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Press Release**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Mayor Meets on the Economy and Healthy Communities

Mayor Carlo DeMaria Jr., this week met with experts on the economy and public health at the November meeting of the Massachusetts Mayors' Association, a member group of the Massachusetts Municipal Association, to focus on the latest economic news for Massachusetts and the nation, and to discuss important public health concerns facing communities. The session was held in the City of Everett, at Everett High School's Crimson Café.

On Wednesday, November 19, Mayor DeMaria and Mayors from across the state participated in a wide-ranging discussion on the national and Massachusetts economy, the economic stimulus package being developed by Congress, and the fiscal challenges facing cities as they work to deliver services that are essential to the region's economic strength.

Dr. Michael Goodman, director of economic and public policy research at the Donahue Institute at the University of Massachusetts presented a sobering picture of the economic outlook for Massachusetts. Dr. Goodman's analysis confirmed that the state has entered a serious recession, and the impact on state and local governments will be severe. During the discussion, Mayor DeMaria stated that "there is no more important issue facing our city than preparing for and dealing with this recession – we must do all that is necessary to protect essential services, and work with state and federal leaders to get the resources and tools we need to manage during very difficult times."

Mayor DeMaria also participated in a discussion led by Geoff Wilkinson, the senior policy advisor for the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. Wilkinson discussed innovative ways that cities and towns are collaborating to deliver public health services, and offered to work closely with Mayors to make their communities healthier and more sustainable. Wilkinson also highlighted Mayor Joseph Curtatone's award-

winning program "Shape Up Somerville" as a model for efforts to combat childhood obesity.

The Massachusetts Municipal Association (MMA) also provided an analysis of the state's deteriorating fiscal condition, triggered by the tumbling economy and the national financial crisis on Wall Street. The MMA update discussed growing concerns of further state budget cuts, and reported on recent legislative developments. Working with the National League of Cities, the MMA is asking Congress and the incoming Obama Administration to incorporate cities and towns in the new economic stimulus package being developed on Capitol Hill. Mayor (*Name*) agreed, and called on Congress to include funding for vital public works and infrastructure projects to create construction jobs, to provide access to credit to finance vital local initiatives, and to extend unemployment benefits as a lifeline for city residents who lose their jobs due to the recession. "Now is the time for action," said Mayor DeMaria

"I am very pleased that Mayor DeMaria attended and participated in this important meeting," said Mayor Joseph Curtatone of Somerville, the President of the Massachusetts Mayors' Association. "Cities will only make progress if the state and federal government work in concert with Massachusetts communities to protect local revenues, create jobs and invest in local services that are vital to sustaining the economy, and Mayor DeMaria is a leader in this vital work."

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