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LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR MURRAY ANNOUNCES \$165,000 IN ARRA FUNDING FOR MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. BUSINESS EMPOWERMENT CENTER**Stimulus Funds Help Prepare Unemployed for Future Jobs**

Worcester - Monday, February 1, 2010 - As part of the Patrick-Murray Administration's Massachusetts Recovery Plan, Lieutenant Governor Timothy Murray and Congressman James P. McGovern today announced \$165,000 in federal recovery funds for Worcester's Martin Luther King, Jr. Business Empowerment Center (MLKJ-BEC) to prepare participants for jobs or apprenticeships in construction trades and related occupations.

Today's announcement is part of the Patrick-Murray Administration's focus on assisting unemployed or underemployed individuals, including women, people of color and youth aged 17-24 who are out of school, and ex-offenders. The MLKJ-BEC of Worcester plans to create a program targeted to support unemployed or underemployed individuals of color.

"We must continue to emphasize training and preparedness. The Martin Luther King, Jr. Business Empowerment Center has strong experience with helping people train for apprenticeships and empowers those with an entrepreneurial spirit to go further and explore becoming small business owners. Their success is vital to job growth and business development in the Commonwealth," said Governor Deval Patrick.

"Creating jobs has been and will continue to be a critical component of our economic recovery plan," said Lt. Governor Murray. "As part of our plan, investing in education and training programs in partnership with facilities like the Martin Luther King, Jr. Business Empowerment Center will support our workforce today and also contribute to future long-term growth in Massachusetts."

The recovery dollars slated for the MLKJ-BEC, and several other organizations around the state, will help residents with pre-employment training and basic knowledge of trades and construction skills required for employment in construction and/or to gain entry into an Apprenticeship Program.

"This is exactly how stimulus dollars should be used - to train workers and get them back on the job," said Senator John Kerry. "This is an investment in the people of Massachusetts and our economic future."

"This is an excellent use of stimulus funds that will benefit the people of the greater Worcester area," said Senator Paul Kirk. "Now more than ever, job training is an essential tool in helping get the hard-working people of Massachusetts back to work."

"I'm very pleased with this use of federal stimulus funding," Congressman James P. McGovern said. "It is essential that workers have the skills they need to compete in the 21st century economy."

"This is a good investment in our economy and workforce," said state Senator Michael O. Moore. "We need to focus our funding resources on programs that are going to prepare individuals for good-paying skilled jobs. These are the types of programs that could make a difference in someone's life."

"I'm thankful to the Governor and Lieutenant Governor for this announcement," said state Representative John P. Fresolo. "This is the type of endeavor we should be funding with stimulus dollars. It will be a shot in the arm for job creation, which is what is most in need in this recession we are in."

"The Martin Luther King, Jr. Business Empowerment Center has been working to build jobs in the minority community and these funds will help them continue their very important work," said Representative Vincent A. Pedone.

"This is terrific news and another example of what the Administration has said all along - that stimulus funding has been beneficial and is doing what it was intended to do - training people and putting people back to work," Representative James J. O'Day.

Massachusetts Secretary of Labor and Workforce Development, Joanne Goldstein welcomed these stimulus funds to help job-seekers and to introduce people to trades.

"We are pleased to see these funds placed in the hands of organizations with a history of successfully helping people begin a career in a trade or reinvigorate their trade career path," she said.

"This investment will help people who are currently unemployed train for jobs that are being created through stimulus programs in public works and clean energy," said Commonwealth Corporation President and CEO Nancy Snyder, who will administer the grant on behalf of the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development.

Investments to help get unemployed individuals back to work are critical components of the Patrick-Murray Administration'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.

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