**Memorandum**

To: Leadership Council
From: Pamela Schwartz

Date: January 16, 2015

**RE: Draft Legislative Priorities for Review**

This memorandum will summarize the legislative priorities as recommended by each Network committee. At our January 21 meeting, we will discuss these recommendations and you will decide the Network priorities for the state’s Fiscal Year 2016 budget. While your decision making will provide comprehensive recommendations, we will also discuss and decide upon a “top 3” priority list to help guide Network advocacy. The committee recommendations include the following:

**Family Services:**

* Fund Secure Jobs Program to $2million (effectively equals level-funding between DHCD and legislative appropriation in FY15)
* Increase funding for MRVP ($100 million per CHAPA, MCH and a coalition of groups’ recommendations)
* Increase RAFT (amount uncertain, subject to additional information)
* Maintain or increase HomeBASE funding to allow for the continuing of $8,000 funding level to exit shelter
* Restore funding to Housing Consumer Education Centers (HCEC)

**Individual Services:**

* Increase funding for W. Mass. emergency shelters (to at least the statewide average of $32/night)
* Increase funding for TPP from $500,000 to $1 million
* Fund Home and Healthy for Good (amount to be determined in consultation with MHSA)
* Fund Secure Jobs program to include individuals (continue funding CommCorp’s current program that provides this resource)

**Unaccompanied Homeless Youth**

* Fund unaccompanied homeless youth $4 million ($2.5 for housing via DHCD; $1.5m for holistic wrap-around services via EOHHS), the follow-up to the recent passage of unaccompanied homeless youth bill that authorized services for this population. This advocacy is in coordination with Mass. Coalition for the Homeless.

**Veterans Services**

* Support DHCD’s efforts to enforce and enhance veteran preference rules currently in place for state public housing (public housing legislation passed last year requires DHCD to promulgate new regulations, providing an opportunity to revisit and strengthen veteran preferences).

**Work Group to House People with Sex Offense Histories**

* Endorse Work Group’s outreach to the Statewide Commission to Reduce Sex Offender Recidivism with Network statement on goals to increase public safety through the provision of stable housing to this population (statement draft in process). Commission is now meeting almost monthly through June, 2015, and our own work group’s expert consultant, Laurie Guidry, sits on the Commission. She will seek a public hearing in Western Mass. in order to provide an opportunity for Network advocacy around the issue of housing and public safety.