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# Governor Deval Patrick

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## **GOVERNOR PATRICK VISITS SPRINGFIELD SAFE AND SUCCESSFUL YOUTH INITIATIVE, UNDERScores IMPORTANCE OF ANTI- YOUTH VIOLENCE PROGRAMS IN CREATING OPPORTUNITY AND SAFER COMMUNITIES**

SPRINGFIELD – Tuesday, February 11, 2014 – Governor Deval Patrick today joined Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary John Polanowicz and members of the Springfield Safe and Successful Youth Initiative (SSYI) to discuss the program's success and the continued importance of the Patrick Administration's efforts to create safer communities by ending the cycle of violence and enabling residents to make better lives for themselves.

"By partnering with local community and civic leaders across the Commonwealth, the Safe and Success Youth Initiative is working to break the cycle of violence and provide the resources to help our young people help themselves," said Governor Patrick. "We are here today because we share a commitment to making our communities safer; every community, for every resident. Safe communities are what it takes to create opportunity and opportunity is what America is about."

Building upon his investments in violence prevention, the Governor proposed an investment of \$4.8 million to continue SSYI programs statewide through the end of this fiscal year in his FY14 supplemental budget, as well as \$9.5 million in his FY15 budget in order to fully fund services across the Commonwealth.

SSYI is a comprehensive, interagency strategy that connects law enforcement, employment, education, public health and youth development agencies to reduce youth violence in the Commonwealth. The program focuses on young men, ages 14 to 24, who have a proven risk for criminal behavior, have been victims of violence or are family members of someone who has. SSYI-supported programs have served over 1,300 young people, connecting them with education and employment opportunities that help them achieve personal and professional success. The 11 participating cities have achieved a 25 percent drop in homicide victims ages 14-24 and a 19 percent decrease in aggravated assault in victims ages 14-24.

"SSYI's proven track record of results is making our Commonwealth safer for generations to come," said Secretary Polanowicz. "The program is not only improving the lives of the young people and families directly served, but it also reduces crime, and promotes safer and stronger communities."

In Springfield, the Patrick Administration has partnered with the Salvation Army, Springfield Police Department, Roca, Bay State Medical Center, the Hampden County Sheriff's Department and the Regional Employment Board. Through these partnerships, the Administration is able to fund community-based organizations that serve over 100 young people in the Springfield area alone.

SSYI is one of several Patrick Administration initiatives geared toward ending youth violence and creating an atmosphere for continued growth and opportunity among all of the Commonwealth's residents. Last month, Governor Patrick announced \$27 million to launch of the Massachusetts Juvenile Justice Pay for Success Initiative, the nation's largest financial investment designed to improve outcomes for hundreds of at-risk young men in the probation system or leaving the juvenile justice system. The Governor also proposed a \$12 million investment in the successful YouthWorks Summer Jobs Program in his FY15 budget.

Operating in 11 cities selected based on youth-related homicide rates, non-fatal assault rates and serious injuries rates, SSYI serves Boston, Brockton, Chelsea, Fall River, Holyoke, Lawrence, Lowell, Lynn, New Bedford, Springfield and Worcester.

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