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## **Massachusetts Legislature Approves a \$15 Million Fund in Response to the Coronavirus Outbreak**

March 13, 2020 – BOSTON – Yesterday, the Senate and House passed a supplemental budget to create a \$15 million fund in response to the outbreak of COVID 19 cases in Massachusetts. The funds, held in reserve, will support the Commonwealth’s monitoring, treatment, containment, public awareness and prevention efforts against the 2019 novel coronavirus by the Department of Public Health, regional and local boards of health, and other public entities.

“Massachusetts acted quickly to put in place funds for our public health system so that it may have resources immediately available to combat the spread of the coronavirus,” said **House Speaker Robert A. DeLeo (D – Winthrop)**. “Thank you to Chair Michlewitz for his work to move this legislation this week and Leader Jones for his support. We took this action in partnership with our Senate colleagues, and we appreciate the leadership of Senate President Spilka and the work of Chair Rodrigues during this public health crisis.”

“This week, the Senate, along with our partners in the House, acted decisively to provide a flexible source of funding to assist state and local efforts to deal with our unfolding public health crisis,” said **Senate President Karen E. Spilka (D-Ashland)**. “I would like to thank everyone, from Senate Ways and Means Chair Michael Rodrigues and Minority Leader Bruce Tarr, to Speaker DeLeo and Chair Michlewitz, for their collaborative work to quickly pass this supplemental budget.”

“I am pleased that we were able to approve this critical funding so quickly,” said **Representative Aaron Michlewitz, Co-Chair of the Joint Committee on Ways & Means (D-Boston)**. “We will continue to work collaboratively with our partners in the Senate and with the Baker administration to combat this crisis however we can.”

“As COVID-19 outbreak continues to disrupt the day-to-day actions of our Commonwealth, we must continue to rapidly respond to this immediate public health crisis,” said **Senator Michael Rodrigues, Co-Chair of the Joint Committee on Ways & Means (D-Westport)**. “Thanks to the leadership of Senate President Spilka, and the partnership of Speaker DeLeo and Chair Michlewitz, we have acted swiftly to

provide an immediate infusion of \$15 million to enhance state and local response efforts to ensure the well-being of our residents and mitigate the spread of COVID-19.”

“I’m pleased we were able to take quick action as a first step to address the coronavirus outbreak,” said **House Minority Leader Representative Bradley H. Jones, Jr. (R-North Reading)**. “I expect this will be the first of many actions we will take to respond to this rapidly evolving public health situation.”

“To combat the spread of Coronavirus illness, the Senate and House have acted quickly to give the state and local agencies charged with protecting the public health the resources they need to respond effectively to this threat,” said **Senate Minority Leader Bruce Tarr (R-Gloucester)**. “Our actions today reflect our ongoing commitment to do what is necessary to reduce risk of harm to the people of the Commonwealth.”

The bill now goes to the governor.

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