
PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
April 13, 2005

For More Information
Kevin Conlon – 617-722-1114

SENATOR MENARD FILES BILL TO PROTECT MEMBERS OF THE ARMED SERVICES

BOSTON – In 2003, State Senator Joan M. Menard (D-Fall River) sponsored and shepherded through legislation which guaranteed that each and every state employee who is called to active service would receive from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts the difference between their service salary and their salary as a state employee. It also protected their health insurance, (including the right to continue with their own physicians), their vacation and sick time, and their seniority rights.

Unfortunately, this legislation is scheduled to expire on September 11th of this year; a date that the Legislature originally felt would cover any deployments to the Iraqi conflict. This has not proven to be true. Massachusetts has had to see many of her own deployed overseas and there likely be more extensions and more deployments.

Therefore, Senator Menard has filed new legislation which would extend these benefits indefinitely. In the bill, Senator Menard also clarifies that the intent of the legislation was to make sure that any particular stipend or allowance that a soldier may will not be used in any calculations. Many cities, towns, school departments, and other public entities throughout the Commonwealth have adopted this measure.

"I am so proud of how my colleagues in the Legislature have responded to what I consider our obligation to protect the homes and families of men and women serving in the Armed Services," remarked Senator Menard, referring to the several legislators who signed onto this bill.

"Our organization applauds Senator Menard's continued legislative efforts in support of our activated employees," said Ted Mulvehill, President of the Massachusetts Veterans' Service Officers Association, and Director of Veterans' Services for the Town of Norwood. "This proposal is critical, given the approaching expiration date of the existing statute. I have no doubt that the General Court will embrace and adopt Senator Menard's bill, allowing Massachusetts to continue to be the national leader in supporting state, city and town employees who have been called to active duty."