

2019-2020 Legislative Priorities to Prevent and End Homelessness

The Western Massachusetts Network to End Homelessness includes over 150 organizational partners from across the four counties of Western Massachusetts. After conferring with our Network partners and coordinating with statewide organizations such as CHAPA, Mass. Coalition for the Homeless and Mass Law Reform Institute, the Network seeks your co-sponsorship of the bills listed below:

An Act relative to housing reform, H.1228/S.775 (Rep. Honan, Sen. Boncore) *to increase housing production by using the Governor's Housing Choice bill as a foundation and including additional provisions like requiring multifamily zoning around public transit, abutter appeals reform, and setting affordable housing production goals.*

An Act relative to the Massachusetts Rental Voucher Program, H.1305/S.797 (Rep. Madaro, Sen. Eldridge) *to improve MRVP by codifying the program, raising the fair market rent standard for vouchers and making other programmatic fixes.*

An Act promoting fair housing by preventing discrimination against affordable housing, H.1344/S.781 (Rep. Barber, Sen. ChangDiaz) *to promote fair housing by prohibiting cities and towns from making discriminatory land use decisions against affordable housing or developments that are suitable for families with children.*

An Act to ensure right to counsel in eviction proceedings, H.3456/H.1537/S.913 (Rep. Tyler Rep. Dave Rogers, Sen. DiDomenico) *to help preserve tenancies and prevent homelessness by providing low-income tenants facing eviction with a right to counsel.*

An Act relative to economic mobility for families with low-income, H.137/S.58 (Rep. Vega Sen. Lewis) *to further economic mobility and address cliff effects for families in Massachusetts; and An Act providing for coordinated data and assistance to address family homelessness, S.31 (Sen. Comerford) *to increase transparency by directing state agencies to improve access to data on certain homelessness related measures and to make benefit program information more accessible to families.**

An Act promoting housing opportunity and mobility through eviction sealing, H.3566/S.824 (Rep. Moran, Sen. Boncore) *to protect tenants from unfair stigma and permanent eviction records.*

An Act to further provide a rental arrearage program, H.1264 (Rep. Decker) *to restore a statewide rent arrearage assistance program help people remain stably housed and avoid homelessness.*

An Act to provide identification to homeless youth and families, H.3066/S.2043 (Rep. Kah, Sen. Chandler) *to eliminate the barrier to standard MA ID cards (critical for employment, education and other building blocks for stable housing) for people experiencing homelessness by eliminating the \$25 fee and allowing alternative ways to verify MA residency.*