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ROSENBERG RALLIES SUPPORT TO SAVE WESTERN MASS. DRUG ANALYSIS LAB

State Senator Stan Rosenberg (D-Amherst) President Pro Tem of the Massachusetts Senate, is rallying the western Mass. legislative delegation in an effort to save the Department of Public Health's drug analysis lab located at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst.

The DPH has proposed shutting down the lab on September 30th, 2011, saving the department an estimated \$300,000.

In a letter, signed by 22 western Mass. legislators, to the chairs of the House and Senate Ways and Means Committees, Rosenberg states that closure of the lab would not save money, but rather shift costs to cash-strapped municipalities. Also, closing the western Mass. lab would create greater backlogs at the already-burdened Jamaica Plain laboratory, thereby increasing costs due to travel-related expenses, and could compromise on-going court cases.

"I believe the most prudent thing to do, both in terms of saving money and administering justice, is to keep the western Mass. lab open," Rosenberg said. "My colleagues and I are therefore requesting an allocation of \$300,000 in an upcoming supplemental budget to do just that."

This is the third time in his career that Rosenberg has led the effort to save the lab.