

# From the Office of Senator Pam Resor

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Vol.2

## ***Beacon Hill News: Final Supplemental Budget Adopted***

Late last month, the legislature passed a spending bill which provided \$75 million in much needed local aid to cities and towns. Legislative leaders insisted that \$336 million from the fiscal 2004 budget's \$724 million surplus be placed in the state's rainy day reserve fund to help the state prepare for future economic downturns.

The one-time local aid boost will provide cities and towns across the State with much needed relief in a fiscal year where local officials, teachers, police and fire personnel are anxious to add back some of what has been taken away during the last three years of budget cuts.

"As a former local official, I know this supplemental budget will provide our cities and towns with some much needed breathing room," said Senator Resor. "It will ensure that they share in the state's fiscal relief as the economy begins to recover."

Additional local aid to Middlesex and Worcester cities and towns is proposed as follows:

Acton, \$131,999; Ayer, \$61,200; Boxborough, \$28,428; Harvard, \$36,542; Hudson, \$172,931; Littleton, \$54,488; Marlborough, \$329,414; Maynard, \$102,603; Northborough, \$108,503; Shirley, \$87,967; Southborough, \$40,962; Stow, 38,011; Sudbury, \$81,199; and Westborough, \$106,195.

- The final bill also included funds for other priority projects in the district, including:
- Regional Transportation Relief for Schools.
- Special Education Funding
- A provision adding Shirley to the list of towns included in the Devens "Economic Target Opportunity Area;" a redevelopment program that aims to support area residents and promote commercial growth opportunities in the area.
- \$390,000 for the establishment of the Devens Dispositions Steering committee; a group charged with planning for the development and disposition of Devens and the surrounding communities including; Ayer, Harvard and Shirley.
- Toll Relief for individuals who have paid tolls through a FastLane account or bought weekly or monthly transit commuter passes for the MBTA transit or commuter lines. This deduction shall apply only to the portion of expenditures that exceeds \$150 and does not exceed \$750 per individual.

"While this commuter relief package does not go as far as I would like to see with regard to Turnpike tolls, it will represent a significant cost savings for people who use that highway and for those who use public transportation," said Sen. Resor. "Meanwhile, I will continue to do all that I can to see that the tolls west of Route 128, come down for good."

## Senator Resor hosts Municipal Briefings



Following the end of formal session, Senator Resor hosted a series of municipal briefings with local officials throughout the district. Attendees included local housing authority officials, Finance Committee members, selectman, as well as town and city administrators. The meetings were an opportunity for the Senator to check in with local officials, go over the FY 05 budget and share other legislative highlights from the past year. It was also a chance for municipal officials to share their feedback with Senator Resor feedback and discuss their priorities for the next legislative session, set to start Jan 5, 2005.

## New Bill Provides Relief to National Guard Families



Senator Resor and Representative Spilka recently filed legislation that would create an assistance fund for families of the Massachusetts National Guard. Many families face financial hardships when a family member is called to active duty, this fund is designed to help offset the consequences of a decreased income. Many reservists earn less while on active duty than they do at their civilian jobs and some private and public employer's do not always make up the difference. With extended tours of duty, some up to two years- many families are experiencing financial hardship. If approved, this fund will establish a voluntary check off box on state income tax forms, enabling taxpayers to donate directly to the fund. Senator Resor said "This fund will give Massachusetts taxpayers a chance to play a meaningful and direct role in helping military families meet their financial needs."

## *"Senator Resor on Economic Development"*

As a member of the Senate Ways and Means committee I realize the importance of sound economic policies and community development programs statewide. I am a strong supporter of regional development initiatives and job training programs that serve to promote the economic viability of our communities and expands the assets this region has to offer to businesses who wish to locate in the region. I will continue working to ensure the economic well being of the Middlesex Worcester district in the present and the future.

I am very pleased that a long time priority of mine, which will add Shirley to the list of towns included in the Devens "Economic Target Opportunity Area," was included in the supplemental budget. This plan is a redevelopment program that aims to support residents and promote commercial growth opportunities in the area. Another priority of mine included in the budget was \$390,000 in funding for the establishment of the Devens Dispositions Steering Committee, a group charged with planning for the redevelopment and revitalization of the Devens area. The groups' formation has been widely supported by Ayer, Harvard and Shirley town officials.

The I-495 Initiative a valuable group that brings together state and local officials as well as member of the business and education communities, to work together and strive for balanced "smart" community growth and economic development in the region. I have been an active board member on the I-495 Partnership since it was formed and was recently named the new Senate chair of the organization. I am honored to work with and on behalf of this group so they may continue to serve the communities along the I-495 corridor.

If you have any concerns or questions about this issue, please do not hesitate to contact my office via phone: 617.722.1120 or by email: [presor@senate.state.ma.us](mailto:presor@senate.state.ma.us)

## Thank You, Pam!

“We are writing on behalf of the Assabet River Consortium and the Organization for the Assabet River (OAR), to express our appreciation for your initiation and support of the Assabet River study and its associated funding in the state Supplemental Budget.”

Julia Blatt, Executive Director, OAR  
Paul Blazar, Chair, Assabet River Consortium

“Thank you for the time and efforts you and your senate colleagues have made in supporting the increase in state funding for special education students. After the first year of implementation, the circuit breaker formula is proving to benefit our schools as we are beginning to see the financial reimbursements within our districts. Thank you for listening to our community concerns and making a difference for our very special students.”

Jean M. Bean, Student Support Services  
Northborough- Southborough Public Schools