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For Immediate release - June 11, 2008

Patrick-Murray Administration Announces \$1.3 Million Massachusetts Opportunity Relocation and Expansion Grant

Fitchburg's Airport Industrial Park Will Receive Funds to Boost the Local Economy

FITCHBURG- Wednesday, June 11, 2008 - Lieutenant Governor Tim Murray today announced the Patrick-Murray Administration will award the Airport Industrial Park project in Fitchburg a \$1.3 million Massachusetts Opportunity Relocation and Expansion (MORE) jobs grant to improve public infrastructure, leading to the development of a biomass-fueled power plant that will preserve 175 existing jobs and create 35 new jobs.

"The grants support partnerships between local municipalities and private investors to create new jobs," said Governor Deval Patrick. "I am proud our administration can partner with cities and towns in this way to help both the state and local economies flourish."

"This grant program is another example of how state government can work with communities to stimulate local economies across the Commonwealth," said Lt. Governor Murray.

The announcement comes after Governor Patrick laid out his economic stimulus plan to create a culture of opportunity focused on restrained spending with immediate and long-term investments, while preparing for the impacts of a softening national economy. The MORE Jobs Program is another tool to help the administration stimulate economy growth across the state.

The Fitchburg Airport Industrial Park project will fund construction for roads, water, sewer, and utilities access to the city's 43D expedited permitting priority development site. The improvements will enable CCI-Energy LLC to make a private investment to build a 15 megawatt biomass-fueled power plant. When completed, this project will preserve 175 existing jobs at Simonds International, a cutting tools manufacturer, and add an additional 35 new jobs.

"This grant is another example of the hands on approach of the Patrick-Murray Administration" said Senator Robert A. Antonioni (D-Leominster). "Last year, state and local economic development officials traveled to the region and visited this and other sites to determine the priorities of the region. In visiting the Fitchburg site, it was easy to envision how an influx of funding would open this area to new industrial development. Mayor Wong and her economic development team can now move forward on this exciting project."

"This MORE Grant allows us to move forward with a critically important economic development project in Fitchburg's Airport Economic Opportunity Area. This project combines renewable energy, job creation and job retention; it allows the city to move forward, bringing the needed infrastructure to Simonds and CCI - Energy," said state Rep. Stephen L. DiNatale (D-Fitchburg). "By doing that we create the infrastructure necessary for the designed industrial park; this will make 70 acres available for development. This is money well spent by the state; this is going to become a great regional economic development project."

The Patrick Administration recently named this site as a Growth District, partnering with the state to plan for significant commercial, residential, or mixed-use growth. The area is also a Chapter 43D Priority Development Site, on which the city agrees to permit projects in six months or less, while receiving a \$150,000 technical assistance grant.

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