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**PRESS RELEASE**

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**For Immediate Release  
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**MENARD'S ARMED FORCES BILL ENACTED  
IN BOTH HOUSE & SENATE**

*Bill Sits on Governor's Desk Awaiting his Signature*

BOSTON – Senator Joan M. Menard, (D-Fall River), and her colleagues in the Massachusetts State Legislature today enacted “An Act Further Regulating Salaries of Public Employees Serving in the Armed Forces of the United States” the Legislature’s final step of passing a bill into law before heading to the Governor’s desk.

This important piece of legislation renews an existing law set to expire on September 11<sup>th</sup> of this year which calls for state employees who are called to active service to maintain their current levels of compensation and benefits they otherwise would have received had they not been called upon to serve the nation. Specifically, public employees shall be paid their regular wages – reduced their military salary. Additionally, upon a request to the Group Insurance Commission by those citizens called to active duty, all health benefits extended to employees and their families will continue without interruption. All employees will also receive full credit for their retirement benefits during time served in the military, paid for by the State Pension Fund.

“I am thrilled we were able to enact this legislation prior to the looming deadline” Menard said following today’s Senate session. “Why should these brave men and women who leave their homes and families to selflessly serve our country be punished by not receiving their normal salaries and benefits? The least we in the legislature can do is to ensure that they do not have to worry about their financial well being, health coverage and retirement benefits.”

Today’s legislation provides local cities, towns and counties the opportunity to participate in this bill through local approval. The cost of this bill will be absorbed through state agencies’ existing resources.