

## **Fiscal Year 2018 State Budget Priorities**

- **Fund the Secure Jobs Initiative \$2 million (Line Item 4400-1020)** to maintain the statewide level of workforce development services for homeless families across the Commonwealth. Secure Jobs has obtained employment for over 1,000 homeless families statewide, and close to 500 families in Western Massachusetts alone. In FY17, the Western Massachusetts program will employ close to 120 heads of households at an average wage of close to \$13/hour. Its continuity is critical to permanently ending family homelessness. *Statewide Support: Statewide Secure Jobs Coalition*
- **Fund individual emergency shelter \$50 million (Line Item 7004-0102)** to provide an incremental but vital increase of \$5 million from FY17 to support the increasing demand of emergency shelter statewide. This increase is especially critical to Western Massachusetts, which meets the emergency shelter needs of 13 percent of the population while receiving only 7 percent of funding statewide. *Statewide Support: Coalition for Homeless Individuals, Mass. Coalition for the Homeless*
- **Fund Residential Assistance for Families in Transition (RAFT) \$18.5 million and maintain language to include individuals (Line Item 7004-0108).** This funding increase and language would allow for the RAFT program to continue to provide prevention resources to families with children as well as elders, people with disabilities, and other individuals. The pilot expansion program of \$500,000 in FY17 demonstrated the demand for this resource to individuals who would lose their housing without it. Expanding RAFT will reduce the use of emergency shelter and provide the Commonwealth significant savings. *Statewide Support: CHAPA, Mass. Coalition for the Homeless*
- **Fund the Tenancy Preservation Program \$1 million (TPP, Line Item 7004-3045).** This homelessness prevention program works with individuals and families with disabilities who face eviction. With funding of \$1 million (an increase from \$500,000 in FY17), TPP could provide housing stabilization services to individuals before they are in housing court at greater risk of eviction. This investment would reduce homelessness while saving resources for the Commonwealth, landlords and tenants. *Statewide support: CHAPA, MassNAHRO*
- **Level Fund Housing Consumer Education Centers 2.6 million (HCECs, line item 7004-30036).** Level-funding HCECs in FY18 is critical to maintaining the front line for housing crisis response in the Commonwealth in general and Western Massachusetts in particular. In addition to crisis response, HCECs offer first-time homebuyer training and foreclosure prevention counseling. The one-on-one attention provided by HCEC staff creates a lifeline to housing stability. *Statewide Support: CHAPA, Mass. Coalition for the Homeless*

- **Fund the Youth Demonstration Project \$4 million (Line item 4000-0007)** to support unaccompanied homeless youth ages 18 to 24 with housing and support services. This effort, funded at \$2 million in FY17, has already provided over 130 youth across the four counties with a range of services, including housing, educational, vocational and other case management support. Funding this program at \$4 million would provide for sufficient investment to meet this need across the entire Commonwealth.  
*Statewide Support: CHAPA, Mass. Coalition for the Homeless*
- **Level Fund the Local Consortia to End Family Homelessness \$1 million (Line item 1599-0017).** Western Massachusetts hosts two consortia—Hampden County and Three County (Berkshire, Franklin, Hampshire). Together, they have played a vital role in FY17 in preventing and diverting homelessness with flexible funding and innovative interventions. Continued investment in this initiative is a vital component to overall reduction in homelessness across the region and Commonwealth.  
*Statewide Support: Statewide Consortia and all regional housing providers*
- **Level Fund Home and Healthy for Good \$2 million (Line Item 7004-0104).** This Housing First program provides permanent supportive housing for the chronically homeless, including a Western MA program for LGBTQ unaccompanied homeless youth that has served over 17 LBTQ youth this fiscal year alone.  
*Statewide support: CHAPA, MA Coalition for the Homeless*
- **Fund the Massachusetts Rental Voucher Program \$120 million (MRVP, Line Item 7004-9024)** to increase the number of vouchers available, help preserve affordable housing developments and make programmatic fixes that will increase the program's success. **The increase from \$86.5 million in FY17 to \$120 million** would recognize this program's critical role in preventing and ending homelessness.  
*Statewide support: Housing Solutions Campaign, CHAPA, Homes for Families, MA Coalition for the Homeless*

### **Regional Earmarks Addressing Homelessness**

**Craig's Doors Emergency Shelter, Amherst (Line item: 7004-0102)** for \$200,000 to level fund 28 emergency shelter beds for homeless individuals from Hampshire, Franklin and Hampden Counties. This is the only behavior-based shelter in Hampshire County.

**Berkshire Emergency Shelter Initiative (Line item: 7004-0102)** for \$150,000 to level fund 20 additional emergency beds in Berkshire County as well as diversion and other support services, providing assistance to over 150 Berkshire County residents annually.

**Western MA Network to End Homelessness:** From FY15-FY17, the Network received an earmark of \$125,000 to support its collaborative efforts to end homelessness in Western MA. In FY17, the Network's funding was cut as part of the Governor's 9C cuts. Discussions among the Network Leadership Council and area legislators are underway regarding the request for FY18 funding.

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