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DEVAL L. PATRICK
GOVERNOR

HD 4390
7-11-14
11:20am

July 11, 2014

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives:

Pursuant to Section 5 of Article 63 of the Amendments to the Constitution, I am today signing House Bill 4001, "An Act Making Appropriations for the Fiscal Year 2015 for the Maintenance of the Departments, Boards, Commissions, Institutions and Certain Activities of the Commonwealth, for Interest, Sinking Fund and Serial Bond Requirements and for Certain Permanent Improvements," and returning certain portions to you for reconsideration.

The fiscal year 2015 budget that I am signing into law supports our proven growth strategy of investing in education, innovation and infrastructure to create jobs and opportunity in the near term and strengthen our Commonwealth in the long term.

Even in the face of the most significant economic and fiscal challenges in generations, we have shared an unshakeable commitment to investing in education, from early education through higher education, recognizing that education is the foundation for opportunity and economic mobility. This budget includes a \$100 million increase in Chapter 70 local education aid, which will bring funding for this program to \$4.4 billion, the highest level in state history and 18 percent greater than when I took office. The budget invests an additional \$24 million in early education to enable 1,700 more children to access early education services which will prepare them for future academic and economic success. The budget also provides another significant increase in funding for public higher education, allowing the University of Massachusetts to freeze tuition and fees for the second consecutive academic year.

This budget ends the practice of paying for transportation staff on the capital budget, creating more room for spending capital dollars on better roads, rail and bridges across the Commonwealth. It also includes investments in the Massachusetts Life Sciences Center, a proven vehicle for supporting job creation in life sciences, and a catalyst for making Massachusetts the leader in the life sciences sector.

The budget includes important investments to make our communities stronger and safer and provide supporting services and opportunities for the most vulnerable residents of the Commonwealth. It funds many of the strategies I have proposed to address the opioid epidemic in Massachusetts and brings renewed focus to providing youth and adults with the tools and skills to successfully re-enter society after criminal and civil custody. It also continues our support for the Safe and Successful Youth Initiative, the summer jobs program for at-risk youth and Shannon Grants.

This budget also includes funding for capacity building and operational improvements at the Department of Children and Families that will allow the agency to better serve families in need across the Commonwealth; as well as investments which will allow non-convicted patients currently treated at Bridgewater State Hospital to receive mental health services in more appropriate settings. It also provides a significant increase to support the critical work of our human service providers (Chapter 257) and continues steady progress towards restoring full adult dental coverage at MassHealth.

The budget recognizes that investments in growth and opportunity are most effective when government works well and manages prudently – building on work we have done together over the past eight years to implement pension, ethics, transportation, municipal health insurance and other reforms improving performance and promoting long-term fiscal sustainability at every level of government. Notably, it contains information technology governance and management reforms largely reflected in my Executive Order 549, which is already producing major improvements in how we select and deploy technology solutions for delivering core services. The budget also includes significantly increased payments towards

the costs of our long-term public pension and retiree health care liabilities, putting the state on a stronger fiscal footing.

Of course, the work of meeting the needs of the people of Massachusetts and managing state finances does not end with the enactment of the annual budget, but rather *begins* with it.

Over the course of the past year, for example, we have seen the emergence of an opioid epidemic requiring previously unanticipated investments in prevention, intervention and treatment. As we have collectively identified other critical opportunities and challenges – the chance to spur even more robust economic growth through targeted investments; the need to add resources and better technology to protect children – we have confronted those issues head on and developed meaningful solutions.

We have also had to react to unpredictable changes in our revenues. Being mindful that despite careful planning and sound fiscal management, we cannot anticipate every problem that may arise, I am proposing some additional fiscal management tools in accompanying supplemental appropriations legislation to ensure that we are well-positioned to capitalize on opportunities and solve problems while maintaining a balanced budget.

While I am very pleased to sign most of the fiscal year 2015 budget into law, there are a limited number of proposed appropriations that I do not support and have thus taken action to reduce. I have also returned certain sections with recommended amendments.

Therefore:

- I am reducing appropriation amounts in items of section 2 of House 4001 enumerated in Attachment A of this message by the amount and for the reasons set forth in that Attachment;
- I am disapproving, or striking wording in, items of section 2 of House 4001 also set forth in Attachment A, for the reasons set forth in that Attachment;

- I am disapproving those sections of House 4001 itemized in Attachment B of this message for the reasons set forth in that Attachment; and
- Pursuant to Article LVI, as amended by Article XC, Section 3 of the Amendments to the Constitution of the Commonwealth, I am returning sections 27, 28, 56, 57, 58, 59, 119, 120, 125, 206, 251, 253, and 290 with recommendations for amendment. My reasons for doing so and the recommended amendments are set forth in separate letters dated today which are included with this message as Attachments C, D, E, F, G, and H.

I approve the remainder of this Act.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David L. Dewhurst". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "D".