



Housing First
for Hampden, Hampshire,
Franklin and Berkshire Counties

November 10, 2025

Chair Brendan Crighton
Joint Committee on Transportation
24 Beacon St., Room 109-C
Boston, MA 02133

Chair James Arciero
Joint Committee on Transportation
24 Beacon Street, Room 134
Boston, MA 02133

Re: An Act to provide identification to youth and adults experiencing homelessness (H.3750/S.2399)

Dear Chairs Crighton and Arciero and Honorable Members of the Joint Committee on Transportation:

I am writing on behalf of the Western Massachusetts Network to End Homelessness (“Network”) in support of *An Act to provide identification to youth and adults experiencing homelessness (S.3750/S.2399)*, filed by Representative Jim O’Day, Representative Sean Garballey, and Senator Robyn Kennedy.

The Western Massachusetts Network to End Homelessness supports collaborative solutions across Hampden, Hampshire, Franklin and Berkshire Counties to prevent and end homelessness through a Housing First approach that centers racial equity. It includes hundreds of partners from virtually every community sector who are committed to making safe, decent and affordable housing a reality for all in our region.

Right now, western Massachusetts shelters are full to capacity with waiting lists. We are seeing an unprecedented rise in individual homelessness for young adults and all adults across the region, not unlike the rest of the Commonwealth. Unsheltered homelessness – people sleeping outside in parks, cars, and other places not fit for human habitation – also has quadrupled since 2021, rising from 80 to 318 people in 2025. The federal government’s current threat of massive cuts to core housing and homelessness programs is making a dire situation even worse.

While there is no single solution to this multi-faceted crisis, one clear and impactful response lies in reducing the barrier to Massachusetts identification (MA ID). The current difficulty in obtaining a MA ID for people who are homeless impacts access to education, employment and housing itself. This we can fix. Let’s provide our most vulnerable residents with one less roadblock to housing stability.

Please issue a favorable report of H.3750 and S.2399 as soon as possible. Thank you very much for your consideration.

Best,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Pamela Schwartz". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Pamela" being more prominent than the last name "Schwartz".

Pamela Schwartz, Director
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