Supplemental Budget Signed to Fund COVID-19 Relief Efforts
Delivers Funds to Hampshire, Franklin, Worcester district

Comerford secures $250,000

(BOSTON, MA) - On Friday, Governor Baker signed a supplemental budget to fund state COVID-19 relief efforts, including funds earmarked for the Hampshire, Franklin and Worcester district.

Senator Jo Comerford (D-Northampton) secured $250,000 in earmarked spending in this supplemental budget, collaborating with the Franklin County Chamber of Commerce and the Greater Northampton Chamber of Commerce to use these funds for COVID-19 relief efforts throughout the region.

Businesses have experienced severe economic consequences from the COVID-19 pandemic as jobs were lost, businesses were forced to close, and the economy seized amid the health crisis. The Franklin County Chamber of Commerce and the Greater Northampton Chamber of Commerce have been at the forefront of assisting businesses with the phased COVID-19 reopening.

$110,000 in funding is earmarked for the Franklin County Chamber of Commerce and will be distributed among a number of Franklin County businesses. “The Franklin County Chamber of Commerce is so appreciative of the efforts of Senator Comerford to come to our aid at a time when we need it most. We plan to disburse funds across several sectors that have felt a heavy blow during the COVID-19 pandemic including childcare, lodging, arts and culture, and tourism,”
said Executive Director Diana Szynal. “We look forward to assisting over a dozen businesses with funds that will have a direct, immediate and meaningful impact on their recovery,” she added.

$110,000 in funding is earmarked for Hampshire County and will be disbursed by the Greater Northampton Chamber of Commerce. “These funds couldn’t be more timely and will significantly boost the Community Revitalization Fundraising campaign that is currently underway to award grants of up to $5,000 to small businesses in the Northampton area,” stated Vince Jackson, Executive Director of the Northampton Chamber. “Small businesses are the backbone of our local economy and a vital part of our community.” he added.

Comerford and the Chambers of Commerce have agreed to work together to use the funds to meet key needs in the region, including child care, business reopening costs, assistance to significantly impacted sectors, PPE purchasing, and other COVID-19 recovery needs.

Some of the funding directed to the Franklin County Chamber of Commerce will be used to help fund childcare sector needs in the North Quabbin area, and some of the funding directed to the Greater Northampton Chamber of Commerce will flow to the Amherst Area Chamber of Commerce as well as be used to assist South Hadley businesses with reopening costs.

Comerford also secured a $30,000 earmark for Franklin County D.I.A.L./S.E.L.F. Inc. for the expansion of their youth homelessness prevention work which is especially critical during the COVID-19 pandemic.

This supplemental budget contains one billion dollars in statewide COVID-19 relief spending that is eligible for federal reimbursement, and also makes a large investment in the Massachusetts COVID-19 Relief Fund which can be drawn from throughout Fiscal Year 2021.