



MASSACHUSETTS COALITION FOR THE HOMELESS

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November 5, 2013

House Welfare Debate Update: Please Ask Your State Representative to Co-Sponsor Representative Decker's Critical Welfare Reform Amendment, Amendment #74

Support Low-Income Families Participating in the State's Family Cash Assistance Program!

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[Text of Amendment #74](#)

[Text of House Bill 3737](#)

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Dear friend,

As we reported yesterday, this week, the Massachusetts House of Representatives will debate their version of the welfare reform bill, [House Bill 3737](#), focused on changing the state's Transitional Aid to Families with Dependent Children Program (TAFDC). The Coalition and many [partner agencies](#) are very concerned that the bill proposed by the House Committee on Ways and Means contains many punitive and counter-productive elements that will not help families exit poverty.

As an update from our previous alert, yesterday State Representative Marjorie Decker of Cambridge filed [Amendment #74](#). This is the main amendment that advocates are seeking, to address major flaws in the proposed legislation.

Thank you for mobilizing so quickly yesterday! So far, at least 27 Representatives have officially signed up. **We need your help today, before tomorrow's scheduled start of the debate, to get more Representatives to co-sponsor this amendment and to actively support it during the debate.**

An updated fact sheet on Rep. Decker's omnibus amendment can be found here: [Amendment #74 fact sheet](#). The amendment addresses major concerns, including:

- The proposed requirement that more parents with disabilities engage in employment in order to receive benefits.
- The proposed requirement that parents prove that they have engaged in job search before receiving benefits (even though

families may not have needed transportation or child care to do so).

- No longer allowing parents to count enrollment in a 4-year college or university towards the work/education requirements.
- The lack of reinvestment in education and training programs.
- Work requirements for women in their last trimester of pregnancy.

If your State Representative is not one of the 27 already listed on the back of the fact sheet, please contact your Representative today ask her or him to co-sponsor this amendment. For more information about co-sponsorship, your Representative can contact David Wittenberg in Representative Decker's office at david.wittenberg@mahouse.gov or 617-365-6213.

If your Representative is listed as a co-sponsor, please call to thank her or him today, and encourage their continued active participation in the debate, in support of low-income families.

Representatives can be reached through the State House switchboard at 617-722-2000, or you can go [here](#) to search for your Representative based on your address.

Please contact me with any questions or to share feedback from your legislators.

Thank you for your swift advocacy! Please stay tuned for additional updates by following the Coalition on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

-Kelly Turley
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Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless



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