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GOVERNOR PATRICK HIGHLIGHTS \$5.6 MILLION FOR YOUTHWORKS PROGRAMS ACROSS THE COMMONWEALTH

Part of Comprehensive Approach to Combating Youth Violence

BOSTON – Tuesday, May 13, 2008 – As summer nears, Governor Deval Patrick today highlighted the administration’s funding of more than \$5.6 million for the YouthWorks summer jobs program this year – an increase of \$1.2 million from last year – as part of a comprehensive approach that coordinates education, employment and support services to increase opportunity and development for young people throughout Massachusetts.

“Summer jobs raise the hopes and skills of young people in the Commonwealth and give them the opportunity to work and to earn,” said Governor Patrick. “This investment in the YouthWorks summer jobs program is critical to the youth who will be on the job—and off the street—this summer.”

The Governor met with Secretary of Labor and Workforce Development Suzanne M. Bump, Secretary of Public Safety and Security Kevin M. Burke and Assistant Secretary for Children, Youth, and Families Marilyn Chase, along with police chiefs and young people who will participate in the program to discuss benefits of the program.

Through this funding, administered by the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development’s Commonwealth Corporation, regional Workforce Investment Boards will leverage other resources, including jobs paid by private sector employers to supplement the public resources from the Commonwealth and expand the number of youth employment opportunities. YouthWorks helps employers pay for the wages of the summer jobs placements, where youth are employed in a variety of areas including administrative, camp counselors, and maintenance and landscaping.

“We must take steps to connect our youth to job opportunities now as the greatest predictor of holding a job as an adult is one who holds a job as a

teenager,” said Secretary Bump. “Teens who work are put on a path that leads to greater academic success and lifetime earnings.”

Statewide, the percentage of teens in the labor force has declined dramatically from 57 percent in 1999 to 48 percent in 2006. The employment rate of teens declined from 53 percent in 1999 to 39 percent in 2006. These changes are even larger in the Bay State’s cities and among low-income families.

YouthWorks employs low-income youth in 25 cities and towns in Massachusetts. Last summer, more than 3,200 youth statewide got jobs last summer across these 25 cities and towns. This summer, funding has increased so that programs can reach more youth than ever before. Youthworks is a key component of the administration’s youth development and anti-violence strategy. The Governor believes that the best youth anti-violence strategy is one that emphasizes prevention, intervention and enforcement.

The Patrick-Murray Administration has invested millions of dollars through various grant programs providing youth with education, skill development and employment opportunities. administered through the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development, Executive Office of Health and Human Services and Executive Office of Public Safety and Security.

“An important part of preventing violence is engaging youth at the community level,” said Assistant Secretary Chase. “Solutions to public health issues facing our youth are a direct result of increased collaboration across youth serving organizations and agencies, as well as from the youth themselves. This grant program, along with the others announced today, provide the resources that will support positive youth development.”

“It is important that efforts among law enforcement and social service providers are coordinated and targeted,” said Secretary Burke.

“As the Governor has noted before, our mission is to create safe spaces for our youth to make good decisions and everyone must be at the table working toward that goal—police officers, prosecutors, our schools and local employers. The Governor’s investments across various disciplines reflects that philosophy.”

Employers looking for additional information on hiring youth can visit <http://www.commcorp.org/youthworks/employer-towns.html> or call toll-free at 866-968-8461.

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