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For Immediate Release

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House Passes Measure to Provide More Than \$1 Billion in Federal Reimbursement for COVID-19 Needs

The Bill Also Establishes Juneteenth as a State Holiday

June 30, 2020 – BOSTON – This week **House Speaker Robert A. DeLeo** and **State Representative Carole Fiola**, along with their colleagues in the House of Representatives, passed a supplemental budget to facilitate federal CARES Act funding to reimburse communities hard-hit by COVID-19.

The spending measure follows the April passage in Congress of the Federal Cares Act, which requires states to expend funds on items related to COVID-19 for federal reimbursement. The supplemental budget directs funds to address vital needs including for personal protective equipment, field hospitals and contact tracing.

The bill also establishes Juneteenth Independence Day on June 19th in Massachusetts, marking the day in 1865 when the enslaved people of Galveston, Texas, learned they were free.

“This supplemental budget will distribute key funds to some of the most vital needs in the wake of COVID-19. It will enable us to access federal funds for PPE, contact tracing, childcare support and other vital areas. I thank Chair Michlewitz and my colleagues in the House for their work on this bill,” said **Speaker DeLeo (D-Winthrop)**. “I’m also grateful to Representative Williams and the members of the Black and Latino Legislative Caucus for their advocacy for making Juneteenth a state holiday.”

“By passing this supplemental budget, we are taking one step closer in helping relieve the financial burden that COVID-19 has inflicted, while also helping some prepare for the coming months as the virus continues to inflict pain. I want to thank my colleagues for their input and guidance on highlighting the most critical needs that were addressed in this budget,” said **Representative Aaron Michlewitz, Chair of the House Committee on Ways & Means (D-Boston)**. “I was also proud to support the inclusion of making Juneteenth a State Holiday throughout the Commonwealth in this budget. I want to thank the members of the Black & Latino Caucus for their work to forever memorializing June 19th and everything it stands for.”

"There is no doubt that our Commonwealth has faced numerous racial and economic issues this year, by passing this supplemental budget, we took the steps needed to move toward economic recovery and worked to ease disparities," **stated Representative Fiola.** "The legislature acted this week to recognize Juneteenth as a State Holiday which goes to honor one of the most significant days in our country's history, a day where we started to move to equality".

Representative Fiola added language that allocates \$150,000 to Fall River. This funding is to support the city's costs related to COVID-19.

The spending bill includes, among other items:

- \$350 Million for personal protective equipment costs across the Commonwealth;
- \$139 Million for increased rate add-ons to congregate care providers;
- \$94 Million for incentive pay for human service employees;
- \$85 Million for field hospitals and shelters;
- \$44 Million for Community Tracing Collaborative;
- \$81.6 Million for child care needs during the pandemic and re-opening;;
- \$500,000 to create an Early Education and Care Public-Private Trust Fund to establish an infrastructure to foster public-private and philanthropic efforts in support of childcare providers.

The bill now moves to the Senate.

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