cape Region. I look forward to working with the Task Force to promote military readiness and increase the economic vitality of the commonwealth of Massachusetts."

During today's visit, Lieutenant Governor Murray also highlighted recent initiatives in support of the state's veterans and defense industry. The Patrick-Murray Administration's Fiscal Year 2013 budget proposal includes \$11.25 million in increased funding for vital veterans' services, including workforce training. The defense industry and its workforce is also a major part of Massachusetts' economy with thousands of employees working at the state's military bases and more than \$14 billion in defense contracts awarded to Massachusetts firms in 2010.

Since 2007, Lieutenant Governor Murray has led the Governor's Advisory Council on Veterans' Services and today's tour builds on the Administration's commitment to the Massachusetts veterans' community, our regional economies and the state's defense industry. To learn more about the Patrick-Murray Administration's commitment to Massachusetts veterans, visit: www.mass.gov/veterans. To learn about the work of the Military Asset and Security Strategy Task Force visit: <http://www.mass.gov/governor/administration/lsgov/lgcommittee/military/>.

GOVERNOR PATRICK SIGNS VALOR ACT TO INCREASE OPPORTUNITIES FOR VETERANS

Legislation increases opportunities for veteran-owned businesses, Gold Star Families, military children and higher education access

BOSTON – Thursday, May 31, 2012 – Governor Deval Patrick today signed Senate Bill 2254, "An Act Relative to Veterans' Access, Livelihood, Opportunity, and Resources", also known as the VALOR Act. The legislation creates increased supports for veteran-owned businesses, Gold Star Families, military children and higher education access in the Commonwealth.

"I am proud to sign the VALOR Act to enhance our already strong supports for veterans," said Governor Patrick. "Massachusetts continues to lead the nation in providing services for veterans and their families, and this legislation will further reinforce our leadership."

"While this past Memorial Day reminded the nation to honor our brave military servicemen and women, the signing of the VALOR Act pledges to support our veterans and their families throughout the year by increasing access and opportunities for services they have rightfully earned," said Lieutenant Governor Timothy Murray, Chair of the Governor's Advisory Council on Veterans' Services. "I am proud to have partnered with the Department of Veterans' Services, Senator Rush, Representative Vallee, and the state legislature to provide our veterans and their families with these benefits including access to education, business assistance, and relief for critical services."

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 relief fund, which derives its funding from a voluntary tax check off on income tax returns, is used to defray the costs of food, housing, utilities, medical service and other expenses borne by Massachusetts National Guard and reserve service members and their families.

"One of the most important services we can provide is to support our veterans and their families," said Attorney General Martha Coakley. "The VALOR Act not only symbolizes our commitment to the 385,000 veterans living in Massachusetts but the level of respect and appreciation we have for all that they and their families have sacrificed to protect the freedom we enjoy in our country."

"With the signing of this bill, we are once again doing what's right for our veterans and service men and women in the Commonwealth," said Senate President Therese Murray. "Massachusetts is number one in

services for veterans, active military and their families, and I am proud to live in a state that not only recognizes the responsibility to give back, but wants to give back. The Valor Act sets an example for the nation in recognizing our veterans and service members and making sure they and their families continue to have proper benefits and the right opportunities for employment and education.”

“I commend the Patrick-Murray Administration for their support of this important bill,” said House Speaker Robert A. DeLeo. “In signing this legislation, we are reinforcing our commitment to veterans. Although we can never fully repay our servicemen and women for their heroism and sacrifice, this signature shows that we will continue to support and help veterans transition when they return home to Massachusetts.”

“We are constantly working to advance opportunities for veterans, including those returning from Iraq and Afghanistan,” said Health and Human Services Secretary Dr. JudyAnn Bigby. “The VALOR Act will address many of the unique challenges that today’s veterans and their children face.”

“In Massachusetts, we have always taken the approach that providing services to veterans and their families is more than a ceremonial duty,” said Department of Veterans’ Services Secretary Coleman Nee. “Ensuring access to health care, education, employment and financial security are the cornerstones of how we honor and provide for the men and women of the Commonwealth who have served us in uniform. The signing of the VALOR Act will strengthen that commitment significantly and reinforce the legacy of Massachusetts leading the way in supporting those that have defended and protected our Nation in times of war and peace.”

“The heroic sacrifices of our veterans are shared by their families,” said Secretary of Education Paul Reville. “The VALOR Act will ease the transition for children of those serving in the military in areas such as course placement, course credit, and testing by joining Massachusetts in the Interstate Compact for Military Children.”

Under the VALOR Act, Massachusetts will join other states as part of the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children. The Compact is a tool for schools to make transition easier for the children of military families so that they are afforded the same opportunities for educational success as other children and are not penalized or delayed in achieving their educational goals. The average military student faces transition challenges more than twice during high school, and most military children will attend six to nine different school systems from kindergarten to 12th grade.

The VALOR Act also calls for the state Board of Higher Education to require each public institution of higher education to develop a set of policies and procedures governing the evaluation of a student’s military occupation(s), military training, coursework, and experience, in order to determine whether academic credit shall be awarded for such experience, training, and coursework. The policy must be in place by March 1, 2013.

“This new law encompasses some of the very best ideas presented by my colleagues in the Legislature and the veterans of the Commonwealth to assist veterans and their families at a time when we are seeing an increase of military men and women returning from deployment overseas,” said Senator Michael Rush. “The signing of the VALOR Act by Governor Patrick marks a proud moment in which Massachusetts renews its commitment to provide for our veterans, service members and their families.”

“I thank Governor Patrick, Lieutenant Governor Murray, and the entire Administration for working in partnership with the Legislature to improve services for Massachusetts veterans,” said Representative James Vallee. “As a veteran, I understand first-hand the challenges military servicemen and women may experience in their transition home, and I am honored to help the Commonwealth expand access and availability for a range of critical services to support our fellow veterans.”

The VALOR Act also streamlines the process for school-aged children of military personnel to transfer between school districts and states; prohibits local hiring authorities from requesting any military medical records that are not requested by the Human Resources Department; and eliminates the \$2,500 cap that applies to years six and beyond of the property tax exemption for surviving spouses of a soldier, sailor, or member of the National Guard whose death occurred as a proximate result of an injury sustained or disease contracted in a combat zone.

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 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.

