



MASSACHUSETTS COALITION FOR THE HOMELESS

Committed to ensuring that everyone has a place to call home

Youth Without Homes Can't Wait: Please Sign on to Representative O'Day's Amendment to Line Item 4000-0007 to Provide an Additional \$1.7 Million in the FY'20 Budget for Housing and Services to Unaccompanied Youth and Young Adults Experiencing Homelessness



Please cosponsor Representative O'Day's youth homelessness amendment to provide a total of **\$5 million** in the FY'20 budget to address the housing and support service needs of unaccompanied youth and young adults, ages 24 and younger, who are experiencing homelessness. The House Ways and Means budget included \$3.3 million.

Requests:

- An additional \$1.7 million for a total of \$5 million for housing and wraparound services for unaccompanied youth under the Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS) line item, 4000-0007.
- This investment would provide expanded funding for the unaccompanied youth homelessness law, **An Act promoting housing and support services for unaccompanied homeless youths, to ensure that the law truly is meaningful for youth without homes** (See Chapter 6A, Sections 16W and 16X of the Massachusetts General Laws).
- The additional housing and service resources would be **distributed statewide through the ten regional agencies contracting with EOHHS** and would be **targeted to youth and young adults age 24 and younger who are experiencing homelessness out on their own**, outside the custody or care of a parent/guardian.

Why Now?

There is a desperate need for increased housing, shelter, and service options for youth and young adults age 24 or younger who are living outside the custody and care of their parents or guardians. We know all too well that youth homelessness takes its toll on both the youth and our society at large. People who experience homelessness as adolescents often face bleak outcomes. While many youth are resilient and are able to overcome the ravages of homelessness, homelessness often leads to poor health outcomes including increased risk of death, exposure to violence, susceptibility to exploitation and high risk behaviors, and poor academic performance with increased risk of dropping out of school.

In April and May 2018, under the leadership of the Massachusetts Commission on Unaccompanied Homeless Youth and in partnership with youth and youth providers, the state conducted its fifth annual statewide youth homelessness survey through the Continuum of Care networks. 2,150 of the young people who participated in the survey were under the age of 25, and of those young people, 738 youth (34.3%) indicated that they currently were experiencing homelessness out on their own, with 17.5% of the young people meeting the Commission's definition of homelessness staying outside, in an abandoned building, in a car, or in another location not meant for human habitation. An additional 77 young people (3.6%) currently were experiencing homelessness along with their parent or guardian. Another 462 young people (21.5%) currently had housing, but had experienced homelessness in the past, and 35 youth (1.6%) said that they had housing that day, but were unsure if they would lose it in the next two weeks. The results are helping to shed more light on the extent of youth homelessness and the needs of young people here in the Commonwealth. See the reverse side for some data from the survey. More information is available at www.mahomeless.org/advocacy/unaccompanied-youth-homelessness. The 2019 Youth Count will run from April 12 – May 12, 2019.

We know that the time to act is now. **The \$3.3 million included in the FY'19 budget, and the \$3.7 million total included in the FY'16-FY'18 budgets have helped to lay the foundation for addressing youth homelessness in the Commonwealth. Increased funding in FY'20 would provide much-needed resources to further build up a systematic, effective, statewide response to unaccompanied youth and young adult homelessness across Massachusetts.**

