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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

State College Faculty Union Oppose War

The Board of Directors of the union that represents 2400 faculty and librarians of the nine state colleges in Massachusetts has called for "the resolution of the crisis with Iraq through international diplomacy rather than through armed conflict." The unanimous anti-war vote came at the November 1st meeting of the Board of Directors of the Massachusetts State College Association (MSCA). The meeting was held at Framingham State College, and representatives from all nine state colleges were present.

The MSCA's resolution will now be brought forward to the Board of Directors of the Massachusetts Teachers Association (MTA), the statewide affiliate of the MSCA, for its consideration. MTA is one of the largest labor unions in the state, representing nearly 90,000 teachers and education staff personnel throughout Massachusetts.

Patricia Markunas, president of the MSCA and professor of psychology at Salem State College, called the Board's support for diplomacy "a voice of sanity in a world where talk of peace and compromise too often gets drowned out by the drums of war." Markunas pointed out that "as educators, we have a responsibility to support peaceful resolution of conflict, not only within our schools but also in international affairs. As unionists, we know that negotiations can be tough, but we encourage our political leaders to use diplomacy and negotiation to diffuse this highly-charged situation."

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Maynard Seider, president of the MSCA chapter at the Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts and sponsor of the resolution, hailed the vote as a big step forward for educators and unionists. "It's important that we oppose this war, as teachers and labor activists. I hope other labor unions and educational organizations will speak out, to stop this madness. We need to stop this war before it starts."

John McKeon, former president of the MSCA chapter at Fitchburg State College, noted the responsibility of the MSCA Board to "maintain and improve public higher education in Massachusetts." He stated that "Armed conflict with Iraq is not necessary. Diplomacy can succeed. A war with Iraq will needlessly drain financial resources from many social programs, including education, and put many of our members and students in harm's way."

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