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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."

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