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## Quinn Bill Pay Cut for Boston Police Officers

*41% Quinn Bill reduction will have lingering consequences on several fronts*

Boston police officers who are eligible for Quinn Bill benefits will see a 41% reduction in the Quinn Bill portion of their next paychecks. The FY10 state budget reduced the state share of the Quinn Bill costs by \$40M or 80%. That means for Boston only 17% of the state's 50% share of the Quinn Bill expenses will be funded in FY10. As required, the City will continue to fund its share of Quinn Bill costs. In FY09, actual Quinn Bill expenses totaled \$21.7M.

In 2008, 1,427 Boston police officers received Quinn Bill payments that averaged \$14,768. Two examples of the impact of the 41% cut on an annual basis show:

- A Captain earning \$197,441 including Quinn Bill pay of \$26,798 would see a \$10,987 or 5.6% cut in earnings.
- A Detective earning \$157,594 including Quinn Bill pay of \$22,089 would see a \$9,057 or 5.7% cut in earnings.

The Quinn Bill is a local-option salary benefit offered exclusively to uniformed police officers who earn law enforcement, criminal justice or law degrees. Officers receive an increase in base pay of 10% for an Associate's Degree, 20% for a Bachelor's Degree and 25% for a Master's or Law Degree with no increase in responsibility or authority. The law requires the state to pay 50% of the cost.

The Menino Administration agreed to accept the Quinn Bill in contracts negotiated with the four police unions in 1998 but it did not become effective until July 2000. To mitigate costs, the unions agreed to no salary increases in FY00 and FY01. The contract stipulated that the City was not responsible for payment of any reduction in the state obligation should that occur.

The police unions are challenging the pay reductions in court but no decision has been rendered yet. The unions argue that despite contract language, the Quinn Bill statute (Ch. 41, s108L) requires eligible officers to be paid the higher salaries once the bill is accepted and that the law does not allow for payments to be reduced. The Town of Mashpee negotiated language similar to Boston but several Mashpee officers have filed suit challenging the right of the Town to reduce payments.

The reduction of Quinn Bill earnings will most likely result in the police unions seeking higher wages in the next contract negotiations. It also may result in officers who are pension eligible retiring since their pension is based on their highest salary for 3 consecutive years.

With the state backing away from its 50% share, it should enact legislation clarifying that cities and towns are not obligated to fund payments beyond their own half share.