



For Immediate Release:

**SENATOR L'ITALIEN SECURES \$50,000 INVESTMENT FROM STATE FOR
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES IN LAWRENCE VIA LAWRENCE
PARTNERSHIP**

LAWRENCE, MA. The Lawrence Partnership has received a \$50,000 investment advocated by Senator Barbara L'Italien. The funding represents both a material and symbolic endorsement of the innovative strategy that the Partnership has implemented to spur economic development in Lawrence through alignment of private and public sector leaders. Derek Mitchell, the Executive Director of the Lawrence Partnership articulated what this funding means for the group and the state as a whole. "This resource is vital to the scaling of our initiatives to create jobs and opportunities in Lawrence, but is also a recognition that this model works. Other gateway communities have reached out to us eager to learn how to replicate our approach. We are grateful that the State also sees the value of what we have been doing in Lawrence".

The support for the Partnership was championed by Senator Barbara L'Italien, who is an ex-officio board member of the Lawrence Partnership board. "This investment by the state in Lawrence will more than pay for itself in jobs, economic activity and worker training as the Lawrence Partnership continues to provide capital and other support to help small businesses in the city grow and improve," said Sen. Barbara L'Italien, whose district includes Lawrence, Andover, Tewksbury and Dracut. "As I visit and to talk to small business owners across the city, many are looking for capital to expand or upgrade, and one of the first places I tell them to contact is the Lawrence Partnership. I am very pleased that my colleagues in the Legislature supported my budget amendment for this funding." The unique approach of the Lawrence Partnership is derived from the participation by presidents, CEOs and executive directors of banks, mills, businesses, schools, and community organizations all working in close concert with elected officials to identify and implement innovative strategies to spur economic development in and around Lawrence. "I want to thank Senator L'Italien and our State Delegation for securing these funds for the City of Lawrence and the Lawrence Partnership," said Mayor Daniel Rivera. "Economic Development is a key factor in creating jobs and opportunities to make Lawrence Better."

In addition to the \$2.5 Million dollar loan fund that the Lawrence Partnership created to support small businesses in Lawrence, the group has also spearheaded the Training Consortium, a regional workforce alignment initiative to connect regional businesses with the talent they need to thrive and grow in the area. Anita Worden, the CEO of the Yaskawa Solectria Solar hosted the press conference and is one of the private sector leaders helping to develop the Training Consortium. "Lawrence has been a wonderful place to grow our business from 4 to 200 employees. A skilled workforce has been key to this growth, and equally important, key to

the growth of the solar industry. We appreciate the support of Senator L'Italien and other legislators that are committed to this community and growing the solar industry. With their support, it will continue to be a great place to live, work and thrive," said Anita Worden, CEO of Yaskawa – Solectria Solar. Yaskawa Solectria Solar, which is the #1 commercial PV inverter supplier in the U.S., located its corporate headquarters in Lawrence in 2005 in Riverwalk's 46-acre campus in Lawrence. Riverwalk exemplifies the transformation and lasting power of economic revitalization.

The additional support for the Lawrence Partnership will contribute to the implementation and scaling of projects through the Training Consortium, creating more opportunities to align the local workforce with the in-demand skills that growing firms like Solectria have. That is a recipe for growing local industry *while also* creating upward mobility for Lawrence residents. Simply put, it is a win-win proposition, one that the state of Massachusetts is smart to be investing in.