



**SAVE OUR COMMUNITIES
COALITION**

For Cost Control. For Taxpayers.

For Immediate Release
March 11, 2010

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**Mayors and Local Leaders form the
Save Our Communities Coalition**
*New Coalition Advocates for Authority to Redesign
Municipal Health Plans*

More than twenty Massachusetts municipal leaders announced today the formation of a new coalition, Save Our Communities Coalition, which will work to advance healthcare plan design legislation. The group gathered at the invitation of Boston Mayor Thomas Menino last week to discuss how cities and towns can control rising employee health care costs without the authority to modify health plan design, as it stands under the current state law. With growing healthcare costs taking a large percentage of already tight budgets, municipal officials are working together to advocate for a more efficient use of taxpayer money.

“This is an issue that affects every city and town in the state. We can no longer ignore rising health care costs. It will undermine our ability to provide services to the citizens of our communities,” said Coalition co-chair Mayor Scott W. Lang. “We must confront this issue and make difficult decisions to ensure that we have a municipal finance structure that is sustainable not just through one budget cycle, but for the future.”

“I am pleased to join with other municipal leaders to push for health insurance plan parity,” said co-chair and Revere Mayor Thomas Ambrosino. “We all agree that the status-quo isn’t working, and is an unsustainable model of municipal finance which is unfair to our taxpayers. We can also all agree that we must work with the Legislature, the Governor, and every stakeholder to resolve this issue.”

The cost of providing healthcare for municipal employees has more than doubled in the last decade, far outpacing the inflation and growth of any other municipal expenditure, and costs continue to grow at an unsustainable rate. Currently, cities and towns in Massachusetts spend about two billion dollars each year on health insurance, which represents an average of 14% of municipal budgets.

Proposed legislation would remove the statutory requirement that municipal officials must collectively bargain plan design changes, giving municipalities the authority to make updates to co-payments and deductibles and bring down total premium costs. This would lessen the burden of health

care costs on city budgets and make funds available for other taxpayer services such as public safety, schools, and community centers.

The Coalition has requested to meet with Governor Patrick, Senate President Murray, and Speaker DeLeo to discuss the proposed legislation. Mayors and municipal leaders across the state have also reached out to state labor groups and continue to meet with local labor unions and municipal workers to discuss the issue.

Founding Members of the Coalition include:

Thomas G. Ambrosino, Co-Chair, Mayor of Revere

Scott W. Lang, Co-Chair, Mayor of New Bedford

Jay Ash, City Manager of Chelsea

Joseph A. Curtatone, Mayor of Somerville

Carlo DeMaria, Jr., Mayor of Everett

Robert J. Dolan, Mayor of Melrose

Kimberley Driscoll, Mayor of Salem

Mark P. Hawke, Mayor of Gardner

Clare Higgins, Mayor of Northampton

Richard C. Howard, Mayor of Malden

Richard Kelliher, Town Administrator of Brookline

Thatcher W. Kezer III, Mayor of Amesbury

Bernard F. Lynch, City Manager of Lowell

Thomas M. Menino, Mayor of Boston

Joshua Ostroff, Natick Board of Selectman

William F. Scanlon, Jr., Mayor of Beverly

Joseph C. Sullivan, Mayor of Braintree

Lisa A. Wong, Mayor of Fitchburg

William M. Manzi III, Mayor of Methuen

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