Last fall, after working with the state legislature and the veterans' community, Lieutenant Governor Murray introduced an initiative in partnership with major trade associations in Massachusetts to encourage their employers to hire veterans and circulate information on veterans' benefits. Additionally, the Patrick-Murray Administration launched an Interagency Task Force on Hiring Veterans, directing all executive branch agencies to promote the benefits of hiring veterans. Through the Registry of Motor Vehicles, veterans are also now given the option to list their veteran status on the front of their driver's license and state identification cards in order to more easily access services. The Patrick-Murray Administration also proposed to increase veterans' services by 13% in the Fiscal Year 2013 Budget.

The Patrick-Murray Administration recently launched a new web portal MassVetsAdvisor.org to help veterans and their family members access more than 200 state and federal benefits in one location. MassVetsAdvisor provides access to programs for education, counseling, employment, health care and other services.

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.

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.

GOVERNOR PATRICK SIGNS BILL TO RENAME YARMOUTH OVERPASS AFTER MARINE CORPORAL NICHOLAS G. XIARHOS



Governor Patrick joined the parents of Corporal Nicholas Xiarhos to sign H. 4156, "An Act Designating A Certain Overpass in the town of Yarmouth as the Marine Corporal Nicholas G. Xiarhos Veterans Memorial Overpass." (Photo credit: Jeremiah Robinson / Governor's Office) View additional [photos](#).

BOSTON – Wednesday, July 25, 2012 – Governor Deval Patrick today joined family members and legislators to sign H. 4156, "An Act Designating A Certain Overpass in the town of Yarmouth as the Marine Corporal Nicholas G. Xiarhos Veterans Memorial Overpass." The legislation will rename the overpass on North Dennis Road spanning Route 6 in Yarmouth after Marine Corporal Nicholas G. Xiarhos, who died in action in Afghanistan on July 23, 2009.

"I am proud to honor a young man who made the ultimate sacrifice in defense of our Commonwealth, our country and our freedom," said Governor Patrick. "This is just a small measure of our gratitude for Nicholas Xiarhos, his family and his community."

Nicholas Xiarhos graduated from Dennis-Yarmouth Regional High School in 2006. Nine days after graduating from high school, he entered the United States Marine Corps Boot Camp at Parris Island in

South Carolina. On September 22, 2006, he earned the title of United States Marine. Nicholas died on the battlefield in the Garmsir District of Helmand province in Southern Afghanistan on July 23, 2009 while going to the rescue of his fellow Marines in combat.

“This legislation is important to the Xiarhos family and to the larger Cape Cod community in honoring their fallen son, U.S. Marine Corps. Corporal Nicholas G. Xiarhos,” said Representative Demetrius Atsalis, sponsor of the bill. “It became one of my priorities for me to see my office work for the final passage of this bill before the end of this legislative session. I believe that Marine Corporal Nicholas G. Xiarhos’ family and friends, along with other Cape Cod War Veterans, can justifiably be proud of this venerable moment.”

“Today’s ceremony marks a time-honored tradition, a promise never to forget those who sacrifice for our country,” said Senator Dan Wolf. “Every time I pass this bridge, now named for a fallen hero, in my heart I will renew that promise.”

“Nicholas Xiarhos was an outstanding young man, and I am reminded of this each time I walk into my office, as I have his picture on my office door,” said Representative Cleon Turner. “I was happy to suggest that the legislature name this overpass to honor Nick- it is already decorated with military flags and it was an overpass he traveled every day.”

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR MURRAY JOINS LEOMINSTER COMMUNITY TO DEDICATE THE JONATHAN ROBERGE MEMORIAL BRIDGE

Bridge dedicated in honor of fallen soldier from Leominster

LEOMINSTER – Monday, July 9, 2012 – Lieutenant Governor Timothy Murray today joined members of the Leominster community to dedicate the Jonathan Roberge Memorial Bridge in honor of Jonathan Roberge of Leominster, a 22-year-old private first class in the United States Army, who was killed in action near Mosul, Iraq on February 9, 2009.

"Massachusetts is proud to honor our veterans and pay respect to those fallen heroes who made the ultimate sacrifice while protecting our country's freedom," said Lieutenant Governor Murray, Chair of the Governor's Advisory Council on Veterans' Services. "With this newly dedicated memorial bridge, our Administration joins the Roberge family, the Leominster community and our colleagues in the state legislature to remember Jonathan Roberge for his service to our Commonwealth and our country."

Governor Deval Patrick signed [S. 1741](#), "An Act Designating a Certain Bridge in the City of Leominster as the Jonathan Roberge Memorial Bridge" on December 21, 2011, officially designating one of the bridges crossing the Nashua River in Leominster in Roberge's memory.

"There is no greater sacrifice a person can make than to give their life in defense of our nation and its citizens," said Department of Veterans' Services Secretary Coleman Nee. "The Jonathan Roberge Memorial Bridge will honor Jonathan's sacrifice, and serve as a reminder to all of his bravery and patriotism on behalf of a grateful nation."

"The City of Leominster, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the United States of America will be forever grateful for service and ultimate sacrifice made by PFC Jonathan Roberge while bravely defending our country's freedom," said Senator Jennifer Flanagan. "The bridge dedication is a mere symbol of the pride, sorrow and thankfulness we hold in our hearts."

"As a veteran, this is a bittersweet moment for me as we gather together to dedicate one of our local bridges in honor of our fallen hero, Jonathan Roberge," said Representative Dennis A. Rosa. "I am proud to have been a part of the legislation that brought us to this day."

Roberge was driving a Humvee when he and fellow soldiers in the 3rd Battalion 8th Calvary Regiment were attacked by insurgents with an improvised explosive device, taking his life. Roberge received the Bronze Star and the Purple Heart posthumously from the United States Army. He was a 2005 graduate of Leominster High School's Center for Technical Education, where he studied in the automotive technician program. He is a former mechanic for Gervais Ford in Ayer and a former Boy Scout. He is survived by his parents John and Pauline; his two sisters Meghan and Sarah; and a younger brother Andrew, who all joined Lieutenant Governor Murray for the dedication ceremony.

“The family is grateful for the outstanding support of the community,” said John Roberge, father of Jonathan Roberge.

“Jonathan Roberge made the ultimate sacrifice for our country. The dedication of this bridge in his name, so close to where he lived, will be a permanent remembrance of his commitment to his family, his community and his country,” said Mayor Dean Mazzarella of Leominster. “I hope both the bridge and the Roberge Park will serve as a place of comfort and peace for all veterans.”

