



Housing First
for Hampden, Hampshire,
Franklin and Berkshire Counties

Western Massachusetts Network to End Homelessness FY25 House Budget Priority Amendments

We ask our Western Massachusetts State Representatives to co-sponsor the following amendments to the FY25 House Budget:

Amendment #1100 (Rep. Sabadosa) for The Western Massachusetts Network to End Homelessness to fund the Network's coordinating efforts to prevent and end homelessness across Hampden, Hampshire, Franklin and Berkshire Counties (\$100,000).

Amendment #790 (Rep. Decker) to strengthen the RAFT Program by: earmarking \$10 million within the RAFT account to provide grants above the general cap to families and individuals when a higher grant is essential to resolve a housing crisis; prohibit EOHLIC from imposing a notice to quit requirement on households seeking assistance with back rent; and require direct-to-tenant payments in cases where the landlord is not cooperative with the RAFT application and documentation process.

Amendment #1479 (Rep. Rogers) to strengthen the Access to Counsel pilot program for people facing eviction to make a statewide pilot program; provide full legal representation; and create an advisory committee to help the MA Legal Assistance Corporation design the program.

Amendment #1075 (Rep. Uyterhoeven) to "prevent older adults from experiencing homelessness" through a short-term housing bridge subsidy program for low-income older adults, ages 60 and older, at risk of housing instability or homelessness (\$10 million).

Amendment #1106 (Rep. Sabadosa) to level fund the Safe Havens program for chronically homeless individuals (\$1 million).

Amendment #889 (Reps. Duffy and González) to expand the Cliff Effect pilot project, a three-year effort to ease a family's transition off public assistance while securing sustainable employment (\$100,000).

Amendment #789 (Rep. Decker) to improve Emergency Assistance for Children and Families by expanding tracking and reporting language to include data on families placed on the EA wait list; creating an ombudsperson unit with EOHLIC, with language similar to that which was enacted with the FY22 budget; officially removing the Emergency Assistance asset limit

Amendment #737 (Rep. Barber) for "Improvements to HomeBASE" including: allowing families to renew HomeBASE benefits beyond 3 years if needed; allowing families to increase their income and stay in HomeBASE longer than 12 months, provide upstream access to benefits, allow households to maximize resources from RAFT, HomeBASE and other rental assistance programs and add language to carry over unspent FY24 funds into FY25.

Amendment #788 (Rep. Decker) to "Lift Kids Out of Deep Poverty" to increase cash assistance grants.

Amendment #26 (Rep. Hawkins) to restore language in the Home and Healthy for Good program to support systems change work to address individual homelessness in communities statewide.

Amendment #667 (Rep. Consalvo) for the Alternative Housing Voucher Program (\$500,000).

Amendment #1302 (Rep. O'Day) to prevent and end youth homelessness (\$1.5 million).

Amendment #299 (Rep. O'Day) to provide free Mass IDs to youth and adults experiencing homelessness (\$75,000) and establish fee waiver and documentation standards to access standard Mass IDs.

Amendment #660 (Rep. Owens) "Boston Area Youth - Cash Assistance For Stable Housing" (BAY-CASH) to create a pilot for direct cash assistance to unaccompanied youth and young adults who are experiencing homelessness that offers a promising model for replication in western MA (\$100,000).