

Fiscal Year 2018 State Budget Priorities

- **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. *The Governor's FY18 proposal included \$2 million; the House Budget included \$540,000. Funding at least \$2 million in FY18* is critical to allow the current level of services to continue.
- **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. *The Governor's FY18 proposal included \$1 million; the House Budget provided no funding. Funding at \$1 million in FY18* would allow for this vital component to reducing homelessness across the region.
- **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 facilitated employment for close to 500 families in Western Massachusetts alone. *The Governor's FY18 proposal included \$800,000; the House Budget included \$500,000. Funding at least \$800,000 in FY18* would allow for a minimal degree of continuity in this employment initiative for homeless families.
- **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. *The Governor's FY18 proposal included \$500,000; the House Budget included \$750,000. Funding at least \$750,000 in FY18* would preserve more tenancies and provide housing stabilization services to individuals before they are in housing court at greater risk of eviction.
- **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 provide prevention resources to families with children and expand them to include elders, people with disabilities, and other individuals. *The Governor's FY18 proposal included \$13 million; the House Budget included \$15 million, neither including the expansion language for individuals. Funding at least \$15 million and including the expanded language in FY18* would reduce the use of emergency shelter and provide significant savings.

- **Fund Housing Consumer Education Centers \$2.6 million (HCECs, line item 7004-30036).** Level-funding HCECs in FY18 (relative to the initial FY17 level, prior to the 9C cut of \$300,000) is critical to maintaining the front line for housing crisis response in the Commonwealth in general and Western Massachusetts in particular. *The Governor's FY18 proposal and House budget included \$2.3 million. Funding at \$2.6 million in FY18* would bring HCEC's back to the FY17 funding level.
- **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. *The Governor's FY18 proposal included \$45.2 million; the House budget included \$47.4 million. Funding at \$50 million in FY18* would provide a small but critical boost to Western MA shelters.
- **Fund Home and Healthy for Good \$2.2 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 LGBTQ youth this fiscal year alone. *The Governor's FY18 proposal included \$2 million (level funding for FY17); the House proposal included \$2.2 million. Maintaining the House funding proposal at \$2.2 million in FY18* would provide more housing for the hardest to house population.
- **Fund the Massachusetts Rental Voucher Program \$120 million (MRVP, Line Item 7004-9024)** to increase the number of vouchers available and to adjust the fair market rent guidelines so the vouchers are more usable. *The Governor's FY18 proposal included \$97.5 million; the House proposal included \$100 million. Funding at least \$100 million* would recognize this program's critical role in homelessness prevention.

Regional Earmarks Addressing Homelessness

Western MA Network to End Homelessness (Line item: 7004-0102) for \$125,000 to support its collaborative efforts to end homelessness in Western MA. From FY15-FY17, the Network received this earmark, which was cut in FY17 as part of the Governor's 9C cuts. **The House Budget proposal included \$125,000 in funding.**

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. *This earmark was not funded in House Budget. Senate support for this earmark is critical to maintaining this emergency shelter resource.*

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. *This earmark was not funded in the House Budget. Senate support for this earmark is critical to maintaining this emergency shelter resource.*

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