Today’s dedication ceremony is part of the 4th Annual Massachusetts Awareness for Support and Services (MASS) Veterans Tour led by Lieutenant Governor Murray. Building on the success of three previous tours, the 4th Annual MASS Veterans Tour promotes services offered by the state as well as local and federal government and private and non-profit organizations for veterans and their families. In addition to today’s dedication ceremony, Lieutenant Governor Murray will highlight the state’s 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. Additional resources that will be highlighted during the tour include the work of the Military Asset and Security Strategy Task Force to protect the jobs and mission at the Commonwealth’s six military bases; initiatives to hire veterans and support workforce training for veterans; and partnerships to increase housing assistance to help end homelessness for veterans and transition veterans back to the workforce.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR MURRAY JOINS COMMUNITY TO DEDICATE THE FIRST LIEUTENANT DEREK S. HINES MEMORIAL BRIDGE

Amesbury, Newburyport, and Salisbury honor fallen U.S. soldier; Bridge Project using Innovative “Design-Build” Construction Techniques

AMESBURY – Monday, August 13, 2012 – Lieutenant Governor Timothy Murray today joined the Hines family and state and local officials for the dedication ceremony of the First Lieutenant Derek S. Hines Memorial Bridge in Amesbury. The bridge, which opened to traffic on Monday, August 6, 2012 had been closed since November 15, 2010 when construction began.

“Massachusetts is proud to honor our veterans and pay respect to those fallen heroes who made the ultimate sacrifice while protecting our country’s freedom,” said Lieutenant Governor Murray, Chair of the Governor’s Advisory Council on Veterans’ Services. “We dedicate this bridge that connects our communities and families as we come together to remember First Lieutenant Hines, a native of Newburyport, for his service and dedication to his community, Commonwealth, and country.”

The Hines Bridge was a \$34 million effort to replace a structurally deficient swing bridge. The bridge carries Main Street over the Merrimack River and connects Deer Island with Amesbury to the north and Newburyport to the south. The project was constructed using an innovative design-build construction technique that reduced the construction timeline.

“Through the leadership of Governor Patrick and Lieutenant Governor Murray, this Administration has made investment in our infrastructure a top priority,” said Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) Secretary and CEO Richard Davey. “By working with communities on both sides of the bridge, as well as with the Hines family, we are able to dedicate a finished product that we can all be proud of.”

The Hines Bridge was named after First Lieutenant Derek S. Hines, a 25-year-old Army Ranger who was killed in 2005 during a firefight in Afghanistan. Lieutenant Hines grew up in Newburyport and Amesbury. MassDOT and the contractor have worked closely with the Hines family and state representatives on a proposal to include a pedestal with a memorial plaque that will be installed on the pedestrian overlook constructed as part of the project.

“There is no greater sacrifice a person can make than to give their life in defense of our nation and its citizens,” said Department of Veterans’ Services Secretary Coleman Nee. “The First Lieutenant Derek S. Hines Bridge will honor Derek’s sacrifice, and serve as a reminder to all of his bravery and patriotism on behalf of a grateful Commonwealth and nation.”

"I was proud to sponsor the legislation with former Senator Steven Baddour to name this the Memorial Bridge for First Lieutenant Hines and collaborate with MassDOT and the Hines Family," said State Representative Michael A. Costello. "Since 1792, five structures have spanned this site- with the dedication today to Derek this bridge becomes an enduring symbol of honor and love."

"We are all very pleased that the Commonwealth has seen fit to add the enhancements that make this span a worthy memorial to First Lieutenant Hines. Derek's parents are each from Newburyport and Amesbury. How appropriate, that we will always remember his sacrifice through this bridge that also connects our two communities," said Amesbury Mayor Thatcher W. Kezer III.

"It is fitting today that we dedicate this bridge to honor the ultimate sacrifice given by First Lieutenant Derek Hines. As we approach the anniversary of his tragic passing, the bridge and the plaque will stand as a tribute to his bravery," said Newburyport Mayor Donna Holaday. "The Hines family has worked through these difficult years dealing with the loss of their son and we come together as officials and community members to say thank you."

MassDOT is using the design-build method on numerous projects to combine the traditional design-bid-build method into a single item with contractors responsible for design and construction of a project. Working together, design and construction teams are able to complete projects within shorter timelines.

The 2011 road and bridge construction effort will invest \$931 million in road and bridge repair projects, creating thousands of jobs and improving our infrastructure.

PATRICK-MURRAY ADMINISTRATION ANNOUNCES COMPREHENSIVE, NATION- LEADING ENERGY AUDITS FOR MASSACHUSETTS MILITARY BASES

\$1.5 million for energy efficiency, renewable energy and enhanced energy security at six military bases statewide

BOURNE – Thursday, January 17, 2013 – Lieutenant Governor Timothy Murray today joined Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Rick Sullivan at the Massachusetts Military Reservation to announce \$1.5 million in funding for a first-in-the-nation initiative that will include comprehensive energy audits of the state's six military bases.

An initiative of the Patrick-Murray Administration's Military Asset and Security Strategy Task Force, chaired by Lieutenant Governor Murray, the audits will build on the Commonwealth's leadership in clean energy, further align Massachusetts bases with the U.S. Department of Defense priorities and reduce energy consumption and costs.

"This is an excellent step forward, both for our valued military bases and for our energy goals in the Commonwealth," said Governor Deval Patrick. "I thank the Lieutenant Governor's Task Force for their innovative work and look forward to celebrating the results."

"Moving forward on these energy audits is a key example of the work the Task Force first set forth to complete," said Lieutenant Governor Murray, Chair of the Military Asset and Security Strategy Task Force. "The defense industry and our military bases rely heavily on energy, and it is critical that we develop innovative opportunities to enhance energy efficiency and deliver cost-savings for our bases."

The Military Asset and Security Strategy Task Force shares a goal with the U.S. Department of Defense, the nation's largest user of energy, to reduce energy costs at all military installations. To do so in the Commonwealth, the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources (DOER) will procure a contractor to conduct a comprehensive review of each base, including assessing each base for their energy use; establishing opportunities for renewable energy installations on site; and exploring the possibility of microgrid integration. For more information, review the full scope of work on DOER's website, <http://www.mass.gov/eea/docs/doer/massachusetts-military-bases-clean-energy-background.pdf>

Funding for this program comes from the 2011 Alternative Compliance Payments (ACP) Spending Plan. ACPs are paid by electric retail suppliers if they have insufficient Renewable Energy Certificates to meet their compliance obligations under the Commonwealth's Renewable Portfolio Standard. DOER establishes the plan for the use of those funds to support clean energy development in Massachusetts.

