BOSTON – Wednesday, May 15, 2013 - Lieutenant Governor Timothy Murray today highlighted the Patrick-Murray Administration’s commitment to helping unemployed veterans during a tour of the Greater Boston Veterans Job Fair.

“Our Administration continues to build strong partnerships across academia, government and the non-profit and private sectors to help veterans get back to work,” said Lieutenant Governor Murray, Chair of the Governor’s Advisory Council on Veterans’ Services. “Job fairs like today’s event organized by Suffolk University is another opportunity to reach out to veterans seeking employment and to also ensure these men and women who have bravely served our country have access to the benefits they deserve.”

The Patrick-Murray Administration, led by the efforts of the Department of Career Services (DCS) and the Department of Veterans’ Services, has partnered with veterans’ services organizations and private businesses to connect veterans with employers who are hiring and skills training opportunities. The Administration also
works with employers to help them understand the benefits of hiring veterans and assisting them with the resources to find the veterans who are ready to help their business grow and succeed. Through the Hiring Incentive Training Grant program, DCS helps employers defray the cost of providing job skills training to veterans.

Lieutenant Governor Murray was joined by DCS Director Alice Sweeney, JobNet Career Center Executive Director Rosemary Alexander and Michael Falaska, the Center’s Veteran’s Services Representative.

In its 11th year, the Greater Boston Veterans Job Fair aims to connect employers with veterans who are seeking jobs and to inform employers of the incentives and benefits of hiring a veteran. The event included 43 employers and seven veteran’s services agencies and organizations. The fair was organized by JobNet, a One-Stop Career Center in Boston operated by DCS, with help from the Veterans’ Coordinating Committee.

“We want employers to know that hiring veterans is a win-win situation,” said Secretary of Labor and Workforce Development Joanne Goldstein. “Not only do employers help honor the service veterans have made to our country, but they hire an employee who is disciplined, dependable and focused on succeeding.”

Veterans receive priority of service at each of DCS’s 33 One-Stop Career Centers around the Commonwealth. Each One-Stop Career Center has a staff member dedicated to assisting veterans. Over the last year, DCS has provided services to over 17,000 veterans in the Commonwealth. Veterans, and spouses of certain veterans, also go to the front of the line for employment, training and placement services in any workforce preparation program directly funded, in whole or in part, by the U.S. Department of Labor.

The Patrick-Murray Administration is a leading provider for veteran services and continues to implement employment assistance and workforce training programs for members of the armed forces, veterans and their spouses. In 2011, the Administration launched an aggressive employment campaign focused on increasing the hiring of Massachusetts veterans. Among these initiatives, the Patrick-Murray Administration has partnered with major trade associations to encourage them to hire veterans and circulate information on veterans’ benefits. One example includes the Administration’s partnership with the Boston Chamber of Commerce to launch the “Boots to Business” program, which expands mentoring and networking opportunities and educates local employers about the skills service members gain in the military. Connecting veterans’ initiatives with the Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce is the first step in what the Patrick-Murray Administration envisions as a state-wide program designed to provide networking and mentoring opportunities for veterans of all generations. “Boots to Business” currently has over 30 mentors from local companies working with local veterans.

To lead by example, Governor Deval Patrick and Lieutenant Governor Murray called for the establishment of an Interagency Taskforce on Hiring Veterans within the Executive Branch. The Secretary of Administration and Finance charged the head of the Human Resources Division along with Taskforce members to take a critical look at the Executive Branch’s current policies, processes and practices on hiring veterans and recently completed this plan.

Following Governor Deval Patrick’s authorization in 2012 of “An Act Relative to Veterans’ Access, Livelihood, Opportunity, and Resources” (VALOR Act), the
Governor signed an executive order to help small businesses owned by disabled veterans gain access to contracts for public projects in the areas of construction, design and goods and services procurement. In March, Lieutenant Governor Murray announced the establishment of guidelines to assist members of the armed forces, veterans and their spouses with professional licenses so that they can prepare and apply for job in the Commonwealth.

To learn more about services for Massachusetts veterans, visit www.mass.gov/veterans.

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