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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
(Gordon)

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Rep. Gordon Provides April 3 COVID-19 Update -- Evictions and Foreclosure Moratorium, Restaurant Beer and Wine Takeout Sales, and Contact Tracing Initiative

Representative Gordon wrapped up another busy week on Friday, April 3 and provided the following updates to constituents as the COVID-19 emergency continues. The total number of positive cases climbed to 10,402 today with 1,436 new cases reported. An additional 38 people perished from the virus brought the toll to 192. In total, 62,962 tests have been conducted in Massachusetts.

Licensed restaurants are now permitted to sell beer and wine with take-out and delivery food orders. Pursuant to the bill, residents will no longer have to make two stops if they want a bottle of wine or beer with their meals. All applicable state law with respect to restrictions on the sale of liquor remain in place.

In addition, the new law includes provisions that extend the state tax filing deadline to July 15 and gives municipalities more flexibility with regard to scheduling and deadlines on tax payments and permits. Residents who are unable to pay local taxes or fees due to the financial impacts of COVID-19 can rest assured that their sewer, water, trash collection, and other essential municipal services will continue.

Rep. Gordon joined the House of Representatives in passing critical legislation on that establishes a moratorium on residential and commercial evictions and foreclosures throughout the COVID-19 State of Emergency and 30 days after it ends. Foreclosures and “notice to quit” letters are also prohibited during this time. Under the bill, evictions will only be allowed when there are allegations of criminal activity or when lease violations threaten public health or safety.

The Senate is expected to take up the bill promptly.

The bill also includes important protections for tenants who are struggling financially due to the COVID-19 emergency. If a tenant is unable to pay rent on time because of the current

crisis, the landlord may not charge late fees or report it to credit rating agencies as long as the tenant notifies the landlord within 30 days of the late payment.

The Baker-Polito Administration announced the creation of the COVID-19 Community Tracing Collaborative (CTC). The CTC was established by the administration and Partners In Health to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 in the Commonwealth. Under the guidance of the COVID-19 Response Command Center, the CTC will intensify efforts in the state to trace the contacts of COVID-19 patients and support individuals in quarantine. It is the first initiative of its kind in the nation, and public health officials see it as a meaningful way to slow the spread of the virus and allocate resources where they are most desperately needed.

Burlington, Bedford, and Wilmington residents should be aware that if they have contact with a COVID-19 positive individual, they may receive a phone call from the Community Tracing Collaborative. Residents are urged to answer these calls and actively participate in contact tracing efforts. Residents that know they have been exposed to the novel coronavirus can more effectively protect themselves, their families, and vulnerable members of the community.

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