"The Patrick-Murray Administration has made energy efficiency and renewable energy a priority in Massachusetts," said Secretary Sullivan. "These audits will allow us to move forward with innovative energy projects at our bases, some of the largest energy users in the Commonwealth."

"The National Association of State Energy Officials has conducted a six-month review of various states' efforts to aid the military in finding cost-effective, innovative solutions to modernizing energy infrastructure and making facilities more energy efficient and sustainable," said David Terry, Executive Director of NASEO. "While there are many fine examples, Massachusetts is poised to be the national leader with its comprehensive approach to aiding bases in evaluating their energy needs, identifying solutions, and facilitating implementation. It's another great Massachusetts partnership program that will enhance local economic development and at the same time support of the exceptional work of our nation's military personnel."

The Commonwealth's six military bases are the Massachusetts Military Reservation on Cape Cod; Westover Air Reserve Base in Chicopee; Barnes Air National Guard Base in Westfield; Natick Soldier Systems Center in Natick; Fort Devens; and Hanscom Air Force Base.

In 2012, for the second consecutive year, Massachusetts was ranked the top state in the nation for energy-efficiency policies and programs by the American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy (ACEEE). This distinction recognizes the Commonwealth's ambitious energy agenda and accomplishments through the Green Communities Act, the Green Jobs Act and the Global Warming Solutions Act, all signed by Governor Patrick in 2008.

About the Military Asset and Security Strategy Task Force

Governor Patrick and Lieutenant Governor Murray have committed to supporting Massachusetts' military bases. In February 2012, with the support of Governor Patrick, Lieutenant Governor Murray signed Executive Order #541 creating the Military Asset and Security Strategy Task Force. As chair of the Task Force, Lieutenant Governor Murray and Task Force members led meetings including tours, roundtable discussions and committee meetings in support of the state's six military bases.

Over the last year, the Military Mission, Operations, Opportunities and Efficiencies Subcommittee of the Task Force, led by MassDevelopment and the National Guard, has joined base leadership to explore opportunities to achieve upgrades and efficiencies, including energy efficiencies, on each base.

In 2012, Lieutenant Governor Murray tasked MassDevelopment to collaborate with the UMass Donahue Institute and assess the economic benefits of Massachusetts' six military installations including. The report found that more than 46,500 jobs directly and indirectly are related to our installations that have an estimated economic impact of more than \$14.2 billion to Massachusetts.

To learn more about the Military Asset and Security Strategy Task Force, please visit: www.mass.gov/governor/militarytaskforce.

Supportive Statements

"Energy efficiency is intricately linked to our Nation's national security. Massachusetts and, in particular, the Massachusetts Military Reservation in my district, are already leaders on this front and are committed to further developing their self-sufficiency," said Congressman Bill Keating. "I applaud Governor Patrick and Lieutenant Governor Murray's initiative to help Massachusetts Military Reservation and other bases throughout Massachusetts identify additional opportunities for renewable energy and clean technology integration. It will not only help our environment and surrounding communities, but will also support the longevity of these installations, which in turn contribute greatly to our local economies. I stand ready to assist the Governor and Lieutenant Governor in moving this initiative forward and thank them for their tireless efforts on behalf of our military families, communities, and bases."

"Massachusetts is once again leading the way with state-of-the-art clean energy solutions, creating an opportunity for our military installations to serve as national models for efficiency and productivity," said Congresswoman Niki Tsongas. "I have worked with the Governor, Lieutenant Governor and their team to take important steps to ensure Massachusetts' bases have a strong and bright future, and remain some of our military's most innovative resources."

"I strongly believe we must always be looking at innovative ways to save money and increase our energy efficiency," said Congressman Jim McGovern. "These new efforts, under the guidance of the Task Force chaired by Lieutenant Governor Murray, will allow our military bases to become more efficient while increasing their security---a winning combination for the Commonwealth and our military. I commend the Patrick-Murray administration for their innovative, forward thinking leadership on this critical issue."

"This funding will allow us to take a close look at how we can reduce energy costs at all of our military bases in Massachusetts," said Senate President Therese Murray. "The Massachusetts Military Reservation on Cape Cod has always displayed a strong commitment to this effort by taking advantage of their renewable energy options and other initiatives to reduce operational costs. The information gathered from these audits will help our bases continue their conservation efforts and promote energy efficiency in the Commonwealth."

"These energy audits for military bases represent an exciting new innovation for the Commonwealth," said Senator Marc Pacheco. "I am pleased that we will be able to take a look at these bases and figure out ways to improve their energy consumption."

"The Massachusetts National Guard is excited to be part of Lt. Gov. Murray's team to develop and strengthen our state's military and civilian partnerships. This initiative will greatly benefit the commonwealth and secure a responsible future for all its military installations through the use of clean and cost effective energy," said Major General L. Scott Rice, The Adjutant General, Massachusetts National Guard. "It's a great opportunity to explore new missions and build partnerships that will further our individual and collective agency goals."

"Westover strives to be a good neighbor as we fulfill national security objectives," said Colonel Steven Vautrain, 439th Airlift Wing Commander at Westover Air Reserve Base. "Being as efficient as possible with our limited resources makes good sense from both budgetary and mission-impact standpoints. We look forward to continuing our positive relationship with the Commonwealth and exploring ways to save taxpayer money through energy conservation."

"The joint nature with which the commands at the Massachusetts Military Reservation on Cape Cod approach reducing energy consumption along with the design, development and installation of renewable energy projects is providing the Massachusetts Military Reservation with a diverse energy portfolio that will lead the installation toward its goal of energy reliability, redundancy and most importantly energy security," said Colonel Anthony Schiavi, Executive Director, Massachusetts Military Reservation. "This Clean Energy Assessment will be an important tool for us to use in advancing our programs to that end as well as explore other areas in a rapidly growing area of technology."

"Camp Edwards fully supports and applauds the efforts of Lt. Governor Murray and the entire Task Force for establishing the Clean Energy Project Team," said Colonel Richard Crivello, Commander of Camp Edwards Army National Guard Training Site. "We enthusiastically look forward to working with the Project Team to find new and innovative ways to reduce our energy consumption and carbon footprint while continuing to provide modern necessary and compatible training facilities for our deploying Massachusetts Army National Guard and Northeast Region military units."

