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**Patrick-Murray Administration Names Members to Re-Activated
Advisory Council on Veterans' Services****Council to hold its first meeting Monday**

BOSTON - Friday, June 29, 2007 - Governor Deval Patrick and Lieutenant Governor Timothy Murray today named members to the Governor's Advisory council on Veterans' Services to guide the administration on how best to assist Massachusetts veterans and their families.

"The Commonwealth is proud of the men and women who answer the call of duty and we have a responsibility to ensure that they and their families receive the services and programs they need," said Governor Patrick. "The members we have appointed to the Council reflect a broad cross section of veterans, and I look forward to their assistance in helping us understand and respond to the immediate needs of our veterans of all wars."

The Governor's Advisory Council was created by executive order in April and 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 is chaired by Lieutenant Governor Murray and will work closely with the Department of Veterans' Services.

"As we approach Independence Day, we must honor the sacrifices so many of our citizens have made and continue to make to protect our freedom," Lieutenant Governor Murray said. "I am excited to begin working with the members of this council as we seek to improve the delivery of services for all those who have served."

Appointed to the council are:

- * Ralph Cooper, Roxbury
- * John Hogan, Walpole
- * Virginia Hurley, Cambridge
- * Florence Johnson, Charlestown
- * Paul Keough, Roslindale
- * Leslie Lightfoot, Ashburnham
- * Richard Pelosi, Sutton
- * Jim Berrelli, West Springfield
- * Merrill Blum, Centerville
- * Jeff Brodeur, Hyannis
- * Douglas Clifford, Waltham
- * Steve Como, Pittsfield
- * William Dooling, Holliston
- * Richard Gore, Danieslon, CT
- * Tom Lyons, Wakefield
- * Leslie McKittrick, Jr., Boston
- * Raymond O'Brien, Stoneham
- * Ralph Orlando, Newburyport
- * Richard Vontour, Leominster
- * Renner Wonderlick, Belmont
- * Bernard Flynn, Reading
- * Clarence Plant, Worcester

- * Thatcher Kezer, Amesbury
- * James Crosby, Boston
- * Gumercindo Gomez, Springfield

The Council will hold its first meeting Monday, July 2 at 11:30 am in the Governor's Council Chamber at the State House.

"I am pleased and excited to see that the Governor's Council on Veterans' Services is about to begin its work," said Secretary Thomas G. Kelley of the Department of Veterans' Services. "It sends a strong signal to all that Governor Patrick's administration and all of Massachusetts are committed to making a great system of services to veterans even better. I look forward to the role the Council will play in identifying our deserving veterans' needs."

Council members represent numerous organizations serving veterans in Massachusetts, including the American Legion, Disabled American Veterans, Employer Support for the Guard and Reserve, Gold Star Mothers, Gold Star Wives, Marine Corps League, United Veterans of America, Paralyzed Veterans of America, providers of veterans homelessness services, providers of veterans outreach services, veterans of Operation Iraqi Freedom, the Veterans Benefits Clearinghouse, Veterans of Foreign Wars, and Veterans Service Officers.

Also serving on the Council are 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.

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