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HOUSE . . . . . No. 5177

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
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CHARLES D. BAKER
GOVERNOR

KARYN POLITO
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

December 11, 2020

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives,

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives:

I am filing for your consideration a bill entitled "An Act Making Appropriations for Fiscal Year 2021 to Provide for Supplementing Certain Existing Appropriations and for Certain Other Activities and Projects," recommending the appropriation of $107.4 million in fiscal year 2021 (FY21).

Many of the Commonwealth's small businesses, and notably those with diverse ownership, are experiencing prolonged challenges in accessing capital, which are compounded by severe revenue loss. The Municipal Police Training Committee and the proposed Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) Commission both need operating funds. Interruptions in schools across the Commonwealth have deeply disrupted learning in ways that could persist for years if left unaddressed.

Despite the state's own fiscal pressures, the need for small business support cannot be understated. The revised budget proposal I submitted in October included over $100 million in additional funding for an economic recovery and small business relief plan, with a focus on supporting small businesses in underserved markets, minority-owned, women-owned, and veteran-owned businesses, and those that have not yet received federal aid. While the budget enacted by the Legislature included additional economic development assistance, it only funded about half of our proposal.

I appreciate your support for additional resources for economic development. Given the hardships facing Main Street economies and diverse businesses across the Commonwealth, I ask again today for full funding in order to address the unique needs of Massachusetts small businesses.

Specifically, this bill includes $46.4 million for new economic recovery planning and response programs through Mass Growth Capital Corp and $1 million to bring traditional Small Business Technical Assistance grants to $6 million. I recommend again the full $4 million budget for Community Compact related programs, as strong municipal government practices contribute to the essential stability of Main Street businesses.

I am also recommending $5 million to fund the start-up costs of the new POST Commission. Separate funding is necessary to provide the new POST Commission with operating funds while maintaining the necessary funding for the training mission served by the Municipal Police Training Committee

On the subject of schools, the Legislature appropriated $53 million for one-time grants to the K-12 system intended to maintain and increase educational quality during the pandemic. While I agree with the intention, distributing the money by formula misses the opportunity to prioritize more targeted measures, especially for low-income districts. These could include intensive instructional time during school vacations, early literacy supports, remote learning support services, and individual tutoring. Extra support may be needed for very young children, particularly those with special educational needs, or who have fallen behind in reading, as well as teenagers who are taking the MCAS exam and preparing to move on to college. Repurposing these funds will also support the expansion of district-run summer schools, community-based learning pods, and accelerate the development of expanded online resources.

This legislation recommends $53 million to address those needs.

I recognize that I am filing this bill at the very end of the legislative session. If the Legislature is unable to act before the end of session, we will continue to pursue this funding as these critical needs are not going away. Sufficient revenues are estimated to be available to finance these appropriations. I urge you to enact this legislation promptly.

Respectfully submitted,

Charles D. Baker,
Governor

HOUSE . . . . . No. 5177

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the One Hundred and Ninety-First General Court
(2019-2020)

An Act making appropriations for fiscal year 2021 to provide for supplementing certain existing appropriations and for certain other activities and projects.

Whereas, The deferred operation of this act would tend to defeat its purposes, which are forthwith to make supplemental appropriations for fiscal year 2021 and to make certain changes in law, each of which is immediately necessary to carry out those appropriations or to accomplish other important public purposes, therefore it is hereby declared to be an emergency law, necessary for the immediate preservation of the public convenience.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

SECTION 1. To provide for supplementing certain items in the general appropriation act and other appropriation acts for fiscal year 2021, the sums set forth in section 2 are hereby appropriated from the General Fund unless specifically designated otherwise in this act or in those appropriation acts, for the several purposes and subject to the conditions specified in this act or in those appropriation acts, and subject to the laws regulating the disbursement of public funds for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2021. These sums shall be in addition to any amounts previously appropriated and made available for the purposes of those items. These sums shall be made available until June 30, 2022, except as otherwise stated.

SECTION 2.

