



**Please Cosponsor and Actively Support Amendment #802 to the House FY'19 Budget to Ease Access to Massachusetts IDs for Youth, Families, and Individuals Experiencing Homelessness**  
**Sponsored by Representative Kay Khan**

**Overview:**

Amendment #802 seeks to incorporate language from House Bill 2737/Senate Bill 1906, An Act to provide identification to homeless youth and families, as an outside section to the FY'19 state budget. Currently, the bills are awaiting action by the House and Senate Committees on Ways and Means.

**Amendment Cosponsors (as of April 18th):**

Representatives Christine Barber, Linda Campbell, Sean Garballey, Colleen Garry, Carmine Gentile, Kenneth Gordon, Jonathan Hecht, Kay Khan (sponsor), Jack Lewis, Paul McMurtry, James O'Day, Denise Provost, David Rogers, José Tosado, Steven Ultrino, Aaron Vega, and Chris Walsh.

**Importance of This Amendment:**

Obtaining a state identification card is a critical first step for youth and adults experiencing homelessness to accomplish typical life tasks and access opportunities. ID is required for a broad range of life activities, such as:

- Applying for jobs
- Enrolling in education programs
- Getting a library card
- Picking up a package from the post office
- Opening financial accounts
- Entering certain government buildings
- Accessing services
- Interacting with law enforcement

Unfortunately, there are significant barriers to accessing IDs for people experiencing homelessness, with some service providers estimating that half of their clients lack identification cards.<sup>1</sup>

With the implementation of the REAL ID Act across the country, states have recognized the need for an alternative identification card accessible to people experiencing homelessness, especially youth, who may lack the documentation necessary to obtain a REAL ID-compliant card. Thirteen other states currently offer free or reduced fee cards for individuals experiencing homelessness, and a growing number offer clear alternative criteria for individuals experiencing homelessness who cannot demonstrate proof of address.<sup>2</sup>

It is time for Massachusetts to step up and join those states that are addressing this issues. This amendment, as well as House Bill 2737/ Senate Bill 1906, would:

- Establish a fee waiver process for youth and adults experiencing homelessness
- Create a process for individuals experiencing homelessness to apply for IDs if they cannot meet the existing criteria, such as alternative proof of Massachusetts residency that does not require a permanent address (looking to documents already accepted by other Massachusetts state agencies)

<sup>1</sup> Hussey, H. (2015). Expanding ID Card Access for LGBT Homeless Youth. Center for American Progress. <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/lgbt/reports/2015/10/01/122044/expanding-id-card-access-for-lgbt-homeless-youth/>

<sup>2</sup> Mirza, S., Soto, S. and Rooney, C. (2016). State ID Card Policies for LGBTQ Youths Experiencing Homelessness. Center for American Progress. <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/lgbt/reports/2016/09/28/144928/state-id-card-policies-for-lgbtq-youths-experiencing-homelessness/>

**Please cosponsor and actively support this amendment to increase access to identification cards!**

**Organizational Endorsers**

ACT UP/Boston	Housing Families Inc.
Allston-Brighton Health Collaborative	Justice Resource Institute/YouthHarbors
Boston Homeless Solidarity Committee	LUK, Inc.
Bridge Over Troubled Waters	Massachusetts Alliance of HUD Tenants
Cambridge and Somerville Housing and Welfare Coalition	Massachusetts Appleseed Center for Law and Justice
DIAL/SELF Youth & Community Services	Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless
Domus Incorporated	Massachusetts Commission on LGBTQ Youth
Father Bill's & Mainspring	Massachusetts Housing and Shelter Alliance
First Church Shelter, Cambridge	MassEquality
Gates of Hope Inc.	Poor People's United Fund
Hearts of Hope Inc.	Samaritans Steps
Hildebrand Family Self-Help Center	School on Wheels
Homeless Empowerment Project	Wayside Youth & Family Support Network
Homeless Prevention Council of Lower Cape Cod	Western Massachusetts Network to End Homelessness
Homeless Youth Providers Engaging Together	Y2Y Harvard Square

**For more information, please contact Kelly Turley of the Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless at [kelly@mahomeless.org](mailto:kelly@mahomeless.org) or 781-595-7570 x17.**



**MASSACHUSETTS  
COALITION  
FOR THE HOMELESS**