



MASSACHUSETTS COALITION FOR THE HOMELESS

Committed to ensuring that everyone has a place to call home

Please Actively Support These Housing, Homelessness, and Safety Net Program Amendments to the Senate Version of the FY'16 Budget

Thank you for your support of housing, homelessness, and safety net programs and your co-sponsorship of related amendments. We ask for your continued active support for these programs and amendments throughout this week's caucuses and debates. In particular, we ask for your strong support of the key amendments listed below.

1. Emergency Assistance (EA) family shelter and services (EA, line item 7004-0101):

- [Amendment #416](#), filed by Senator Joan Lovely, to ensure that families staying in motels/hotels as part of the EA program have access to the same services and resources as other guests of those motels/hotels whose stays are not being paid for by DHCD.
- [Amendment #404](#), filed by Senator Jason Lewis, to prohibit the imposition of new shelter eligibility restrictions in FY'16.

2. HomeBASE Housing Assistance Program (line item 7004-0108):

- [Amendment #760](#), filed by Senator Barbara L'Italien at the request of the Coalition and Massachusetts Law Reform Institute, to direct DHCD to waive the 18-month bar for families who are in need of additional HomeBASE or shelter resources, based on a family's circumstances and if the application of the bar would not be "fair, just, and equitable". See the amendment fact sheet [here](#).
- [Amendment #422](#), filed by Senator Joan Lovely, to increase HomeBASE funding to \$33 million and to include language to expand access to families in domestic violence and substance abuse treatment shelters.

3. Massachusetts Rental Voucher Program (MRVP, line item 7004-9024):

- [Amendment #446](#), filed by Senator Linda Dorcena Forry, to carry over unspent funds from FY'15 into FY'16 for MRVP ("prior appropriation continued" language).

4. Alternative Housing Voucher Program (AHVP, line item 7004-9030):

- [Amendment #467](#), filed by Senator Jamie Eldridge, to increase AHVP funding by an additional \$500,000 to \$5.05 million (which would be a \$1.5 million increase over the FY'15 funding level).

5. Residential Assistance for Families in Transition Program (RAFT, line item 7004-9316):

- [Amendment #356](#), filed by Senator Ken Donnelly, to increase RAFT funding to \$13 million from \$12 million.

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6. State-funded public housing operating subsidies (line item 7004-9005):

- [Amendment #471](#), filed by Senator Jamie Eldridge, to increase state-funded public housing operating subsidy funding by \$1 million, up to \$65 million.

7. Home and Healthy for Good Program (line item 7004-0104):

- [Amendment #492](#), filed by Senator Thomas Kennedy, to restore the language and \$200,000 in funding for the LGBT young adult pilot program within Home and Healthy for Good.

8. Shelter and services for unaccompanied individuals at-risk and experiencing homelessness (line item 7004-0102):

- [Amendment #431](#), filed by Senator Linda Dorcena Forry, to further increase funding for this line item up from the SWM recommended level of \$44.7 million to \$48.5 million.

9. McKinney-Vento school transportation for students experiencing homelessness (line item 7035-0005):

- [Amendment #569](#), filed by Senator Joan Lovely, to increase McKinney-Vento transportation funding by \$1 million, to bring the funding up to \$8.35 million.
- [Amendment #586](#), filed by Senator Jamie Eldridge, to increase McKinney-Vento transportation funding even further, to \$20.82 million.

10. “A Better Life” Pilot Program (line item 7004-0114):

- [Amendment #826](#), filed by Senator Thomas McGee, to make improvements to the “A Better Life” pilot program currently administered through the Worcester Housing Authority. This amendment would add hardship exceptions to the work or education requirements, and expand the activities that would count towards those requirements, so as to better serve participating families. The amendment would establish programmatic protections and clarifications to ensure that public housing residents are not unfairly evicted as a result of program implementation, to ensure that requirements do not adversely affect the most vulnerable residents, and to avoid having more families with children lose their housing. It would also require reporting so that the state can learn what is working, what is not working, and what needs to be retooled, as this program potentially is expanded.

11. Homelessness prevention reserve fund at the Executive Office of Health and Human Services to serve families who are experiencing homelessness or in danger of experiencing homelessness (new line item 1599-0017):

- [Amendment #849](#), filed by Senator Sonia Chang-Diaz, to expand access to reserve fund services to families in certain non-Emergency Assistance programs, through line items “7004-0108, 7004-3036, 7004-9316 and to families who are homeless or at risk of homelessness through programs within the Executive Office of Health and Human Services.”

For more information on these amendments and all Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless policy campaigns, please visit <http://www.mahomeless.org/advocacy/present-policy-campaigns> or contact Kelly Turley at kelly@mahomeless.org or 781-595-7570 x17.