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GOVERNOR PATRICK PROCLAIMS HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH**Announces Events to Honor Hispanic-Owned Businesses Across the Commonwealth**

BOSTON – Monday, September 17, 2012 – Governor Deval Patrick today proclaimed September 15, 2012 to October 15, 2012 as Hispanic Heritage Month in Massachusetts. Throughout the month, Governor Patrick, Lieutenant Governor Timothy Murray and leaders from the Administration will be participating in events that highlight the economic contributions and rich heritage of the Massachusetts Hispanic community.

"Our small businesses fuel our economy and I am thrilled that we are able to celebrate our diversity by honoring the contributions Hispanic-owned businesses make in creating a stronger and more vibrant Commonwealth," said Governor Patrick.

"As we celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month, our Administration looks forward to joining the community to acknowledge their history and also the range of contributions they bring to the Massachusetts economy," said Lieutenant Governor Murray.

Governor Patrick and Lieutenant Governor Murray will join business owners, community leaders and elected officials to celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month at the following events:

Thursday, September 20, 2012

3:00 p.m. Massachusetts Latino Chamber of Commerce
225 High Street
Holyoke

Friday, October 5, 2012

12:30 p.m. Massachusetts State House, Grand Staircase
24 Beacon Street
Boston

Each event will feature remarks from both the Governor and Lieutenant Governor, recognition of the Hispanic-American Chamber of Commerce and Massachusetts Latino Chamber of Commerce, an opportunity for Hispanic business owners to network with key business advisors and resource providers in Massachusetts.

"The Hispanic-American Chamber of Commerce applauds the Patrick-Murray Administration for believing in the importance of including the Hispanic-American Business community as a part of the economic engine that drives Massachusetts forward to a prosperous economy for the benefit of all its residents," said Jesus Rosa, Board Chair of the Hispanic-American Chamber of Commerce.

"The state of Massachusetts is ranked 15th for most Latino-owned businesses and these businesses are making a significant contribution to the economic development of major cities and towns," said Carlos Gonzalez, President/CEO of the Massachusetts Latino Chamber of Commerce. "Latino small businesses are a large employer of inner city residents and are emerging as an important cluster that need the continued support of government. We commend the Governor's acknowledgement of the minority small business community and its contribution to the economy. "

The Patrick-Murray Administration has prioritized growing the Massachusetts economy through supporting small businesses and improving the ease of doing business in the state. Earlier this year, Governor Patrick announced an effort to streamline and rescind state regulations to improve government efficiencies and reduce extra burdens on small businesses, helping small businesses continue to thrive and create jobs through a systematic review of state regulations. Also, no new regulation will be

issued without serious consideration of impact and input of small businesses. In February, Governor Patrick signed legislation freezing employer contributions to the Unemployment Trust Fund, providing immediate relief to small businesses. Since 2009, the Patrick-Murray Administration has saved Massachusetts employers approximately \$1.2 billion, encouraging small and large businesses to continue their hiring trends.

The Patrick-Murray Administration has supported minority-owned businesses in the Commonwealth by establishing non-discrimination, equal opportunity and diversity as core principles; establishing the Supplier Diversity Program to expand opportunities for minority and women-owned businesses to participate in state and agency contracts; and establishing the Office of Access and Opportunity to support the Administration's non-discrimination, equal opportunity and diversity principles. In 2011, Governor Patrick celebrated the opening of the Minority Business Development Agency Business Center in Boston, an effort to support minority-owned businesses and entrepreneurs in the Commonwealth.

Governor Patrick's proclamation recognizes that the nations of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Mexico, and Chile celebrate their independence between the dates of September 15 and September 18. According to the United States Library of Congress, National Hispanic Heritage Month is an opportunity for Americans to celebrate "the histories, cultures and contributions of American citizens whose ancestors came from Spain, Mexico, the Caribbean and Central and South America." First recognized as a week-long observation under President Lyndon B. Johnson, President Ronald Reagan later expanded the holiday from September 15 to October 15.

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