



June 17, 2021

Chairman Aaron Michlewitz
Representative Ann-Margaret Ferrante
Representative Todd Smola

Chairman Michael Rodrigues
Senator Cindy Friedman
Senator Patrick O'Connor

**RE: Western Massachusetts Network to End Homelessness Conference Committee
Recommendations to Prevent and End Homelessness***

Dear Chairman Michlewitz, Chairman Rodrigues, Representative Ferrante,
Senator Friedman, Representative Smola, and Senator O'Connor:

I am writing on behalf of the Western Massachusetts Network to End Homelessness to thank you for your investments in preventing and ending homelessness and to request the adoption of the following provisions to best meet our regional and statewide goals:

The Western Massachusetts Network to End Homelessness (7004-0107)

- Adopt the Senate appropriation of \$75,000 to allow the Network to continue to provide coordination of homelessness prevention and rehousing services across the four western counties.

Safe Havens Housing Program (5046-2000)

- Adopt the Senate appropriation of \$1,000,000 to the DMH Statewide Homelessness Support Services line item "to expand safe haven housing in a manner that ensures geographically equitable access." These funds will allow for first-time funding for critically needed Safe Havens beds in Hampshire and Franklin Counties.

Massachusetts Rental Voucher Program (MRVP (7004-9024)

- Adopt the Senate appropriation of \$150,000,000.
- Adopt Senate language so that voucher holders would not have to pay more than 30% of their income toward rent from current standard of 40% of income.
- Adopt Senate language that requires at least 75 percent of newly issued vouchers to be targeted to households with incomes at or below 30% area median income at time of initial occupancy.

Residential Assistance for Families in Transition (7004-9316)

- Adopt the House appropriation of \$26,725,768.
- Adopt the House language to de-link RAFT and HomeBASE allowing eligible households to access the maximum benefit of each program.

HomeBase (7004-0108)

- Adopt the House language to de-link RAFT and HomeBASE allowing eligible households to access maximum benefit of each program.

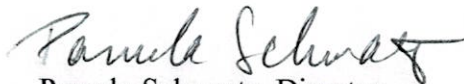
Tenancy Preservation Program (7004-3045)

- Adopt the House appropriation of \$1.8 million.

We deeply appreciate your attention and your commitment to preventing and ending homelessness across the Commonwealth.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Best,



Pamela Schwartz, Director

Western Massachusetts Network to End Homelessness

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**These recommendations are in collaboration with our statewide partners, including CHAPA, Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless and Massachusetts Housing and Shelter Alliance.*