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**Governor
Deval Patrick**

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GOVERNOR PATRICK JOINS CONGRESSMAN OLVER, HUD SECRETARY DONOVAN TO CELEBRATE KICK-OFF OF ASSISTED-LIVING HOUSING CONSTRUCTION IN GARDNER

Phase 3 of Heywood Wakefield project underway to transform vacant mill into 78 affordable units for seniors and generate 137 construction-related jobs



Governor Deval Patrick today joined Congressman John Olver, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Secretary Shaun Donovan and other officials to celebrate the start of construction on the long-vacant Heywood Wakefield furniture manufacturing mill. (Photo credit: Matt Bennett/Governor's Office)

GARDNER - Monday, August 30, 2010 - Governor Deval Patrick today joined Congressman John Olver, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Secretary Shaun Donovan and other officials to celebrate the start of construction on the long-vacant Heywood Wakefield furniture manufacturing mill. This \$24 million project, made possible with federal and state resources, including \$3.08 million in federal recovery funds from HUD, will transform the mill into 78 affordable assisted-living rental apartments for seniors and generate an estimated 137 construction jobs.

"This project is an excellent example of how infrastructure investment creates jobs, as well as a foundation for further private sector growth," said Governor Patrick. "I thank Secretary Donovan and Congressman Olver for helping us secure funding for this project and so many projects like it across the Commonwealth. This is why Massachusetts is coming out of recession faster and stronger than the rest of the country, while remaining true to our values."

"This kind of construction project will help put people back to work as we focus on Massachusetts' economic recovery," said Lieutenant Governor Timothy Murray. "We are excited about today's groundbreaking and look forward to seeing this project support our seniors while also facilitating economic development, sustainability and growth for the region and the Commonwealth."

"Typically, assisted living facilities are only an option for those with significant means. Only a very small handful of facilities in Massachusetts currently cater to seniors who have worked hard all their lives, but have little in the way of savings or other resources to afford assisted living. This new facility will allow seniors of various economic means to live in a community where they will receive the care and attention they deserve," said Congressman John Olver.

"I am thrilled that this conversion will soon be underway, producing quality affordable homes for Gardner's seniors. I applaud Congressman Olver and Governor Patrick for their support for this development," said Secretary Donovan. "The plans for Heywood Wakefield are a great example of Recovery Act funding jumpstarting a stalled development. This development will improve quality of life for residents while promoting green construction and creating quality jobs at the same time."

When completed, the Heywood Wakefield assisted living facility will join two adjacent sections of that mill complex already converted into 171 units of elderly housing and 175 units of mixed income apartments. All 78 units will be affordable to elders with incomes at or below 50% of the area median income. Eight units will be available to residents with incomes at or below 30%. The property will consist primarily of studio apartments, and the design incorporates extensive common space throughout the building including a library, dining room, wellness center, activities space, living room, and a country kitchen. Residents will receive assistance with daily activities and housekeeping.

"This is a win-win situation as this project will generate nearly 140 jobs and will provide our seniors a housing opportunity that's affordable. Investments in projects like this are necessary to put our people back to work and to help our seniors. I am pleased to see the Patrick-Murray Administrations continued investment in jobs and economic opportunities throughout the Commonwealth," said Senator Marc R. Pacheco, Chair of the Joint Committee on Federal Stimulus Oversight.

"This project is a perfect example of how we can revitalize existing structures through federal and local partnerships to provide new, affordable housing in the Commonwealth. The Heywood Wakefield 3 will provide safe and affordable housing to many seniors in need, engage our older population in a new community, and provide a place to call home," said Representative Kevin G. Honan, Chair of the Joint Committee on Housing.

"I am so pleased to see the Heywood Wakefield Assisted Living Center project become a reality. The Greater Gardner community will soon have another wonderful resource for an underserved segment of the population. I look forward to working with Governor Patrick, Congressman Olver, Senator Flanagan, and all other interested parties as this project moves toward completion. I congratulate all who have worked so hard on this," said Representative Robert L. Rice, Jr.

Over the past year, the Patrick-Murray Administration has distributed more than \$59.6 million in tax credit assistance recovery funds from HUD along with \$109.1 million in tax credit exchange recovery funds from the U.S. Treasury to revive 32 similar developments across the Commonwealth. These projects were stalled due to a lack of available equity in previously awarded federal low-income housing tax credits. They are now expected to generate more than 3,000 jobs and provide nearly 2,000 new housing units, 1,669 of which will be affordable for low- and moderate-income working families.

Since taking office, Governor Patrick's top priority has been to create jobs and build a stronger economic foundation for the people of Massachusetts. Through fiscally responsible, targeted investments in the life sciences and clean energy sectors, along with the largest investment in the state's public infrastructure in decades, the Patrick-Murray Administration is putting people back to work across the Commonwealth. As a result, Massachusetts is emerging from the recession faster and stronger than any other state in the nation.

July marked the sixth straight month of job gains in Massachusetts - with a total of almost 64,000 jobs added since December 2009. In April, the Commonwealth had the largest single monthly job gain in 17 years, adding 19,000 jobs to our economy. Last month, the private sector created 19,200 jobs, the greatest monthly private sector increase in 20 years. Additionally, CNBC recently ranked Massachusetts the fifth best state to do business in, a significant improvement from 15th in 2008 and eighth in 2009. It also marked the first time in the history of the rankings that Massachusetts has finished in the top five.

The Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia reports that since the national recession began in December 2007, Massachusetts' economy has performed better than 33 of the 50 states. In the last quarter of 2009, Massachusetts outperformed 48 other states. And, expressly citing the Governor's successful management through the national fiscal crisis, all three national rating agencies - Standard & Poor's, Fitch and Moody's - have re-affirmed the state's AA bond rating.

To learn more about the Governor's plan to revive housing development projects across the Commonwealth, click here. To learn more about the Governor's job creation and economic growth initiatives, visit www.ma.gov/governor/jobs.

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