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## **HUD AWARDS FUNDING TO PROVIDE PERMANENT HOUSING FOR HOMELESS VETERANS**

*\$1.3 million awarded to Boston Housing Authority*

Today, Congressman Michael Capuano joined US Department of Housing and Urban Development Regional Director Taylor Caswell to announce \$1.3 million in funding that has been awarded to the Boston Housing Authority to provide permanent supportive housing for homeless veterans.

The funding is being awarded under HUD's *Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing Program (HUD-VASH)* in which additional rental assistance vouchers are being provided under the *Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program*. These vouchers, which are being administered by the Boston Housing Authority, are specifically targeted to homeless veterans. The VA Boston Healthcare System will provide outreach, supportive services and case management to eligible homeless veterans.

"This HUD funding will help the City of Boston expand its efforts to serve our veterans, who have given so much for our country. The money will be targeted toward providing homeless veterans with support services and the opportunity to obtain permanent housing, and I appreciate the efforts of all involved to make this program a success," stated Congressman Mike Capuano.

To apply for a voucher, veterans can call 857-364-4444. The Boston Housing Authority will determine income eligibility in accordance with HUD regulations for the Housing Choice Voucher Program. Under the program, veterans can use vouchers to rent privately-owned housing and pay up to 30 percent of income towards rent. The federal subsidy will make up the difference between the actual rent and what the veteran will pay.

"Every veteran deserves a home that he or she can afford," said HUD Regional Director Taylor Caswell. "This program will serve a vital need by making sure veterans have an affordable place to live with the support services they need to live independently."

The funding is part of \$2.5 million awarded in Massachusetts and \$72.3 million awarded nationwide to assist 10,000 veterans across the country. It is expected that 105 veterans will be assisted with the funding announced today. Other grants were awarded to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts (\$736,781) to administer 70 vouchers in conjunction with the Bedford VA Medical Center, and to the Northampton Housing Authority (\$487,402) to administer 70 vouchers.

“It is important that we express to our veterans our deepest appreciation for their service to our country by providing them with the kind of housing and quality of life they deserve,” said Mayor Thomas M. Menino. “This will now be possible through a new partnership between the Boston Housing Authority, the VA Boston Healthcare System and US Department of Housing and Urban Development.”

The VA, in conjunction with the Massachusetts Department of Veterans Services and the Massachusetts Interagency Council on Housing and Homelessness will provide outreach, supportive services, and case management to eligible veterans. The VA will make referrals to the Boston Housing Authority and will certify that they are homeless veterans with an honorable discharge. After veterans find suitable housing, the VA will continue to provide community-based case management services, outpatient health service, hospitalization, and other assistance on a regular basis. When a HUD-VASH participant no longer needs voucher assistance, the freed-up voucher will be made available to another eligible homeless veteran.

The VA Boston Healthcare System, with facilities in Jamaica Plain, West Roxbury and Brockton, provides a full array of health care services to 65,000 veterans annually. These services include a variety of outreach programs to homeless veterans throughout eastern Massachusetts.

“This program will provide additional housing opportunities for a most deserving population, our nation’s veterans; men and women who put themselves in harm’s way, so that we could enjoy the comforts of home. Now it is their turn to be given the opportunity to enjoy a home of their own,” said VA Boston Healthcare System Director Michael Lawson.

For Fiscal Year 2008, HUD provided the Boston Housing Authority \$156.7 million to administer 11,800 housing choice vouchers. HUD homeless funding totals \$59.4 million awarded in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in Fiscal Year 2007, including \$18.8 million awarded to the City of Boston.