



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

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| ACT UP/Boston | Housing Families Inc. |
| Action Inc. | Inclusion Advocacy Collaboration |
| AIDS Action/Fenway Health | Justice Resource Institute/YouthHarbors |
| Allston-Brighton Health Collaborative | LUK, Inc. |
| Arise for Social Justice | Martin Richard Institute for Social Justice at Bridgewater State University |
| Boston Center for Independent Living | Massachusetts Alliance of HUD Tenants |
| Boston Homeless Solidarity Committee | Massachusetts Appleseed Center for Law and Justice |
| Boston Tenant Coalition | Massachusetts Bar Association |
| Bridge Over Troubled Waters | Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless |
| Cambridge and Somerville Housing and Welfare Coalition | Massachusetts Commission on LGBTQ Youth |
| Central West Justice Center | Massachusetts Fair Housing Center |
| Children's League of Massachusetts | Massachusetts Housing and Shelter Alliance |
| Citizens for Juvenile Justice | Massachusetts Law Reform Institute |
| 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 |
| Cooperative Metropolitan Ministries | Pine Street Inn |
| Clinical and Support Options/Friends of the Homeless | Poor People's United Fund |
| DIAL/SELF Youth & Community Services | Roca |
| Disability Policy Consortium | Rosie's Place |
| Domus Incorporated | Samaritan Inn Emergency Shelter |
| Father Bill's & Mainspring | Samaritans Steps |
| First Church Shelter, Cambridge | School on Wheels |
| Gates of Hope Inc. | ServiceNet, Inc. |
| Greater Boston Legal Services | Somerville Homeless Coalition |
| The Haven Project | Springfield No One Leaves/Nadie Se Mude |
| The Health Foundation of Central Massachusetts | Stop Bullying Coalition |
| Hearts of Hope Inc. | Tapestry Health |
| Hildebrand Family Self-Help Center | Wayside Youth & Family Support Network |
| Homeless Empowerment Project | Western Massachusetts Network to End Homelessness |
| Homeless Prevention Council of Lower Cape Cod | Women's Lunch Place |
| Homeless Youth Providers Engaging Together | Y2Y Harvard Square |
| HomeStart 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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