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**Deval Patrick**


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 DEVAL L. PATRICK  
GOVERNOR

 TIMOTHY P. MURRAY  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR
**Media Contact**
 Alex Goldstein  
Heather Johnson  
Alec Loftus  
617-725-4025

 Kim Haberlin (HED)  
617-788-3652

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**Administration Convenes Tornado Rebuilding Meeting**

**Community health center construction project to break ground in heart of tornado-impacted business district; Governor Patrick calls together public, private sector leaders to develop plans to make communities stronger than before**



(From left to right) Secretary of Housing and Economic Development Greg Bialecki, Governor Patrick and Springfield Mayor Domenic Sarno applaud the announcements made during the tornado rebuilding meeting at the Basketball Hall of Fame, Tuesday, June 21, 2011. (Photo: Holland Hinman/Governor's Office) [View additional photos.](#)

SPRINGFIELD - Tuesday, June 21, 2011 - Governor Deval Patrick and Lieutenant Governor Timothy Murray today convened a cross section of public and private sector leaders for a tornado rebuilding meeting at the Basketball Hall of Fame and joined local leaders to celebrate Caring Health Center's plans to move forward with its \$18.7 million Main Street expansion despite suffering damages during the June 1st storms. The Governor pointed to the center as an example of the opportunities that have arisen in the aftermath of the tornadoes, and reaffirmed his commitment to helping communities rebuild better and stronger than before.

"In the face of devastation, we have seen our neighbors come together and demonstrate that they know the true meaning of the word community," said Governor Patrick. "We will follow the example set by the Caring Health Center and so many others as we rebuild, bringing the full weight of the public and private sectors to bear so that all communities emerge from the storms stronger than before."

"As we work in partnership with government, non-profit and the private sector organizations to help rebuild impacted communities, Caring Health Center's plans to move forward is very encouraging," said Lieutenant Governor Timothy Murray. "There are so many strong anchors in each of the impacted communities, and we will continue to foster community and economic development

so these special places can once again shine."

Caring Health Center, which provides healthcare, including primary medical and dental care, to more than 16,000 people in the Springfield region, incurred \$590,000 in damages as a result of the June 1st storms. Insurance will cover the necessary repairs, allowing the center to move forward with its planned August 2011 construction kick-off. The 42,000 square foot project will occupy abandoned Main Street storefronts as part of the City's downtown revitalization plans. In addition to addressing a long-standing community need for a pharmacy, officials estimate the expanded center will create 125 new health care positions and between 60-75 construction jobs.

"Our communities are stronger than any storm but we can't let up even for a day. No one can forget that recovery is a long process but an urgent one," said Senator John Kerry. "The public-private cooperation of the last weeks is helping Massachusetts bounce back from disaster, and most importantly these efforts will be ongoing and we are all going to remain in constant communication to leverage all possible federal, state and private resources."

"Weeks after tornadoes shattered lives in these communities it is heartening to see public and private sector leaders come together to help Springfield and other affected communities rebound and get back on their feet," said Senator Scott Brown. "I'm glad that businesses are still moving forward with projects that will aid in the long term recovery of this area."

"We are most grateful for the overwhelming community support we have received," said Caring Health Center President and CEO Anne Awad. "Our partners at Baystate Medical and Mercy Hospital have assisted us with continuing to serve patients. Our employees, who were devastated by the disaster, have rallied to support patients. We have an unconquerable spirit of perseverance to revitalizing the South End and are moving forward with our redevelopment plans."

Governor Patrick, Lieutenant Governor Murray and Secretary of Housing and Economic Development Greg Bialecki used the public forum following the Caring Health Center expansion announcement to highlight the state's commitment to standing with communities throughout the rebuilding process. They also outlined the following principles that will guide the public-private efforts over the coming months to restore residential, commercial and public buildings as well as community anchor institutions including schools and police stations:

- No permanent dislocations. The Patrick-Murray Administration is committed to rebuilding so that every individual, family and business owner can return to living and working in their home community.
- Rebuilding quickly. While rebuilding efforts will take time, the Administration will work with impacted communities to identify short and long-term goals and make interim arrangements for individuals and business owners so that they can carry on as the rebuilding moves forward.
- Collaborative public private partnerships. The Patrick-Murray Administration will rely on an extensive network of public and private partners, both inside and outside of the impacted regions, to advance the rebuilding efforts. Local input and vision will play key roles in revitalizing neighborhoods and downtowns.
- Identifying opportunities. Governor Patrick has consistently maintained that every crisis presents an opportunity. The Administration will identify ways to rebuild that strengthen the state's economic competitiveness, creates jobs and promotes our long-term sustainability and clean energy goals.

"We want to make these communities whole again and we will be working alongside our public and private partners to make our collective vision for a stronger, revitalized Western and Central Massachusetts a reality," said Secretary Bialecki.

In addition to receiving reports on infrastructure and other storm-related updates, participants broke into working groups focused on opportunities to rebuild greener, build needed housing, encourage entrepreneurship, implement community plans, employ local workforce and strengthen community institutions. The working groups will continue their collaborations and issue reports identifying goals and progress to the public throughout the rebuilding process.

"The path to recovery for the affected communities is far from over and I continue to be impressed and inspired by the strength and determination of local residents and business owners to move forward and rebuild," said Senate President Therese Murray. "We're grateful that Caring Health Center is supporting the Springfield community in a time of need and moving forward with their plans for expansion. This is just the most recent example of the community coming together to move forward after the devastating effects of the tornadoes."

"In the wake of these devastating tornadoes, it's encouraging to see the beginning of rebuilding efforts in the affected areas," said House Speaker Robert A. DeLeo. "The process of reconstructing these communities will take some time, but I am eager to work with the Governor, Senate President and local leaders to get the job done."

"Although we are only a couple weeks out from the severe storms that delivered a devastating blow to our cities and towns, we have made enormous progress in recovering from this disaster," said Stephen M. Brewer, Chair of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means. "It is important that we remain united in offering as much assistance and information as possible to the residents affected by this disaster. Getting this information out there and in the hands of the folks at the ground level will help ensure that resources are best utilized and that we continue to rebuild."

"My administration has been working closely together with our state and federal partners since the tornado," said Springfield Mayor Domenic Sarno. "I will continue to focus efforts on getting money and assistance for homeowners and small business owners who lost their property. We need to look at what can be done for individuals as well as neighborhoods and local businesses that were affected by the tornadoes."

To learn more about the Patrick-Murray Administration's comprehensive response to the storms, including securing a federal disaster declaration to unlock a host of federal resources for individuals, businesses and local government, establishing Storm Assistance Centers and providing guidance on health services, insurance claims, housing resources and contractor issues, visit [www.mass.gov/stormrecovery](http://www.mass.gov/stormrecovery).

Residents and business owners in the affected communities can apply for federal disaster assistance online by visiting, <http://www.fema.gov/assistance>, or by phone at 1-(800) 621-3362 or TTY (800) 462-7585 for those with speech or hearing disabilities.

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