



ESSEX NATIONAL  
HERITAGE AREA

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**ESSEX HERITAGE MUNICIPAL LEADERSHIP BREAKFAST HELD**  
*Announces 2010 Priorities and Emphasizes Regional Cooperation*

**January 25, 2010 (Salem, MA)** . . . A broad cross section of regional elected officials and business leaders representing a majority of County's cities and towns, gathered at the Marriott Hotel in Peabody for an update on Essex Heritage activities and strategic priorities on Monday morning. The audience also received a federal update from Congressman John F. Tierney, the meeting's keynote speaker. Attendees included Mayors, Town Managers, Administrators and Selectmen from the 34 cities and towns within the Essex National Heritage Area, State officials, regional partners and business leaders. All were provided an opportunity to network and share concerns before an after the formal program, which highlighted Essex Heritage activities past, present and future.

Essex Heritage Immediate Past President Nancy Huntington Stager provided an overview of the characteristics and 12 year history of the Commission and Current Essex Heritage President Kevin Tierney laid the groundwork for its future strategic vision with his remarks. The presentation provided strong examples of how the organization will continue to advance its mission to preserve and promote the cultural, historic and natural resources of Essex County through advocacy, collaboration and leveraging both human and financial resources to maximize return of regional problem-solving.

Kevin Tierney praised the success of the organization in building public-private partnerships that continue to attract substantial federal grants to the region. “Essex Heritage leverages federal investment in several regional initiatives, such as the Partnership Grant Program, Essex Heritage Scenic Byway Program and Teaching American History Grants to produce an even more sizeable financial investment in the region. These investments substantially impact the regional economy, driving jobs and economic development in every city and town within the Congressionally-designated Heritage Area,” stressed Tierney. Elected officials present were urged to provide feedback and to engage in Essex Heritage programs that can bring direct benefit to their communities.

Essex Heritage Executive Director, Annie C. Harris, affirmed the organization’s commitment to its regional coalition-building strategy. “Several long-term projects currently underway, such as the Border to Boston Recreational Trail System, the Essex Heritage Scenic Byway Project, and the expanding partnership with the National Park Service to increase audience and engage future environmental stewards through education and job programs, require committed civic engagement to achieve ultimate success. These initiatives provide cities and towns the opportunity to connect to exciting ‘quality of life-building’ projects that build a foundation for economic development and job creation.”

Essex Heritage leaders also invited municipal officials to apply for seed money funding for heritage development projects through the 2010 Partnership Grant Program. On-Line grant applications are now being received at [www.essexheritage.org](http://www.essexheritage.org) through February 28<sup>th</sup>.

### **Congressman Tierney the Keynote Speaker**

Congressman John F. Tierney joined the Breakfast as a strong advocate for the work and mission of the Essex National Heritage Commission. He, along with the rest of the Essex County federal delegation, works to identify and support funding of Essex Heritage projects. Congressman Tierney commented that, “the biggest competitor Essex Heritage has in Washington is its own success! So much has been accomplished by Essex Heritage in its

brief twelve year existence that other regions all over the country have attempted to emulate them by trying to establish a similar concept in their particular part of the country.”

Congressman Tierney urged municipal leaders to work in collaboration, taking advantage of the benefits brought to the region by the Heritage Area, at a time when public funds are extremely limited.

Congressman Tierney outlined his view of the current mood of the electorate and how their voice has changed the political landscape in Massachusetts. Tierney stressed that the public wants Congress to focus on jobs, as well as finding a reasonable solution to the economic and health-care system crisis. He concluded his remarks with another ringing endorsement of the work of Essex Heritage, and pledged to continue to be an advocate for its mission work.

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#### **About the Essex National Heritage Area and Essex Heritage**

Designated by the US Congress in recognition of the important role that this region played in American history and its significant heritage sites still remaining, the Essex National Heritage Area is comprised of the 34 communities of Essex County, MA. Essex Heritage is a non profit agency that manages the Heritage Area, and works in collaboration with the National Park Service to promote public/private partnerships, and develop programs that enhance, preserve and encourage regional awareness of the Area's unique historic, cultural and natural resources. For more information, visit Essex Heritage at [www.essexheritage.org](http://www.essexheritage.org) or call (978) 740-0444.



#### **About Salem Maritime National Historic Site**

Salem Maritime National Historic Site was designated in 1937, the first National Historic Site in the National Park Service system. The nine acre site includes the homes of merchants and mariners, the Salem Custom House in which the famous author Nathaniel Hawthorne worked, and a replica of the three-masted cargo vessel *Friendship*. Today, the rangers and volunteers of Salem Maritime NHS continue to inform and inspire visitors with the maritime history of New England and the United States. For more information, visit us on the web at [www.nps.gov/sama](http://www.nps.gov/sama) or call 978-740-1650.