



Everyone Needs ID: An Act to Provide Identification to Homeless Youth and Families

Senate Bill 2568 (formerly Senate Bill 1906) and House Bill 2737

Sponsored by Senate President Emerita Harriette Chandler and Representative Kay Khan

Senate Bill 2568 (formerly Senate Bill 1906) and House Bill 2737 Sponsors and Cosponsors:

Representatives Cory Atkins, Ruth B. Balsler, Michael D. Brady, James M. Cantwell, Marjorie C. Decker, Michelle M. DuBois, Sean Garballey, *Paul R. Heroux*, Kay Khan, Kenneth I. Gordon, Kevin G. Honan, John J. Lawn, Jr., David Paul Linsky, Elizabeth A. Malia, James J. O'Day, David M. Rogers, Byron Rushing, Chynah Tyler, and *Chris Walsh*; **Senators** Harriette L. Chandler, Julian Cyr, James B. Eldridge, and Jason M. Lewis.

Bill Status:

Both Senate Bill 1906 and House Bill 2737 were reported favorably by the Joint Committee on Transportation in December 2017. S.1906 was amended and reported out favorably by the Senate Committee on Ways and Means on June 21, 2018. S.2568 (formerly Senate Bill 1906) unanimously was passed by the Senate on June 28, 2018, 37-0.

S.2568 and H.2737 still are awaiting action by the House Committee on Ways and Means.

Importance of This Legislation:

Obtaining a state identification card is a critical first step for youth and adults experiencing homelessness to accomplish typical life tasks and access opportunities. ID is required for a broad range of life activities, such as:

- Applying for jobs
- Enrolling in education programs
- Getting a library card
- Picking up a package from the post office
- Opening financial accounts
- Entering certain government buildings
- Accessing services
- Interacting with law enforcement

Unfortunately, there are significant barriers to accessing IDs for people experiencing homelessness, with some service providers estimating that half of their clients lack identification cards.¹

With the implementation of the REAL ID Act across the country, states have recognized the need for an alternative identification card accessible to people experiencing homelessness, especially youth, who may lack the documentation necessary to obtain a REAL ID-compliant card. Thirteen other states currently offer free or reduced fee cards for individuals experiencing homelessness, and a growing number offer clear alternative criteria for individuals experiencing homelessness who cannot demonstrate proof of address.²

It is time for Massachusetts to step up and join those states that are addressing this issues. An Act to Provide Identification to Homeless Youth and Families would:

- Establish a fee waiver process for youth and adults experiencing homelessness
- Create a process for individuals experiencing homelessness to apply for IDs if they cannot meet the existing criteria, such as alternative proof of Massachusetts residency that does not require a permanent address (looking to documents already accepted by other Massachusetts state agencies)

¹ Hussey, H. (2015). Expanding ID Card Access for LGBT Homeless Youth. Center for American Progress. <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/lgbt/reports/2015/10/01/122044/expanding-id-card-access-for-lgbt-homeless-youth/>

² Mirza, S., Soto, S. and Rooney, C. (2016). State ID Card Policies for LGBTQ Youths Experiencing Homelessness. Center for American Progress. <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/lgbt/reports/2016/09/28/144928/state-id-card-policies-for-lgbtq-youths-experiencing-homelessness/>

- Senate Bill 2568 adds in more details about allowing ID applicants who are experiencing homelessness to submit residency documentation from providers of homelessness services and state agencies under the Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS).

Please do all you can to support S.2568 and H. 2737 to increase access to Mass IDs for people experiencing homelessness! Please encourage House Speaker Robert DeLeo (617-722-2500) and House Ways and Means Chairman Jeff Sánchez (617-722-2990) to move these bills forward during informal sessions.

Organizational Endorsers

ACT UP/Boston	Martin Richard Institute for Social Justice at Bridgewater State University
Allston-Brighton Health Collaborative	Massachusetts Alliance of HUD Tenants
Arise for Social Justice	Massachusetts Appleseed Center for Law and Justice
Boston Homeless Solidarity Committee	Massachusetts Bar Association
Boston Tenant Coalition	Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless
Bridge Over Troubled Waters	Massachusetts Commission on LGBTQ Youth
Cambridge and Somerville Housing and Welfare Coalition	Massachusetts Fair Housing Center
City of Springfield	Massachusetts Housing and Shelter Alliance
DIAL/SELF Youth & Community Services	MassEquality
Disability Policy Consortium	My Brother's Table
Domus Incorporated	Pax Christi USA-Beverly
Father Bill's & Mainspring	Pine Street Inn
First Church Shelter, Cambridge	Poor People's United Fund
Gates of Hope Inc.	Roca
The Haven Project	Rosie's Place
The Health Foundation of Central Massachusetts	Samaritans Steps
Hearts of Hope Inc.	School on Wheels
Hildebrand Family Self-Help Center	ServiceNet, Inc.
Homeless Empowerment Project	Springfield No One Leaves/Nadie Se Mude
Homeless Prevention Council of Lower Cape Cod	Tapestry Health
Homeless Youth Providers Engaging Together	Wayside Youth & Family Support Network
HomeStart Inc.	Western Massachusetts Network to End Homelessness
Housing Families Inc.	Women's Lunch Place
Justice Resource Institute/YouthHarbors	Y2Y Harvard Square
LUK, Inc.	

For more information, please go to www.mahomeless.org/advocacy or contact Kelly Turley (kelly@mahomeless.org or 781-595-7570 x17). and Molly Schulman (molly@mahomeless.org or 781-595-7570 x20) at the Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless.



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