"The 104th Fighter Wing has a reputation of being an environmental steward; from our robust recycling programs to designing our infrastructure--integrating the newest in energy efficiencies, we are always looking for green-approaches to completing our mission of Homeland Defense," said Colonel James Keefe, 104th Fighter Wing Commander at Barnes Air National Guard Base. "We are excited to explore additional opportunities to decrease our carbon foot-print through collaborating with the Clean Energy Project Team and the Lt. Governor's office."

"We at Fort Devens welcome the opportunity offered by Massachusetts of having an external agency provide an assessment of our energy programs," said Lt. Colonel Steven F. Egan at Fort Devens.

"The Air Force is always looking at ways to reduce our operating costs, increase energy efficiency and reduce our environmental impact," said Colonel Lester Weilacher, Hanscom Air Force Base Commander. "We welcome this opportunity to explore such opportunities in partnership with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts."

GOVERNOR PATRICK SIGNS EXECUTIVE ORDER TO ENHANCE OPPORTUNITIES FOR SMALL BUSINESSES OWNED BY DISABLED VETERANS

Patrick-Murray Administration to help Service Disabled Veteran Owned Small Businesses increase opportunities for public projects



Governor Patrick signs an Executive Order to help create business opportunities for service-disabled veteran-owned small businesses across the Commonwealth in the Governor's Council Chambers in the State House.

(Photo credit: Eric Haynes / Governor's Office)

BOSTON -- Friday, March 8, 2013 -- Governor Deval Patrick today signed an executive order to help small businesses owned by disabled veterans increase access to contracts for public projects in the areas of construction, design and goods and services procurement.

Governor Patrick and Lieutenant Governor Timothy Murray were joined by Secretary of Veterans' Services Coleman Nee, Secretary of Administration and Finance Glen Shor, Secretary of Education

Matthew Malone, members of the Joint Committee on Veterans and Federal Affairs, the Veterans Business Council and other veteran service organizations for the signing.

"Massachusetts leads the nation in veterans' benefits and services," said Governor Patrick. "This executive order will ensure our service-disabled veteran business owners are afforded every opportunity to succeed and grow in the Commonwealth."

"We have a moral obligation to do what we can to support our veterans who have sacrificed so much for our country," said Lieutenant Governor Murray, Chair of the Governor's Advisory Council on Veterans' Services. "As we continue to provide services for all veterans, we hope this executive order will serve as an effective tool to help service-disabled veteran-owned small businesses navigate through various business resources and thrive here in Massachusetts."

The executive order directs the Executive Office of Administration and Finance (A&F) to define program requirements and guidelines. A&F will then implement a participation goal requirement for service disabled veteran-owned small businesses to gain access to contracts for public projects in the areas of construction, design, and goods and services procurement. A&F will also establish a Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Business Enterprise Program to oversee the inclusion of business enterprises owned and controlled by service-disabled veterans in all areas of state procurement contracting.

"The Patrick-Murray Administration has once again stepped to the plate to support our disabled veterans," said Secretary Nee. "This is a win on so many levels. Disabled veteran owned businesses will see immediate opportunities, our returning disabled veterans will have access to more jobs, and the Commonwealth will see increased competition leading to reduced costs."

"The Patrick-Murray Administration has worked to support and expand opportunities for small, women and minority-owned businesses," said Secretary Shor. "I am pleased that today we are able to build on those efforts by enhancing economic opportunities for businesses owned by service-disabled veterans to ensure they have the proper tools so they can grow here in the Commonwealth."

In "An Act Relative to Veterans' Access Livelihood, Opportunity, and Resources" (The VALOR Act), which Governor Patrick signed last year, provides greater assistance to help veteran-owned small business participate in public projects. A&F's implementation of the executive order will help create jobs and reduce veteran unemployment.

"Governor Patrick's issuance of an Executive Order establishing an SDVOSB program for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts should be applauded and recognized by all," said Veterans Business Council President Arthur N. Mabbett. "Massachusetts has always been a leader in recognizing its veterans and their commitment to our great nation and the defense of peace and freedom everywhere. This new SDVOSB program will afford enhanced opportunities for all honorably discharged SDVs to compete for contract opportunities with the Commonwealth. In doing so, we further honor and recognize these veteran's service to our country and provide enhanced business and job creation opportunities for disabled veterans. By providing opportunities, new businesses can be created, existing businesses can grow and jobs can be added to the Commonwealth's workforce. The VBC applauds the Governor and his

Administration for their leadership regarding this vital matter. Massachusetts now joins 15 other states and the federal government in establishing a SDVOSB Program.”

“I want to applaud the Patrick-Murray Administration for continuing to provide enhanced opportunities for our veterans,” said Senator Mike Rush, co-chair of the Joint Committee on Veterans and Federal Affairs. “This executive order will have positive impacts on the Commonwealth in the areas of job creation and cost savings through competition. This no-cost, job creation measure will help grow service-disabled, veteran-owned businesses which will undoubtedly assist in reducing the number of unemployed veterans in our state.”

“Thanks to the efforts of the Patrick-Murray Administration, opportunities for veterans continue to grow and improve,” said Representative Carlo Basile, co-chair of the Joint Committee on Veterans and Federal Affairs. “By providing more supportive measures to service disabled, veteran owned businesses we are helping to decrease unemployment for our veterans, allow positive job growth for the Commonwealth, and support small businesses at no cost to the taxpayer.”

“Veterans undergo vigorous training and education during their military careers, so this executive order provides an opportunity to bring that unique skill set to assist the Commonwealth in government contracts,” said Representative Jerald Parisella, vice-chair of the Joint Committee on Veterans and Federal Affairs. “This action will not only benefit those veterans who have served the United States honorably, but be an asset to Massachusetts by having highly-motivated, disciplined individuals participate in programs that will benefit the citizens of the entire state.”

"Ensuring that our disabled veterans have every opportunity to start a small business, indeed to engage in every aspect of our communities, must be one of government's top priorities," said Senator Dan Wolf, a member of the Joint Committee on Veterans and Federal Affairs. "I commend our administration for finding one more creative avenue to help make that possible."

“It is a priority for us to assist our veteran business owners,” said Representative Claire Cronin, a member of the Joint Committee on Veterans and Federal Affairs.

