



It's Already Gone Too Far

Ask Your State Legislators to Reject Section 30 of the Governor's Proposed Supplemental Budget (H. 3676), Which Would Deny Emergency Shelter to the Most Desperate Homeless Families with Children

The Problem: Many families with children experiencing homelessness are currently forced to sleep in cars, bus stations, emergency rooms, and other unsafe places or to sleep doubled up in many different places before they are admitted into shelter

The Governor now proposes to deny many of these families shelter even *after* they have become this desperate.

- Based on the state's own data, in FY 15, more than **2,300 families with children** had to become so desperate that they slept in cars, bus stations, emergency rooms, or other unsafe or extremely unstable places – such as repeatedly moving from one double-up situation to another to another -- *before* they were found eligible for emergency shelter through the state's Emergency Assistance (EA) program.
- Families with no other options are showing up at hospital clinics and emergency rooms **with no other safe place to sleep**, which in turn drives up health care costs. Educators across the state are expressing concern about the fate of their students whose educations are being disrupted as their families search for a safe place to sleep.
- This crisis is due to onerous shelter eligibility restrictions imposed by the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) in September 2012. Under the current regulations, in FY 15, 48% of the families who applied for shelter were denied.
- **Now, through Section 30 of the pending supplemental budget (H. 3676), the Governor proposes to make things even worse by denying many of these families shelter even after they have become this desperate.** While the Administration has said the proposal is intended to deny all of these families shelter, we do not believe it would in fact shut out those already staying in places not meant for human habitation. (See proposed language on other side).

The Costs of the Governor's Proposal: Leaving more children and their parents without access to EA shelter will force more children into the troubled state foster care system, increase health care costs, undermine the children's ability to focus on school and thereby drive up remedial education costs, and interfere with the parents' ability to work and pay taxes. The trauma to children can have long-term effects.

The Answer: Ask your State Representative and State Senator to reject Section 30 of the supplemental budget (H. 3676), while deepening investments in permanent affordable housing and effective homelessness prevention programs. Legislators can be reached via the State House switchboard: 617-722-2000. To find out who your legislators are, go to www.wheredoivotema.com.

**Ask your State Legislators to Protect Homeless Children with No Safe Place to Stay by Rejecting Section 30 in H. 3676.
Shelter Restrictions Have Already Gone Too Far!**

The Governor's Proposed Language

SECTION 30. Item 7004-0101 of said section 2 of said chapter 46 is hereby amended by adding the following words:- ; provided further, that clauses (iii) and (iv) of 760 CMR 67.06(1)(f)(6)(d) shall not apply in fiscal year 2016; and provided further, that the eligibility changes described in the preceding clause shall only be applicable through June 30, 2016.