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**KENNEDY, PATRICK, SEC. LEAVITT DISCUSS MEDICAID WAIVER
RENEWAL**

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Today, Senator Edward M. Kennedy and Governor Deval Patrick met with Health and Human Services Secretary Michael Leavitt to discuss the renewal of Massachusetts' Medicaid waiver. The waiver helps hundreds of thousands in Massachusetts receive life-saving health care services. Today's meeting was the first in what will be a series of meetings as the renewal process begins for the waiver. It currently expires June 30, 2008.

Senator Kennedy said, "This was a constructive first meeting and good start on the process of renewing the Massachusetts waiver. Massachusetts has defied the odds and is leading the nation on providing good affordable health care for our citizens. I look forward to working with the Governor and the Bush Administration to continue our progress."

"Senator Kennedy, Secretary Leavitt and I had a very positive and productive meeting to discuss the importance of health reform, our successes so far, and the challenges ahead," said Governor Patrick. "I thank the Senator and the entire Congressional delegation for their continued support of this grand experiment, and Secretary Leavitt for his strong partnership from the start."

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