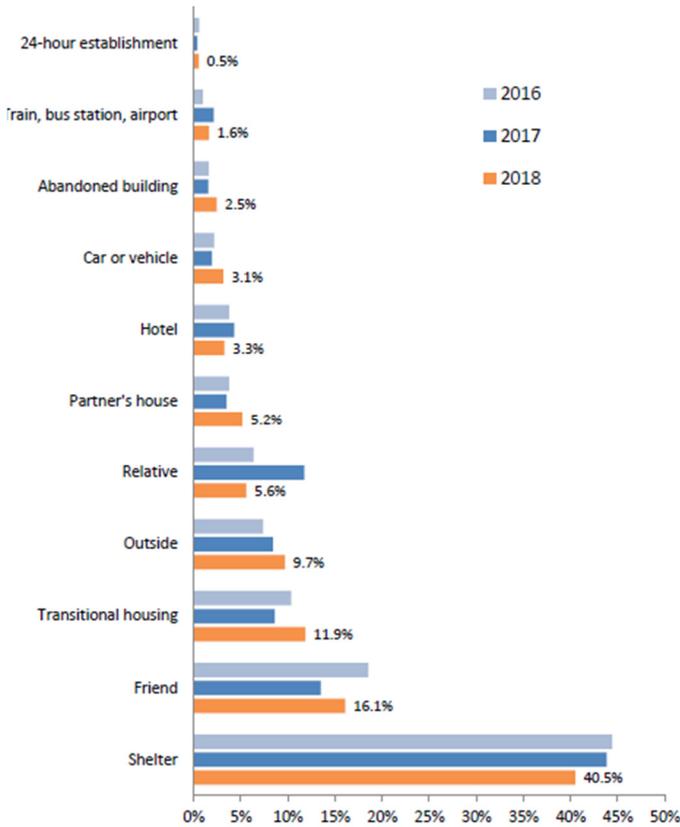
For more information, please contact Kelly Turley, Associate Director, at kelly@mahomeless.org or 781-595-7570 x17.

Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless

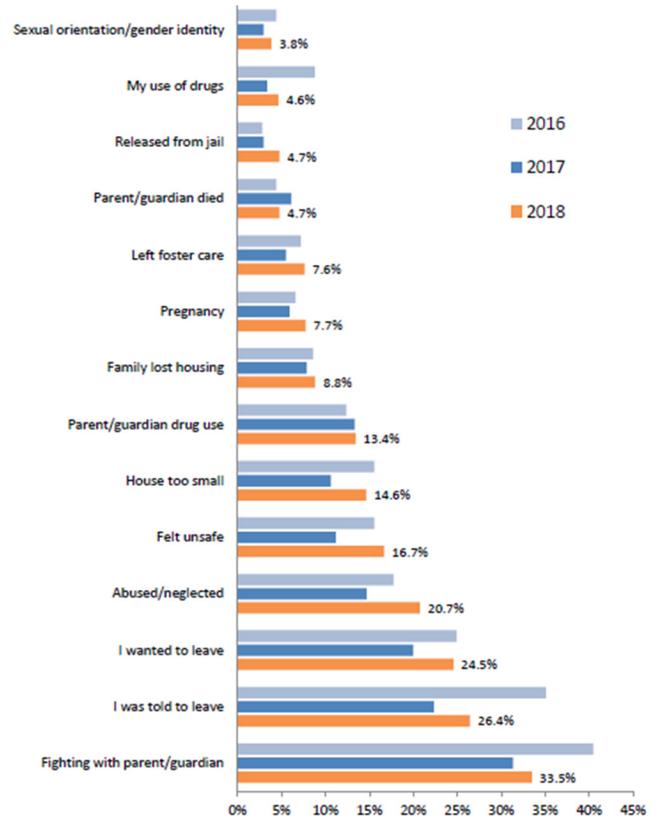
73 Buffum Street, Lynn, MA 01902

www.mahomeless.org

Where Young People Slept the Night Before the Survey



Reasons Young People Were Not Living with Parent/Guardian



Organizational endorsers (as of April 2019):

Boston Area Rape Crisis Center
Boston Youth Action Board
Bridge Over Troubled Waters
Citizens' Housing and Planning Association
Community Action Pioneer Valley
Domus Incorporated
Father Bill's & MainSpring
Homeless Prevention Council of Cape Cod
Horizons for Homeless Children
LUK, Inc.
Massachusetts Appleseed Center for Law & Justice

Massachusetts Association for Community Action
Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless
Massachusetts Law Reform Institute
MassEquality
Poor People's United Fund
School on Wheels of Massachusetts
Somerville Homeless Coalition
Wayside Youth and Family Support Network
Western Massachusetts Network to End Homelessness
Y2Y

Youth without homes can't wait!
Please actively support Rep. O'Day's amendment to provide an additional \$1.7 million investment in housing and services for unaccompanied youth in FY'20 via line item 4000-0007!