There are 124 service-disabled veteran-owned businesses certified by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs located in Massachusetts. More than 385,000 veterans currently live in Massachusetts, including over 42,000 men and women who have served in Iraq and Afghanistan since 9/11. 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.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR MURRAY RELEASES PLAN TO PREVENT AND END VETERANS' HOMELESSNESS

Plan sets goals to end veteran homelessness by 2015

BOSTON – Tuesday, March 12, 2013 – Lieutenant Governor Murray today announced the release of the Massachusetts Interagency Council on Housing and Homelessness' [Integrated Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness Among Veterans](#). Joined by Massachusetts Department of Veterans' Services Secretary Coleman Nee, Department of Housing and Community Development Undersecretary Aaron Gornstein, officials from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), the Massachusetts Interagency Council on Housing and Homelessness (ICHH) and veteran service providers, Lieutenant Governor Murray outlined the report prior to touring the New England Center for Homeless Veterans.

"By working with key stakeholders in the veteran and housing communities, I am proud that Massachusetts will become one of only a few states to outline a comprehensive action plan to ensure all veterans have a safe place to call home," said Lieutenant Governor Murray, who chairs both the Interagency Council on Housing and Homelessness and the Governor's Advisory Council on Veterans' Services. "As we support the men and women who have bravely served our country, we will continue to leverage this partnership to deliver critical resources proven to be effective in ending homelessness."

The Massachusetts Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness Among Veterans (Plan) seeks to ensure all Massachusetts veterans will have a stable place to call home. The objectives of the plan are to reduce the number of homeless veterans in the Commonwealth by 1,000 (based on the annual Point In Time count) by the end of 2015 and to statistically end veteran homelessness in Massachusetts. The annual Point In Time count measures the number of homeless persons in the U.S. on a single night in January 2012, including the number of homeless veterans.

The objectives will be achieved by four primary goals: 1) Rehouse and stabilize veterans who become homeless by implementing a housing strategy; 2) Ensure veterans most at risk of homelessness remain housed to prevent homelessness; 3) Increase access to benefits and resources for veterans through greater intervention; and 4) Align and integrate federal, state, and community resources to support veterans through effective partnerships. Each goal, focused on housing, prevention, intervention, and partnerships, is supported by a detailed action plan to accomplish the goal over time.

"Massachusetts leads the nation in providing benefits and services to our veterans and their families," said Secretary Nee. "No one who has ever worn the uniform of this great nation should struggle to find a roof over their head. This unprecedented coordination and collaboration of the ICHH steering committee is one more example why the Commonwealth leads the way. The plan set forth today will enable Massachusetts to become the first state in the country to end veterans' homelessness."

“DHCD will continue to work aggressively to create more permanent housing options for formerly homeless veterans,” said Undersecretary Gornstein. “We look forward to collaborating with our local, state, and federal partners to implement this important plan.”

According to the 2011 Point In Time count, there were 1,268 homeless veterans on a given night across Massachusetts, which represents 7.6% of the total homeless population in the state. This Point In Time count has been trending downward in recent years, with the 2011 count 20.6% lower than that of the previous year. It is also estimated that 450 of those individuals meet the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development’s definition of chronically homeless.

The Plan is a product of an ICHH Steering Committee to End Veterans’ Homelessness. The Steering Committee engaged well over 200 stakeholders from across the Commonwealth to identify barriers, opportunities, and best practices. Finally, the Steering Committee reviewed emerging best practices in preventing and ending homelessness among veterans from here in Massachusetts, as well as other parts of the country.

“Veterans Service Officers are key allies in preventing homelessness among the veterans in our home communities,” said Steven Connor, President of the Massachusetts Veteran Service Officers Association. “Whether we serve in our Commonwealth’s major cities, or in our most rural small towns, we know there are homeless veterans or those living on the edge of homelessness that we have a duty to serve. The MVSOA is fully supportive of the Patrick-Murray Administration’s efforts to end veterans’ homelessness and we are committed to partnering with veteran service organization and providers to make this vision a reality in all of our cities and towns.”

“The New England Center for Homeless Veterans is honored to host and provide the location for today’s important announcement by Lieutenant Governor Murray,” said Andy McCawley, President and CEO of the New England Center for Homeless Veterans. “The Center’s mission is to provide support and services to those who have served this country, and find themselves facing or at risk of homelessness.

The Center joins the Patrick – Murray Administration, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Federal support agencies, the City of Boston, and the entire community of outstanding Veteran service providers here in Massachusetts to make the end of Veterans’ homelessness a reality.”

In December 2011, Lt. Governor Murray charged the ICHH and the Massachusetts Department of Veterans’ Services (DVS) with drafting the first statewide plan to prevent and end homelessness among veterans. This action is part of the Patrick-Murray Administration’s efforts to end homelessness among veterans. In recent years, the Administration has fostered emerging partnerships, setting the stage for a new way of approaching the challenge of ending veterans’ homelessness in a targeted and collaborative fashion. Last January, DVS launched a pilot program in collaboration with VA known as the Statewide Housing Advocacy for Reintegration and Prevention (SHARP) program. The SHARP team is administered by DVS, and represents a first-in-the-nation model that accelerates the housing process and offers veteran-to-veteran peer support, mental health services, psychiatric evaluation and linkages to emergency shelter to chronically homeless veterans. The team also identifies and enrolls new homeless veterans in the HUD-VASH program. Since January 2011, the SHARP Team has housed 48 chronically homeless veterans out of the initial 50 pilot vouchers awarded to the program and has maintained a

higher than national average success rate in keeping these veterans housed and case-managed for mental health, substance abuse and other issues related to their well-being.

In addition to the work of the DVS and ICHH steering committee and the recently implemented SHARP program, DVS funds more than 30 shelter and transitional housing non-profit organizations, providing housing services to eligible veterans ranging from Emergency Homeless Shelters, group residences, to Single Room Occupancy quarters.

The Patrick-Murray Administration is a leading provider for veteran services and continues to implement programs to complement efforts to end homelessness among veterans. In 2011, the Administration launched an aggressive employment campaign aimed to increase the hiring of Massachusetts veterans. Among these initiatives, the Patrick-Murray Administration partnered with major trade associations to encourage them to hire veterans and circulate information on veterans benefits. The Massachusetts Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives, the Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce, the Massachusetts Business Roundtable, the Associated Industries of Massachusetts, the Massachusetts Biotechnology Council, the Mass High Tech Council, the Defense Technology Initiative, and the Retailers Association of Massachusetts are among the growing list of major trade associations committed to working with the Administration and the Massachusetts veteran community.

