



## The Republican.

### Patrick files \$1 billion bond bill

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BOSTON - Gov. Deval L. Patrick yesterday filed a \$1.1 billion bond bill to finance improvements to public housing, reduce homelessness and upgrade neighborhoods.

The legislation, billed as the state's largest housing bond effort, seeks to spend \$500 million to repair and modernize public housing developments.

Peter A. Gagliardi, executive director of HAP Inc. in Springfield, which develops and manages affordable housing, said the bill would provide a big boost for public housing.

"The condition of state-aided public housing is close to being a scandal," Gagliardi said. "It has been ignored, abandoned and forgotten the past several years. Many people are living with leaky roofs, heating systems that need to be replaced and kitchens and bathrooms that are 40 years old."

The bill also provides \$200 million to create and preserve affordable housing for certain income-eligible families.

Another \$175 million would be for buying, preserving and renovating affordable housing including foreclosed properties.

Patrick wants to use \$100 million to improve group homes and other housing for disabled people and the mentally retarded.

An additional \$55 million would be for Community Development Action Grants, a program that provides grants for municipalities. The money is used mostly for infrastructure work including new sewer and water lines, sidewalks and streets.

Patrick said the bond bill would create 4,000 construction jobs across the state during the next five years.

"This is an ambitious strategy to meet a crucial need - and it better be ambitious because we have profound challenges in this area all over the commonwealth," Patrick said at a press conference yesterday in Boston.

Caroline Murray, executive director of the Alliance to Develop Power in Springfield, said the bill might pay for improvements at many low-income housing developments.

She said Greenfield Gardens in Greenfield could use new siding and a roof and Powdermill Village in Westfield needs new floors and a roof. The Cathedral Hill and Spring Meadows Apartments in Springfield also need work, Murray said.

Subsidiary nonprofits of Murray's organization own \$45 million of real estate that is controlled cooperatively by tenants. Previous housing bond bills helped improve the group's properties.

She said she was very pleased with the bond bill. "It will create literally tens of thousands of affordable

housing units in Massachusetts," Murray said.

Holyoke City Councilor Kevin A. Jourdain said a housing bond is needed.

"If you're going to have public housing, you've got to maintain it like you do any other housing," Jourdain said.

Jourdain said Lyman Terrace and Rosary Towers, two public housing developments in downtown Holyoke, might benefit from the bond bill.

Rep. Angelo J. Puppolo Jr., D-Springfield, a member of a special state commission seeking to end homelessness, said some money in the bond could be used for transitional and permanent housing for the homeless. Other money could go toward shelters for battered women and housing for people trying to recover from substance abuse.

"This is a significant, groundbreaking bill," Puppolo said. "It speaks volumes to the governor's commitment to housing needs."

Patrick has also filed bond bills for stem cell research, upgrading campuses at the University of Massachusetts and state colleges and providing high-speed Internet in some Western Massachusetts communities. He still plans to file bond bills for transportation and the environment.

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