



## 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.<sup>1</sup>

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.<sup>2</sup>

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)

<sup>1</sup> 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/>

<sup>2</sup> 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	Justice Resource Institute/YouthHarbors
Action Inc.	LUK, Inc.
Allston-Brighton Health Collaborative	Martin Richard Institute for Social Justice at Bridgewater State University
Arise for Social Justice	Massachusetts Alliance of HUD Tenants
Boston Center ofr Independent Living	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
Children's League of Massachusetts	Massachusetts Housing and Shelter Alliance
Citizens' Housing and Planning Association	MassEquality
City of Springfield	My Brother's Table
Coastline Elderly Services	National Association of Social Workers-Massachusetts Chapter
Community Action Agency of Somerville, Inc.	Pax Christi USA-Beverly
DIAL/SELF Youth & Community Services	Pine Street Inn
Disability Policy Consortium	Poor People's United Fund
Domus Incorporated	Roca
Father Bill's & Mainspring	Rosie's Place
First Church Shelter, Cambridge	Samaritans Steps
Gates of Hope Inc.	School on Wheels
The Haven Project	ServiceNet, Inc.
The Health Foundation of Central Massachusetts	Somerville Homeless Coalition
Hearts of Hope Inc.	Springfield No One Leaves/Nadie Se Mude
Hildebrand Family Self-Help Center	Stop Bullying Coalition
Homeless Empowerment Project	Tapestry Health
Homeless Prevention Council of Lower Cape Cod	Wayside Youth & Family Support Network
Homeless Youth Providers Engaging Together	Western Massachusetts Network to End Homelessness
HomeStart Inc.	Women's Lunch Place
Housing Families Inc.	Y2Y Harvard Square
Inclusion Advocacy Collaboration	

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



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