Please Actively Support An Act Relative to Assisting Elders and People with Disabilities in the Commonwealth - House Bill 2077/Senate Bill 2039

House Bill 2077 Lead Sponsors: Representative Jim O'Day and Senator Patricia Jehlen


Senate Bill 2039 Lead Sponsor: Senator Patricia Jehlen


Bill Status:
Both bills were heard on October 11, 2017 by the Joint Committee on Elder Affairs, and were reported out favorably. The bills are awaiting the next committee assignment, as of February 21, 2018.

What is EAEDC?
EAEDC is a state-funded cash assistance and benefits program providing support to approximately 19,000 extremely low-income individuals, administered by the Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA).

Who is served by EAEDC?

- Extremely low-income adults 65 years of age or older who are in the process of applying for Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Adults experiencing a mental or physical disability that inhibits their ability to work for at least 60 days
- Participants in the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission’s programs
- Certain caretakers of children who are not eligible to receive Transitional Aid to Families with Dependent Children (TAFDC) program benefits or caretakers of adults with severe disabilities
- Lawfully present immigrants who are residents of Massachusetts

How would House Bill 2077/Senate Bill 2039 improve the EAEDC Program?

These bills would:

1. Remove the shelter reduction/homelessness penalty for individuals experiencing homelessness:
EAEDC program participants who are experiencing homelessness receive a reduced grant of only $92.80 per month. This monthly grant is significantly lower than the current grant for individuals who have housing and clearly is insufficient to allow these participants to meet their basic needs. By eliminating this grant reduction, EAEDC participants experiencing
homelessness (in or out of a shelter) will not be further financially disrupted and may be able to transition into a more stable living arrangement sooner.

2. **Increase the EAEDC grant:** The typical monthly grant of $303.70* has not been increased since 1988. While EAEDC is a vital lifeline for program participants, the benefit levels are very low. We are proposing to match the levels provided under the TAFDC program for households of comparable size, so that, for example, one person on EAEDC could receive up to $428/month (with rent allowance).

   *This is the amount provided to single individuals who are responsible for paying some monthly rent, known as “Living Arrangement A”.

3. **Increase the allowable personal asset limit from $250 to $2,500:** Letting an individual have more than $250 in total monthly assets will allow more EAEDC participants to have assets and to move toward housing stability (by being better able to afford ongoing rent, first month’s rent, last month’s rent, and security deposit payments). The bill language also would exclude the first $15,000 in a vehicle’s trade-in value when determining the asset limit (as in the TAFDC program), so that more EAEDC applicants with cars can approved—which is especially vital in areas with limited or no public transportation.

4. **Create an annual cost of living adjustment (COLA) for EAEDC program participants:** Building in a COLA so that DTA can provide increased benefits in response to the wider economic conditions would ensure that participants do not fall behind further economically from year-to-year.

**Which organizations are endorsing the EAEDC bills?**

As of February 2018, the bill has been endorsed by 75 organizations from across the Commonwealth:

Abby's House  
Action for Boston Community Development  
Aging Disabilities Resources Consortia of Southeastern MA  
Allston-Brighton Health Collaborative  
A.R.I.S.E. for Social Justice  
Berkeley Retirement Home and Nursing Center  
Boston Area Rape Crisis Center  
Boston Center for Independent Living  
Boston Homeless Solidarity Committee  
Bristol Elder Services, Inc.  
CAPIC (Community Action Programs Inter-City, Inc.)  
Catholic Charities Agency, Diocese of Springfield  
Catholic Charities Worcester County  
Catholic Charities, Archdiocese of Boston  
Catholic Social Services of Fall River, Inc.  
Central Boston Elder Services  
Central Massachusetts Housing Alliance  
Citizens Inn  
City Mission Society of Boston  
Coastline Elderly Services, Inc.  
Common Cathedral  
Community Action Inc. of Haverhill  
Community Action Agency of Somerville, Inc.  
Community Day Center of Waltham  
Cooperative Metropolitan Ministries  
Emmaus, Inc.  
Family Promise North Shore Boston  
First Church Shelter  
Greater Lynn Senior Services & Lynn Council on Aging  
Harvard Medical School Community Health & Advocacy Subcommittee of Student Leadership Committee, Center for Primary Care  
Harvard Square Homeless Shelter  
Homes for Families  
Hunger Homelessness Division of the Brandeis University Waltham Group  
Lazarus House Ministries  
Lowell Transitional Living Center  
Lynn Economic Opportunity  
Lynn Shelter Association  
Marie Esther Health Center, Inc.  
Mass Home Care  
Massachusetts Alliance of HUD Tenants  
Massachusetts Association for Community Action (MASSCAP)  
Massachusetts Association of Councils on Aging  
Massachusetts Association of Residential Care Homes (MARCH)  
Massachusetts Catholic Conference  
Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless  
Massachusetts Law Reform Institute  
Massachusetts Senior Action Council  
Mass Home Care  
MetroBoston Aging Disabilities Resources Consortia  
MetroWest Aging Disabilities Resources Consortia  
Minuteman Senior Services  
Mount Pleasant Home - Jamaica Plain  
My Brother's Table  
Mystic Valley Elder Services  
North Shore Community Action Program  
Old Colony Elder Services  
Our Father's House  
Pax Christi - Beverly  
Pine Street Inn  
Rosie's Place  
Samaritan Inn  
Samaritan Steps, Inc.  
Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur - Ipswich Community  
Sisters of St. Anne, Social Concerns Committee - Marlborough  
Somebody Cares New England  
Somerville Homeless Coalition  
Somerville-Cambridge Elder Services  
Southern Mass. Aging Disabilities Resources Consortia  
Springwell, Inc.  
St. Francis House  
The Pettengill House, Inc.  
The Psychological Center  
TriCommunity Coalition to End Homelessness  
Voice of the Poor Committee for Social Justice, Attleboro District of St. Vincent de Paul  
Women's Lunch Place

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**Please do all you can to actively support An Act Relative to Assisting Elders and People with Disabilities in the Commonwealth!** For more information, please contact the Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless: Kelly Turley, Associate Director, kelly@mahomeless.org, 781-595-7570 x 17, 73 Buffum St., Lynn, MA 01902, www.mahomeless.org.