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DEVAL L. PATRICK  
GOVERNOR

TIMOTHY P. MURRAY  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

**Media Contact**

Kyle Sullivan  
Becky Deusser  
Kim Haberlin  
(617) 725-4025

Juan Martinez (HHS)  
(617) 573-1610

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## GOVERNOR PATRICK OUTLINES \$764 MILLION ECONOMIC RECOVERY PLAN TO SUPPORT HEALTH CARE AND SAFETY NET SERVICES

### Priorities will secure jobs, maintain health care reform and protect safety net services

BOSTON- Wednesday, March 25, 2009 - As part of his Massachusetts Recovery Plan to secure the state's economic future, Governor Deval Patrick today announced an additional \$764 million in federal recovery funds to secure jobs, maintain health care reform and protect key safety net services.

"These additional FMAP funds are critically important to Massachusetts during these challenging economic times," said Governor Patrick. "Through thoughtful and strategic investments, we will protect and assist Massachusetts residents who will rely on the state for key services and supports now more than ever."

The federal American Recovery & Reinvestment Act provides a temporary boost in the Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP), increasing federal matching dollars for Massachusetts' Medicaid program from 50 percent to between 56.2 percent and 61.6 percent, depending on unemployment levels in the state during the stimulus period.

Approximately \$764 million in additional FMAP funding will be available to Massachusetts in FY09 and FY10, which supplements the \$1.2 billion announced in January as part of the Governor's Emergency Recovery Plan for FY09 and FY10.

#### Securing Jobs and Supporting Health Care Services: \$255 million in FY10

Ensuring the stability of essential health providers and ongoing strategic initiatives is critical to maintaining jobs in the health sector and preserving key services.

The Governor's FY10 budget priorities provide \$255 million for:

- Hospitals: \$160 million
- Nursing homes: \$45 million
- Community mental health: \$15 million
- Community health centers: \$10 million
- "Community First" initiative: \$20 million
- Other health care providers: \$5 million

#### Maintaining Health Care Reform: \$222 million in FY10

The Governor's plan for FY10 provides \$222 million to maintain coverage and eligibility for all existing MassHealth and Commonwealth Care members, allowing for anticipated increases in caseloads with the creation of a caseload mitigation reserve fund.

#### Protecting the Safety Net: \$97 million in FY10

The Governor's funding priorities for protecting safety net services in FY10 include:

Department of Mental Health: \$14 million

- Support additional rental subsidies for people with mental illness living in the community.
- Provide adequate funding to maintain inpatient capacities.

• Department of Mental Retardation / Department of Developmental Disabilities: \$31.6 million

- Renovate community group homes as part of the "Community First" initiative.
- Restore funding for family supports.

• Disability Commissions and Veterans: \$5.73 million

- Restore after-hour interpreter services for the deaf and hard of hearing
- Fund supports for people with disabilities in the workforce (Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission, Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Commission for the Blind).
- Invest in veterans' services.

• Department of Children and Families: \$10.2 million

- Preserve 82 social work positions.
- Increase rates for foster care families.

• Department of Youth Services: \$3.4 million

- Address substance abuse for detained and committed youth.
- Institute transitional placements.

• Department of Public Health: \$7.4 million

- Support Department's Bureau of Health Care Safety and Quality.
- Maintain access to family planning services.

• MassHealth - Children's Behavior Health Initiative: \$25 million

"Safety net services are critically important during times of economic uncertainty, and the Governor's commitment to securing jobs, maintaining health care reform and protecting needed supports will make Massachusetts communities stronger," added Secretary of Health and Human Services Dr. JudyAnn Bigby. "By making these key investments now, we are continuing to preserve insurance coverage and eligibility for vulnerable populations to avoid capping program enrollment and eliminating services just when they are needed most."

"Unlike in previous fiscal emergencies, where administrations balanced their budgets by reducing safety net services and capping enrollment in health programs, Governor Patrick is making the prudent and compassionate choice to use these federal funds to prevent more devastating cuts in our safety net," said Leslie Kirwan, Secretary of Administration and Finance. "This is a fiscally responsible use of the recovery funds and will ensure that those in need get the help they deserve."

"These actions by Governor Patrick are just what the doctor ordered. This vital funding for health care in Massachusetts is an important element in President Obama's economic recovery plan that we fought for so hard in the Congress," said Senator Edward Kennedy. "I commend Governor Patrick's plan to use the federal recovery funds to shore up safety net services. His plan provides desperately needed money for essential health services, and will stem the tide of job layoffs in the health sector."

"We are facing challenging economic times and this additional federal funding will help ease some of the pressure on health care safety net programs. It is an effective use of stimulus funds and will have a direct impact on many Massachusetts residents," said Congressman Mike Capuano.

"The economic recovery bill was designed to save jobs and prevent the most vulnerable kids and senior citizens from falling

through the cracks in the toughest economic times since the Great Depression," said Senator John Kerry. "This investment will guarantee that the kids and low-income folks hurting the most continue to get desperately needed healthcare services. I applaud Governor Patrick for distributing these funds in a way that protects thousands of people across Massachusetts."

"Maintaining high quality health care services is absolutely critical - especially in these tough economic times," Congressman Jim McGovern said. "I'm pleased that the Governor is ensuring that a wide range of services will receive this federal funding."

Congressman John Olver said, "Shoring up our health care system is a responsible and proper use of stimulus funds. This extra infusion of capital will help to ensure that modest income people have access to health care in these difficult economic times. In addition, these funds will directly contribute toward maintaining high-paying jobs in the health sector."

"I am pleased to see that the \$764 million in FMAP dollars provided to the state via the Economic Stimulus bill will be used to address some of Massachusetts most urgent health care needs," Congressman Stephen F. Lynch said. "These funds will secure jobs, lead to the stabilization of our safety-net hospitals and community health centers, provide for the continuation of health care reform and ensure essential services to those in need. With the economic downturn taking its toll on health care, the funds could not have come at a better time."

"I'm pleased that these federal funds will help Massachusetts maintain its role as a leader in health reform, while making certain that our hospitals and health centers have the resources to provide access to the quality, preventive care that so many of our most vulnerable citizens urgently need," said Congressman John Tierney.

"These needed funds will ensure that medical providers in our state are able to maintain essential health services, will sustain the Commonwealth's historic commitment to universal health care, and protect our most vulnerable residents, all while creating local jobs," said Congresswoman Niki Tsongas. "I want to thank Governor Patrick and Lt. Governor Murray for their ongoing commitment to health care, as well as for their efforts to ensure that the funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act are used to create jobs and make much needed investments in our communities."

"These federal funds will provide critical support for those across the state who need it the most," said Congressman Edward J. Markey. "The money will support the young, the old, the disabled, and the veterans who have served our country so honorably. Our health is our first wealth, and this will provide a vital safety-net for our families and communities."

Investments in safety net services are a critical component of Governor Patrick's Massachusetts Recovery Plan, which combines state, federal and, where possible, private efforts to provide immediate and long-term relief and position the Commonwealth for recovery in the following ways:

- Deliver immediate relief by investing in the road, bridge and rail projects that put people to work today and providing safety net services that sustain people who are especially vulnerable during an economic crisis;
- Build a better tomorrow through education and infrastructure investments that strengthen our economic competitiveness, prepare workers for the jobs of the future and support clean energy, broadband and technology projects that cut costs while growing the economy; and
- Reform state government by eliminating the pension and ethics loopholes that discredit the work of government and revitalize the transportation networks that have suffered from decades of neglect and inaction.

For more information about what the federal recovery law means for Massachusetts, please visit [www.mass.gov/recovery](http://www.mass.gov/recovery).

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