



## Everyone Needs ID:

### Please Cosponsor and Actively Support Senator Chandler's FY'20 Senate Budget Amendment #464 to Ease Access to Massachusetts IDs for Youth, Families, and Individuals Experiencing Homelessness

**Overview:** Senate President Emerita Harriette Chandler of Worcester filed Amendment #464 to the FY'20 Senate Ways and Means budget to ease access to standard Mass ID cards for people experiencing homelessness. The amendment would add an outside section to the FY'20 state budget with language from An Act to provide identification to homeless youth and families, Senate Bill 2043 (also sponsored by Senator Chandler) and House Bill 3066 (lead sponsor: Representative Kay Khan), and would add \$50,000 to the Massachusetts Transportation Trust Fund (line item 1595-6368) to implement the change. Currently, the related ID bills are awaiting action by the Joint Committee on Transportation. Last session, the Senate version of the bill passed unanimously.

**Current Cosponsor:** Senator Jim Welch

**Importance of This Amendment:** 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. This amendment would:

- Establish a fee waiver process for youth and adults experiencing homelessness seeking standard Mass IDs
- Create a process for individuals experiencing homelessness to apply for standard Mass IDs if they cannot meet the existing criteria by 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)
- Expand upon the Registry of Motor Vehicles' efforts to better serve people experiencing homelessness<sup>3</sup>
- Add \$50,000 to the Massachusetts Transportation Trust Fund (line item 1595-6368) to offset the RMV's lost revenue

*(Continued on back)*

<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/>

<sup>3</sup> See <https://www.mass.gov/guides/rmv-real-id-info-center#homeless-individuals->

**Everyone Needs ID Campaign Organizational Endorsers (as of May 2019)**

ACT UP/Boston
Action for Boston Community Development, Inc.
Advocacy Network to End Family Homelessness
AIDS Action/Fenway Health
AIDS Project Worcester
Allston Brighton Health Collaborative
Boston Area Rape Crisis Center
Boston Center for Independent Living
Central West Justice Center
Children's League of Massachusetts
Citizens for Juvenile Justice
Citizens' Housing and Planning Association
Coastline Elderly Services
Community Action Agency of Somerville, Inc.
Cooperative Metropolitan Ministries
DIAL/SELF Youth & Community Services
Disability Policy Consortium
Father Bill's & MainSpring
First Church Shelter
Gates of Hope
The Haven Project
Hearts Of Hope INC
Homeless Prevention Council
HomeStart, Inc.

HousingWorks, Inc.
Justice Resource Institute
LUK, Inc.
Massachusetts Commission on LGBTQ Youth
Martin Richard Institute for Social Justice
Massachusetts Law Reform Institute
Massachusetts Appleseed Center for Law and Justice
Massachusetts Fair Housing Center
Massachusetts Housing & Shelter Alliance
Massachusetts Law Reform Institute
MassEquality
National Association of Social Workers- MA Chapter
Northeast Justice Center
Park Avenue Congregational Church, UCC
Pax Christi of Beverly
Poor People's United Fund
Roca
Rosie's Place
School on Wheels of Massachusetts
Tapestry Health Systems
The Health Foundation of Central Mass
Wayside Youth & Family Support
Western MA Network to End Homelessness
Y2Y Network

**Please cosponsor and actively support passage of Senator Chandler's #EveryoneNeedsID Mass ID Access amendment, Amendment #464!**

For more information, please go to [www.mahomeless.org/advocacy](http://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.



**MASSACHUSETTS  
COALITION  
FOR THE HOMELESS**