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):

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.¹

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.²

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)


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

Organizational Endorsers

ACT UP/Boston
Allston-Brighton Health Collaborative
Boston Homeless Solidarity Committee
Bridge Over Troubled Waters
Cambridge and Somerville Housing and Welfare Coalition
DIAL/SELF Youth & Community Services
Domus Incorporated
Father Bill's & Mainspring
First Church Shelter, Cambridge
Gates of Hope Inc.
Hearts of Hope Inc.
Hildebrand Family Self-Help Center
Homeless Empowerment Project
Homeless Prevention Council of Lower Cape Cod
Homeless Youth Providers Engaging Together

Housing Families Inc.
Justice Resource Institute/YouthHarbors
LUK, Inc.
Massachusetts Alliance of HUD Tenants
Massachusetts Appleseed Center for Law and Justice
Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless
Massachusetts Commission on LGBTQ Youth
Massachusetts Housing and Shelter Alliance
MassEquality
Poor People's United Fund
Samaritans Steps
School on Wheels
Wayside Youth & Family Support Network
Western Massachusetts Network to End Homelessness
Y2Y Harvard Square

For more information, please contact Kelly Turley of the Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless at kelly@mahomeless.org or 781-595-7570 x17.