To lead by example, the Governor and Lieutenant Governor called for the establishment of an Interagency Taskforce on Hiring Veterans within the Executive Branch. The Secretary of Administration and Finance charged the head of the Human Resources Division along with Taskforce members to take a critical look at the Executive Branch's current policies, processes and practices on hiring veterans and recently completed this [plan](#). Last week, Governor Deval Patrick signed an executive order to help small businesses owned by disabled veterans increase access to contracts for public projects in the areas of construction, design and goods and services procurement. This executive order follows the Governor's authorization of "An Act Relative to Veterans' Access Livelihood, Opportunity, and Resources" (The VALOR Act), signed last year, to provide greater assistance to help veteran-owned small business participate in public projects.

To learn more about services for Massachusetts veterans, visit www.mass.gov/veterans.

PATRICK-MURRAY ADMINISTRATION ANNOUNCES MILITARY FRIENDLY GUIDELINES FOR MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES, VETERANS AND THEIR SPOUSES SEEKING PROFESSIONAL LICENSES IN MASSACHUSETTS

NORWOOD – Monday, March 18, 2013 – Lieutenant Governor Timothy Murray today announced that all state agencies that oversee professional licensing within the Patrick-Murray Administration have established guidelines to assist members of the armed forces, veterans and their spouses as they prepare and apply for jobs in Massachusetts.

The announcement is a follow up to the authorization and implementation of [“An Act Relative to Veterans’ Access, Livelihood, Opportunity, and Resources” \(VALOR Act\), signed by Governor Deval Patrick in 2012](#), which required certain areas of state government to establish military friendly practices for licensing. The Patrick-Murray Administration then expanded this action to reach all relevant agencies within the Executive Branch. This component of the VALOR Act was inspired by a request from First Lady Michelle Obama and the Joining Forces Initiative to ensure that those who have served in the military have a streamlined and efficient process through which to obtain appropriate licensure for jobs when they are home.

“As our military servicemen and women sacrifice their lives for our country they also gain tremendous and unique job training skills that should never be overlooked when seeking employment,” said Lieutenant Governor Murray, Chair of the Governor’s Advisory Council on Veterans’ Services. “Massachusetts is already a national leader in providing services for our veterans so it was only natural to answer First Lady Michelle Obama’s call to further support our veterans in this way. We look forward to working with all partners to ensure our veterans are made aware of these new resources as they transition home and into our workforce.”

"Massachusetts leads the nation providing benefits and services to our veterans and their families," said Massachusetts Department of Veterans' Services Secretary Coleman Nee. "The VALOR Act was the most comprehensive and meaningful piece of legislation benefitting veterans and their families in recent memory. I applaud the Patrick-Murray Administration and my colleagues in state government for stepping to the plate and implementing these guidelines to ensure veterans and their families have every opportunity to use their skills and training toward successful careers here in Massachusetts."

Among the state agencies involved in professional licensing, the Massachusetts Division of Professional Licensure (DPL) oversees 31 licensing boards that have licensed more than 370,000 individuals and businesses in a wide range of professions and trades including electricians, plumbers, engineers, architects and allied health professionals.

Each of the 31 DPL Boards of Registration will now:

- Accept relevant education, training and service completed by a license applicant as a member of the armed forces or the military reserves toward the qualifications required for licensure;
- Allow for the trade or professional license of a member of the armed forces who is on active duty to remain valid until he or she is released from active duty, and for 90 days thereafter; and
- Expedite the licensure process for military spouses who are licensed in other states and have left employment there to accompany a spouse relocated to the Commonwealth due to a military transfer.

“We are honored to have military men and women return to the Commonwealth after deployment to join the ranks of our already talented workforce,” said Undersecretary of Consumer Affairs and Business Regulation Barbara Anthony. “I am proud that the Division of Professional Licensure can offer these accommodations to help military families ensure a smooth transition back to civilian life.”

Within another state agency, the Registry of Motor Vehicles is officially adopting the [Military Commercial Driver License Skills Test Waiver](#) that allows a qualified service member or veteran to apply for a CDL without road skills testing. The test will be waived for veterans with two years of military experience operating vehicles representative of the Class of license applied for, during the 90 days prior to discharge from the service. The implementation of this waiver comes after a successful pilot with the Massachusetts National Guard. Massachusetts will join 36 other states that have adopted this option.

“Easing the Commercial Driver Licensing process for our qualified military personnel and veterans is a tremendous customer service that MassDOT is proud to offer,” said Registrar of Motor Vehicles Rachel Kaprielian. “Our men and women will have access to greater employment opportunities with this valuable, marketable certification.”

The Massachusetts Department of Public Safety has also adopted and implemented measures to facilitate professional licensing to support this effort. Additionally, the Board of Registration within the Massachusetts Department of Public Health Division of Health Professions Licensure provides members of the armed forces engaged in active service a six month grace period for license renewal following release from duty.

Examples of professions that now have, or are in the process of creating their own military-friendly regulations, protocols, or guidelines to make it easier for those who apply for licenses include, but are not limited to:

Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs)	Paramedics	Nurses
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Dentists, Dental Hygienists and Dental Assistants	Pipefitters	Respiratory Therapists
Genetic Counselors	Commercial Drivers	Community Health Workers
Early Childcare Workers	Engineers	Public Safety Professionals
Electricians	Plumbers	Architects

A [new website consolidating all areas of state licensing benefits for the military is now available](http://www.MassVetsAdvisor.org) at the state's web portal www.MassVetsAdvisor.org. Last year the Patrick-Murray Administration launched the MassVetsAdvisor web portal to help veterans and their family members access more than 200 state and federal benefits in one location. In addition to the newly added licensing benefits, MassVetsAdvisor provides access to programs for education, counseling, employment, health care and other services.

"We applaud Massachusetts for their efforts to recognize our Service Members and the skills they bring to employers," said Brigadier General Marianne Watson, the National Guard Bureau's Director of Personnel. "This type of collaboration recognizes their military training, experience and professionalism as they transition to the civilian work force. This initiative supports all Service members transitioning from active duty, and National Guard and Reserve personnel who are unemployed within our communities. This forward thinking demonstrates a state-based solution providing opportunities to Service Members, and employers gain employees who are team focused and committed to their organization."

"By implementing the VALOR ACT, the Patrick-Murray administration has once again removed barriers for Veterans seeking employment using their hard-earned military training and skills in the civilian work force," said Major General L. Scott Rice, The Adjutant General, Massachusetts National Guard. "The National Guard is proud to have been part of a successful pilot program that allows a qualified service member or veteran to apply for a CDL without road skills testing. Our service members take time away from their loved ones to train and hone their military skills in order to serve our country, but it also important to know that they also take time away from jobs and from civilian professional development, which can cause them to fall behind their peers. Often their military and civilian jobs are the same and in many cases the standards are the same so it is essential that they receive the credit and benefits both they and their families deserve."

