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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
DATE: September 22, 2008  
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### **ROSENBERG APPOINTED TO TWO SPECIAL COMMISSIONS DEALING WITH MUNICIPAL FINANCES**

State Senator Stan Rosenberg (D-Amherst) will serve on two special legislative commissions this fall, each dealing with municipal finances.

Appointed by Senate President Therese Murray (D-Plymouth), Rosenberg will serve as chairman of the Special Municipal Relief Commission. This 15-member joint House-Senate commission will investigate the feasibility of innovative local revenue-generating initiatives to provide revenue relief to municipalities. Specifically, the commission will examine possible expansion of the meals tax, the extension of the rooms tax to other accommodations not covered by the rooms tax, and other methods of increasing revenue and containing expenses.

Rosenberg will also serve as member of a second special commission established by the governor to study the accounting methods used by cities and towns to balance their fiscal budgets. This 10-member panel will consist of three Senators, three members of the House of Representatives, the State Auditor or his designee, the Commissioner of the Department of Revenue, or his designee, a representative of the Executive Office of Administration and Finance and a representative of the Massachusetts Municipal Association.

Rosenberg said that although local aid is a continuing priority for state government, even in difficult economic circumstances, municipal governments will need additional revenue options to offset any possible cuts to local aid in the future, and to meet growing needs at the local level. He added that the threat to cities and towns posed by Question 1, the ballot initiative to repeal the income tax, makes the work of these commissions all the more critical.

“Question 1 must be defeated,” Rosenberg said. “I’ve heard proponents argue that cities and towns have plenty of money. That is simply false. My plan for these commissions is to take a realistic look at local budgeting and offer some proposals that are based on facts, not fantasy. I think my experience as a former Ways and Means chairman, and my western Massachusetts perspective, will be assets as we navigate the future of the state and local government partnership.”