



COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS  
**MASSACHUSETTS SENATE**  
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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**ROSENBERG RESCUES EDUCATION RESERVE FUND  
IN SENATE BUDGET**

**AMENDMENT ADDS \$5.5 MILLION  
FOR DISTRESSED SCHOOLS**

State Senator Stan Rosenberg (D-Amherst) announced today that he was successful in his effort to add \$5.5 million to the Senate's budget for the Foundation Reserve Fund, an account that helps school districts meet unanticipated expenses. The \$5.5 million in the Senate's budget represents a \$2 million dollar increase over the House's version. The difference will need to be worked out in the House-Senate conference committee.

In addition to the \$5.5 million, Rosenberg's amendment also expands the reach of the fund, known as "pothole money" because it helps schools fill holes in their budgets caused by unanticipated costs. Rosenberg also pushed to include last year's additional language which helped to prioritize rural regional schools with declining enrollments, the so called RED Circuit Breaker language. This year Rosenberg is making additional changes to the program that will give additional priority to districts that are facing transitional costs associated with switching to the state's Group Insurance Commission plan. Although all of these districts anticipate significant cost savings as a result of transitioning to the Group Insurance Commission, there are significant one time costs associated with making the transition. Districts needed funding to assist with both buy-out of their existing programs and bridge coverage until the GIC picked up coverage for their members.

"The Senate had planned on eliminating this account until today," Rosenberg said. "I'm pleased that my colleagues now appreciate just how important this account can be for schools in distress, for rural schools, like many in Franklin County, that are seeing a drop in student population, and for those districts that are opting in to the GIC, a move state government is encouraging. Keeping this account is simply the right thing to do, and I'm glad the Senate has done it."