

EDWARD M. KENNEDY
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-2101

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-2101

July 2, 2009

The Honorable Deval L. Patrick
The Honorable Therese Murray
The Honorable Robert A. DeLeo
The State House
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Governor Patrick, President Murray, and Speaker DeLeo:

For almost forty-seven years, I have had the privilege of representing the people of Massachusetts in the United States Senate. I am proud of the contribution our Commonwealth has made to the great debates of our time and our national history. I believe the voices and views of those we have elected to the Senate and House of Representatives have shaped America's progress—from the days of John Adams and Daniel Webster to the present.

I am now writing to you about an issue that concerns me deeply—the continuity of representation for Massachusetts should a Senate vacancy occur. In 2004, as you know, the law was changed to provide for a special election to choose a new Senator to serve for the remainder of an unexpired term. The law now mandates that the special election be held 145 to 160 days after a Senate seat becomes vacant. I strongly support that law and the principle that the people should elect their Senator; I also believe it is vital for this Commonwealth to have two voices speaking for the needs of its citizens and two votes in the Senate during the approximately five months between a vacancy and an election.

I therefore am writing to urge you to work together to amend the law through the normal legislative process to provide for a temporary gubernatorial appointment until the special election occurs. To ensure a fair election process, I also urge that the Governor obtain, as a condition of appointment of the interim Senator, an explicit personal commitment not to become a candidate in the special election.

Serving the people of Massachusetts in the United States Senate has been—and still is—the greatest honor of my public life. As I look ahead, I am convinced that enabling the Governor to fill a Senate vacancy through an interim appointment followed by a special election would best serve the people of our Commonwealth and country should a vacancy occur.

Sincerely,



Edward M. Kennedy