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Committed to ensuring that everyone has a place to call home

MASSACHUSETTS COALITION FOR THE HOMELESS

TAKE ACTION TODAY!

Please sign and share our message to state legislators in support of key FY'20 budget priorities!

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June 12, 2019

Greetings!

The July 1st start of the next state fiscal year is approaching swiftly. Please join the Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless today in asking your State Representative and State Senator to support key items in the fiscal year 2020 Conference Committee budget so as to prevent and end homelessness among families, unaccompanied youth, and adults!

Last week, the three House and three Senate members who make up the FY'20 Budget Conference Committee began meeting to iron out the differences between the House and Senate versions of the budget. The conferees are Senate Ways and Means Chair [Michael Rodrigues](#), Senate Ways and Means Vice Chair [Cindy Friedman](#), Senate Ways and Means Ranking Minority Member [Viriato \(Vinny\) deMacedo](#), House Ways and Means Chair [Aaron Michlewitz](#), House Ways and Means Vice Chair [Denise Garlick](#), and House Ways and Means Ranking Minority Member [Todd Smola](#).

As the Conference Committee meets, we want to make sure that the conferees and House and Senate leadership are hearing from their legislative colleagues (and directly from Massachusetts residents) in support of key homelessness, housing, and benefits issues. Today, we are asking you to sign and share our latest [one-minute online action](#) in support of the Coalition's FY'20 budget priorities for the Conference Committee stage of the budget process. This letter will be sent to your State Senator and Representative, asking them actively to weigh in in support of the deepest investments and most helpful budget language possible. If you prefer printing and mailing the letter, a downloadable [PDF version](#) is here.

The action highlights our requests for:

- Senate-proposed language for the Emergency Assistance family shelter program to ensure that children and families do not have to stay in places not meant for human habitation before accessing shelter, and Senate-proposed funding level of \$178.7 million, which is \$13 million more than the House-proposed level (EA, line item 7004-0101). We are grateful that both the House and Senate budgets would allow families to retain shelter benefits while increasing their incomes up to 200% of the federal poverty guidelines (before the existing grace period would begin).
- Senate-proposed funding of \$5 million for housing and wraparound services for unaccompanied youth and young adults experiencing homelessness (line item 4000-0007), which is \$1.7 million more than the House-proposed level
- Senate-proposed funding of \$21 million for the Residential Assistance for Families in Transition homelessness prevention program (RAFT, line item 7004-9316), which is \$1 million more than the House-proposed level
- House-proposed direct funding of \$110 million for the Massachusetts Rental Voucher Program (MRVP, line item 7004-9024), which is \$6 million more than the Senate-proposed direct appropriation, and Senate-proposed language that would update the allowable monthly rent levels to match current fair market rents for mobile subsidies issued or renewed on or after August 1st and that would carry over \$6,000,000 in unspent FY'19 funds

Here is our [Conference Committee page](#) and updated [FY'20 budget chart](#), with our analysis of key line items related to homelessness, housing, and benefits, including our Conference Committee requests in columns O and P.

We continue to be grateful for your collaboration and interest!

In solidarity,

Kelly Turley
Associate Director

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