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GOVERNOR PATRICK DISCUSSES EFFORTS TO REDUCE YOUTH VIOLENCE WITH BOSTON YOUTH AND COMMUNITY LEADERS**Encourages Legislature to Support Increased Funding to Reduce Youth Violence**

BOSTON – Tuesday, July 31, 2012 - Governor Deval Patrick today met with youth, community leaders and Boston Mayor Thomas Menino at Youth Options Unlimited (Y.O.U.) in Roxbury to discuss the impact of the first year of the Governor's Safe and Successful Youth Initiative (SSYI) – a multi-faceted strategy for reducing youth violence in the Commonwealth. In 2011, Boston was awarded \$2,264,000 to identify and provide case management to at-risk youth, connect them and their families to activities and services and provide ongoing monitoring and supervision.

"Initiatives like this one in Roxbury are critical to ending the cycle of violence that devastates communities," said Governor Patrick. "We must continue to support these programs at the highest levels possible – I encourage the Legislature to quickly approve the additional \$6 million in funding to keep these programs going."

Y.O.U. is Boston's youth re-entry program, providing a broad range of services to court-involved youth from 14 to 24 years of age. The program's goal is to motivate and empower young people to gain the education, employment, and career advancement to be successful in their workplace, community and life.

"I believe we cannot leave behind any young person, and I believe in second chances," said Mayor Menino. "Thanks to our collaboration, Boston is one of the leaders in the country in preventing youth violence. We work together because we all have the same goal: to reduce youth violence and create positive opportunities for our young people to reach their full potential."

Last year, Governor Patrick announced the Safe and Successful Youth Initiative and awarded 11 cities a total of \$9.7 million to support the initiative's first year. Cities identify young men ages 14 to 24, most at risk of becoming victims or perpetrators of violence. Cities and their partners provide outreach, case management, education, employment and trauma services to the identified youth and their families.

"These partnerships are key to meeting at-risk youth where they are and showing our young people a path to success," said Secretary of Health and Human Services Dr. JudyAnn Bigby. "Governor Patrick's Safe and Successful Youth Initiative is designed to create new opportunities for safety for youth, families and neighborhoods across the Commonwealth."

"We need a holistic approach to working with our youth and combating crime in our neighborhoods, and this program is a big step towards just that," said Representative Linda Dorcea Forry.

"Once again I would like to commend the Governor for always being hands-on and actively involved in the community," said Representative Martin Walsh.

The Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC) is utilizing the \$2.26 million SSYI award to expand Partners Advancing Communities Together (PACT), a firearm violence reduction strategy launched by Mayor Menino in July 2010. PACT brings together BPHC, the Boston Police Department, Boston Centers for Youth & Families, and several youth-serving organizations such as YOU to provide services and resources to those at high risk of becoming victims or perpetrators of gun violence. Using this collaborative model, over the next year, PACT will expand to engage more clients with opportunities for job training, transitional employment, and education; ensure access to trauma support and behavioral health services for clients; connect siblings and children of PACT clients to educational support, after-school and summer programming, and case management services; and improve coordination of PACT partners to better track and report progress with clients. Officials in Boston are working to serve over 230 PACT clients and siblings with funding through the SSYI.

Tuesday's Roxbury visit was the third of a statewide tour, where Governor Patrick and leaders in the Administration will meet with

youth as well as community and municipal leaders to discuss the successes and challenges of the program after one-year. In the past weeks, Governor Patrick has visited SSYI programs in Fall River and Worcester.

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