



Take Action to Establish the HomeBASE Program in State Statute and Provide Benefit Renewals to Children and Families: Please cosponsor and actively support An Act promoting housing stability for families by strengthening the HomeBASE program

[House Docket 1696](#)

Sponsored by Representative Christine Barber

What is HomeBASE?

HomeBASE is a short-term transitional housing program that provides families that are eligible for Emergency Assistance shelter with \$10,000 to be used for monthly help with rent, initial move-in costs, and/or resources to purchase basic furnishings, in tandem with case management and rehousing supports. Families can elect to use HomeBASE when initially applying to shelter or as a tool to exit shelter. HomeBASE allows families to transition away from and out of shelter by providing resources as a pathway to stable housing. HomeBASE is funded via line item 7004-0108.

What needs to be fixed?

HomeBASE currently is not established anywhere in state statute, leaving it vulnerable to yearly budget whims. Additionally, the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), the agency that oversees HomeBASE, has decided that participants only can receive up to 12 months of HomeBASE benefits. This means that families that are stably housed with HomeBASE can lose that support and end up being evicted or back in shelter after exhausting the \$10,000 in HomeBASE benefits, even though evictions and shelter stays are more costly emotionally, physically, socially, and economically. The goal should be to preserve stable housing at all times, but especially during the pandemic and eventual recovery that will last for years to come.

How can we fix it?

This bill would put the HomeBASE program into state statute and direct DHCD to provide renewals of HomeBASE rental assistance in 12-month increments to families and children who otherwise would be facing a return to homelessness, continue to meet basic eligibility guidelines, and are in good standing in the program. More families would be able to remain stably housed, and the HomeBASE would be strengthened.

Who has cosponsored this bill?

As of March 29th, Representatives Barber (sponsor), Campbell, Domb, DuBois, González, Higgins, Robertson, Sabadosa, Santiago, and Uytterhoeven and Senators Collins, Comerford, and Hinds have sponsored or cosponsored this bill.

Which organizations have endorsed this bill?

As of March 29th, the bill has been endorsed by Casa Nueva Vida, Central Massachusetts Housing Alliance, Central West Justice Center, Homes for Families, Lynn Community Health Center, Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless, Massachusetts Law Reform Institute, North Shore Postpartum Help, Northeast Justice Center, Rosie's Place, and Western Massachusetts Network to End Homelessness.

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Please cosponsor and actively support [House Docket 1696](#) today!

For more information, please contact Kelly Turley at the Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless: kelly@mahomeless.org or 781-595-7570 x17.

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