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Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Mayor Meets with AG Coakley on Economic Protection and DPH Commissioner on H1N1 Planning

Mayor Carlo DeMaria Jr. recently met with Attorney General Martha Coakley and Massachusetts Department of Public Health Commissioner John Auerbach at the September meeting of the Massachusetts Mayors' Association, a member group of the Massachusetts Municipal Association. The session was held on Wednesday, September 23 at Memorial Hall in Melrose, and was hosted by Melrose Mayor Robert Dolan.

Mayor DeMaria joined with his colleagues from across the state to discuss key economic protection policy issues with Massachusetts Attorney General Coakley, who outlined enforcement actions and settlements that her office has pursued against financial lending institutions that took advantage of consumers during the subprime mortgage crisis. The Attorney General detailed key tools, programs and funding sources for cities to assist residents who have been harmed by the economic downturn. The discussion also focused on strategies that cities can use to promote business investment to benefit citizens and families at the neighborhood level, including the Abandoned Property Rehabilitation Program.

The Mayor also met with John Auerbach, the state Commissioner of Public Health, to review the latest information concerning the H1N1 flu virus, and discussed community-based preparations to assist with vaccinations and the dissemination of vital information for the public in order to combat the expected outbreak early this fall. The Mayor and the Commissioner focused on the state's action plan and public health experts' recommended actions and resources for communities, families and individuals.

"Our health department staff has a critical role in working with school superintendents, school nurses, police and fire departments, health care providers, and many others in our city to help address the challenges that will come with the H1N1 influenza threat," said Mayor DeMaria "and we are partnering with the Department of Public Health to ensure the strongest possible local response."

During the meeting, representatives from the Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition met with the Mayors to discuss the *English Works* Campaign, a ground-breaking effort to promote economic self-sufficiency for immigrants.

The Massachusetts Municipal Association (MMA) also provided an update and analysis of the state's declining revenue condition during the first quarter of fiscal 2010. The MMA update stressed the need to pass further legislative reforms to give local leaders important health insurance cost-containment powers, to reduce the negative fiscal impact of the flawed charter school funding system, and the need for strong management tools to allow municipal officials to protect essential services, balance local budgets, and reduce the number of layoffs of municipal and school employees.

"I am very pleased that Mayor DeMaria attended and participated in this important meeting," said Mayor Robert Dolan of Melrose, the President of the Massachusetts Mayors' Association. "The only way that we can address the difficult issues facing our cities is by working together to advance a common agenda for strong communities and a stronger economy, and Mayor DeMaria's input is essential to this important work," he concluded.

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