EXECUTIVE OFFICE FOR ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE

Reserves

1599-0026 Municipal Regionalization and Efficiencies Incentive Reserve..$2,000,000

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Office of the Secretary

7002-0040 Small Business Technical Assistance.....$1,000,000

7002-2020 Economic Recovery Planning and Response.....$46,350,000

SECTION 2A. To provide for certain unanticipated obligations of the commonwealth, to provide for an alteration of purpose for current appropriations, and to meet certain requirements of law, the sums set forth in this section are hereby appropriated from the General Fund unless specifically designated otherwise in this section, for the several purposes and subject to the conditions specified in this section, and subject to the laws regulating the disbursement of public funds for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2021. Except as otherwise stated, these sums shall be made available until June 30, 2022.

EXECUTIVE OFFICE FOR ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE

Reserves

1599-1210 For a reserve for the start-up costs of the Massachusetts peace officer standards and training commission established in section 2 of chapter 6E of the General Laws…….$5,000,000

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF EDUCATION

Office of the Secretary

7009-1023 For a program to support and enhance learning opportunities for low-income and other vulnerable students who are most significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic; provided, that funds may be used for one-time grants to school districts, charter schools, and educational collaboratives in the commonwealth to provide instructional time during the summer months; provided further, that funds may be awarded to school districts, charter schools, educational collaboratives, licensed providers of early education and care, and other organizations, as determined by the Department of Early Education and Care and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, to support services that maintain and increase educational quality during the pandemic, and mitigate the loss of instructional time, including but not limited to intensive instructional time during school vacations, early literacy supports, remote learning support services, and individual tutoring; provided further, that funds may be used to support college and career readiness through the administration of diagnostic and college placement tests in high schools, individualized online instructional curricula to strengthen the skills measured by the tests, and academic support to prepare students to demonstrate high school competency on the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System 2.0 examination; provided further, that any funds distributed from this item to a city, town or regional school district shall be deposited with the treasurer of such city, town or regional school district and held in a separate account and shall be expended by the school committee of such city, town or regional school district without further appropriation, notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary ……$53,000,000

SECTION 3. Item 1599-0026 of section 2 of the General Appropriations Act for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2021 is hereby amended by striking out the words “not less than

$1,000,000 shall be expended for an incentive program for communities and municipalities engaging in the use of best practices determined by the community compact cabinet created by the governor's executive order number 554 issued January 23, 2015" and inserting in place thereof the following words:-

not less than $2,000,000 shall be expended for an incentive program for communities and municipalities engaging in the use of best practices determined by the community compact cabinet created by the governor's executive order number 554 issued January 23, 2015.

SECTION 4. Said item 1599-0026 is hereby further amended by striking out the words "$1,000,000 shall be expended for a multi-year competitive grant program to provide financial support for 1-time or transition costs related to regionalization and other efficiency initiatives" and inserting in place thereof the following words:-

$2,000,000 shall be expended for a multi-year competitive grant program to provide financial support for 1-time or transition costs related to regionalization and other efficiency initiatives.

SECTION 5. Item 7002-2020 of section 2 of the General Appropriations Act for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2021 is hereby amended by striking out the words "not less than $17,500,000 shall be expended for grants to support small businesses negatively impacted by the 2019 novel coronavirus" and inserting in place thereof the following words:-

not less than $35,000,000 shall be expended for grants to support small businesses negatively impacted by the 2019 novel coronavirus.

SECTION 6. Said item 7002-2020 is hereby further amended by striking out the words "not less than $3,850,000 shall be expended for small business technical assistance and grants that focus on the needs of business enterprises owned by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals, including the extension of online and digital tools for small businesses" and inserting in place thereof the following words:-

not less than $7,700,000 shall be expended for small business technical assistance and grants that focus on the needs of business enterprises owned by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals, including the extension of online and digital tools for small businesses.

SECTION 7. Said item 7002-2020 is hereby further amended by striking out the words "not less than $17,500,000 shall be expended for a program to provide matching grants to community development financial institutions" and inserting in place thereof the following words:-

not less than $35,000,000 shall be expended for a program to provide matching grants to community development financial institutions.

SECTION 8. Said item 7002-2020 is hereby further amended by striking out the words "not less than $7,500,000 shall be expended for matching grants to low-income and moderate-income entrepreneurs" and inserting in place thereof the following words:-

not less than $15,000,000 shall be expended for matching grants to low-income and moderate-income entrepreneurs.