“Governor Patrick, Lieutenant Governor Murray, Secretary Nee and Registrar Kaprelian have been true and tireless advocates for our veterans, military and their families,” said Senator Mike Rush. “There has been true partnership between the Administration and the Legislature as we have worked to empower our state agencies and the public with an understanding of the unique needs of this community. As men and women are returning from overseas, I am proud that Massachusetts is able to greet them with the appreciation and support they, and their families, deserve. I am confident the needs of our veterans will remain the highest priority in Massachusetts.”

The Patrick-Murray Administration is a leading provider for veteran services and continues to implement employment assistance and workforce training programs for members of the armed forces, veterans and their spouses. In 2011, the Administration launched an aggressive employment campaign aimed to increase the hiring of Massachusetts veterans. Among these initiatives, the Patrick-Murray Administration partnered with major trade associations to encourage them to hire veterans and circulate information on veterans’ benefits.

To lead by example, the Governor and Lieutenant Governor called for the establishment of an Interagency Taskforce on Hiring Veterans within the Executive Branch. The Secretary of Administration and Finance charged the head of the Human Resources Division along with Taskforce members to take a critical look at the Executive Branch’s current policies, processes and practices on hiring veterans and recently completed this [plan](#).

In early March, Governor Deval Patrick also signed [an executive order to help small businesses owned by disabled veterans](#) increase access to contracts for public projects in the areas of construction, design and goods and services procurement. This executive order also follows the Governor’s authorization of the VALOR Act to provide greater assistance to help veteran-owned small business participate in public projects.

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LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR MURRAY HIGHLIGHTS VETERANS' SERVICES AT HOLYOKE SOLDIERS' HOME

HOLYOKE – Thursday, April 4, 2013 – Lieutenant Governor Timothy Murray today toured the Holyoke Soldiers' Home to highlight the Patrick-Murray Administration's continued commitment to supporting Massachusetts veterans. Lieutenant Governor Murray was joined on today's visit by Massachusetts Department of Veterans' Services (DVS) Secretary Coleman Nee for a meeting with Superintendent Paul Barabani and Board Chair Steve Como, followed by a tour of the facility.

"Massachusetts is proud to support and honor all of our veterans," said Lieutenant Governor Murray, Chair of the Governor's Council on Veterans' Services. "The Holyoke Soldiers' Home provides critical services for veterans throughout western Massachusetts and we're committed to working with them and all providers to ensure veterans receive the high quality care and benefits they deserve."

Governor Deval Patrick's Fiscal Year (FY) 2014 budget includes an increase in funding by nearly 7 percent for veterans' services and 3.3 percent for the Holyoke Soldiers' Home. Last month, Governor Patrick also filed a capital supplemental bill and a series of multi-year bond bills that will support the FY2013-2017 Capital Investment Plan. The plan continues the Patrick-Murray Administration's efforts to grow jobs and economic opportunity through strategic investments in the Commonwealth's infrastructure. If passed by the legislature, the Administration will have the authorization to consider funding future projects at the Holyoke Soldiers' Home. All projects would be eligible for federal funding matches of 65 percent if approved by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. The Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS) and DVS are beginning a study to be completed in 2013 which will consider all options for potential renovations and expansion of services.

"I am proud to be part of an Administration that leads the nation in its support of those who serve our country," said EOHHS Secretary John Polanowicz. "The Patrick-Murray Administration has consistently made veterans and military families a priority, as exhibited in Governor Patrick's budget, in which veteran's services would see an increase in funding to ensure that every generation of Massachusetts' veterans has access to the benefits they deserve."

Over the last six years, the Patrick-Murray Administration has increased funding for the Department of Veterans' Services and Soldiers' Homes in Holyoke and Chelsea by 47 percent or \$42.5 million. This increased funding supports care and services for the rising number of veterans and their families in Massachusetts.

"The Patrick-Murray Administration has continued to keep veterans issues at the forefront," said Secretary Nee. "I look forward to working closely with Superintendent Barabani to ensure the Holyoke Soldiers Home is providing the finest services to our veterans for years to come."

Among the range of services for veterans supported by the Patrick-Murray Administration, Secretary Polanowicz joined veterans and local officials for the grand opening of the Veterans' Assistance Center at

the Soldiers' Home in Holyoke earlier this year. The new Veterans' Assistance Center provides veterans and their family members with information and assistance on eligibility and application for state and federal benefits, disability services, community referrals and interaction with veteran service agents. Those served include residents of the Soldiers' Home, those using out-patient or dental services, veterans from communities throughout western Massachusetts and veterans returning from conflict overseas. The center is staffed with certified service officers from the Disabled American Veterans Chapters of Holyoke, West Springfield and Agawam and the Bilingual Veterans Outreach Center of Springfield.

In addition to the new Veterans' Assistance Center at the Soldiers' Home in Holyoke, the Patrick-Murray Administration, with the support of the state legislature, also authorized \$671,000 during FY 2012 to provide 12 additional beds to serve veterans at the Holyoke Soldiers' Home. Recognizing dental care as a major unmet need for veterans, the Administration also worked with the Home in 2011 to reopen the Holyoke Dental Clinic that now serves veterans throughout western Massachusetts. Additionally, following Governor Patrick's call in 2012 for a comprehensive plan to address and treat Alzheimer's disease for patients in Massachusetts, the Holyoke Soldiers' Home has been at the forefront of providing early detection, education and care for veterans and their families affected by Alzheimer's disease.

The Patrick-Murray Administration leads the nation in providing for our veterans. In addition to the Governor's proposed FY 2014 budget and improvements at the Holyoke Soldiers Home, the Administration continues to implement initiatives to support employment assistance and workforce training programs for members of the armed forces, veterans and their spouses. Most recently, the Administration announced that all state agencies that oversee professional licensing within the Administration have established guidelines to assist members of the armed forces, veterans and their spouses as they prepare and apply for jobs in Massachusetts. In early March, Governor Patrick also signed [an executive order to help small businesses owned by disabled veterans](#) increase access to contracts for public projects in the areas of construction, design and goods and services procurement. This executive order also follows the Governor's authorization of the VALOR Act to provide greater assistance to help veteran-owned small business participate in public projects. In 2011, the Administration launched an aggressive employment campaign aimed to increase the hiring of Massachusetts veterans. Among these initiatives, the Patrick-Murray Administration partnered with major trade associations to encourage them to hire veterans and circulate information on veterans' benefits.

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