



MILITARY FRIENDS DEDICATES \$100,000 TO “MASSACHUSETTS CARES!” GRANTS
New Grant Pilot Program to Benefit Deployed Mass. Guard & Reserve Families

(BOSTON) - The Military Friends Foundation, a non-profit organization chartered by the Commonwealth with caring for Massachusetts Citizen Service Members, was joined by Military Families and Government Leaders at the State House today to announce a new pilot program to recognize families of deployed Massachusetts Guard and Reserves. The “Massachusetts Cares!” Grant pilot program will receive \$100,000 from the Military Friends Foundation.

“The Massachusetts Cares! Grant is a ‘Thank You’ to those who are putting their lives on the line in service to our country,” said **Sergeant Major Jim Kelly (Ret.)**, President of the Military Friends Foundation and an Iraq veteran who served with the Massachusetts National Guard. Sergeant Major Kelly said the grant will help deployed service members and their families. “I can tell you first-hand that it is not just the service member who is impacted by deployment – in a very real way a family serves as well. The Massachusetts Cares! Grant recognizes that service.”

Massachusetts Cares! will provide \$200 grants to deployed E-7s and below who, like so many, face financial challenges during their deployment. “Each Mass. Cares! grant represents a contribution to the lives of our military families...it can be another week of camp for a child, groceries for a week or simply the opportunity to speak with a beloved military member with the peace of mind that comes from knowing your neighbors care for you,” said **Major General Joseph C. Carter, Adjutant General of the Massachusetts National Guard** to military families and supporters in attendance.

Joining the Military Friends Foundation at this launch was **Lieutenant Governor Timothy Murray** “As Massachusetts continues to be a national leader in offering comprehensive benefits and services to our service men and women, I want to congratulate the Military Friends Foundation for finding an innovative way to provide financial assistance to our military families through the Massachusetts Cares Grant,” said Murray, who also serves as Chair of the Governor’s Advisory Council on Veterans’ Services.

The Military Friends Foundation, established in 2003, is dedicated to serving Massachusetts National Guard and Reserve Families. The Foundation proudly administers the *Massachusetts Military Family Relief Fund* which was created by the State Legislature to recognize the unique contributions and sacrifices made by Citizen Service Members. The new Mass. Cares! Grant Program receives support from thousands of people across the Commonwealth through this Fund. Taxpayers can directly support the *Mass. Military Family Relief Fund* on their Mass. State Income Tax Form under voluntary contribution check-off box Question 32E.

Military Families received Mass. Cares! Grants at Wednesday’s ceremony, which featured **Thomas Lynn, the father of the first Mass. Cares! Grant recipient Army National Guard SPC Moses Lynn**. He read a letter from his wife, Susan, which said, “For me, as a military mom, the Massachusetts Cares Grant is a tremendous help in taking care of some of my son's financial responsibilities while he's away. This helps take care of one less bill he has to worry about, so that when he does return, in January, 2011, his finances will be on track. To the MA residents who have contributed to the Military Family Relief Fund I say "Thank You" for thinking of not only my son, but every other MA military member serving. I

will encourage family and friends to check off the Voluntary Contributions in the future. I know that any amount will benefit our military families.” Specialist Lynn of Quincy is serving a tour of duty in Afghanistan.

"I am so honored and proud of the Massachusetts Cares! Grant. This is an amazing program that will help thousands of veterans, soldiers and their families. Our troops are protecting our country and sacrificing time with their families - and it is so important we have programs like this in the Commonwealth to show our soldiers we will always support them," said **State Representative Harold P. Naughton** (D-Clinton), who served in Iraq with the US Army Reserves.

“While we can never truly repay a veteran for their service, we can make sure that their families and loved ones are well cared for while they are away,” commented **Secretary of Veterans’ Services Tom Kelley**. “I applaud the efforts of the Military Friends Foundation for their commitment to Massachusetts’ National Guard and Reserve families.”

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Last year, the Military Friends Foundation provided \$100,000 in assistance to Massachusetts Military Families through a range of grants and support programs. For more information on Military Friends programs visit www.militaryfriends.org.

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