



MASSACHUSETTS COALITION FOR THE HOMELESS

Committed to ensuring that everyone has a place to call home

December 20, 2016

Greetings!

With two weeks to go until the end of the current legislative session, please join us in continuing to take action to pass the bill of rights for people experiencing homelessness, [House Bill 1129](#). **Today (or tomorrow morning), please ask your state legislators to sign onto [Representative Smitty Pignatelli's letter](#) to House Ways and Means Chair Brian Dempsey.** As you may know, the bill has been awaiting action by the House Committee on Ways and Means since last December. We are seeking as many co-signers as possible on Rep. Pignatelli's letter, to show Chairman Dempsey and legislative leadership the importance of swift passage of the bill of rights.

**HOMELESS  
BILL OF RIGHTS**  
**HOUSE BILL 1129**

**Lead Sponsor:**  
Representative William Smitty Pignatelli

The Homeless Bill of Rights would entitle those experiencing homelessness to the same rights as any other resident of Massachusetts.

### Creating a Bill of Rights for People Experiencing Homelessness:

House Bill 1129 aims to ensure that people experiencing homelessness are able to exercise the same rights as any other resident of Massachusetts. The rights included in the

bill are the right to move freely in public spaces, the right to equal treatment by municipal agencies, freedom from discrimination in employment, the right to emergency medical care, the right to register to vote and to vote, freedom from disclosure of records, and the right to a reasonable expectation of privacy of property. The bill seeks to have the rights outlined to be treated as a statement of legislative intent, as a guide for state and municipal agencies to prevent discrimination based on housing status.

**Please call your legislators today to ask them to:**

- **Sign onto Rep. Pignatelli's letter to House Ways and Means Committee Chair Brian Dempsey by tomorrow, Wednesday, December 21st at 2 p.m.**
  - To do so, your legislators can contact Gena Frank in Rep. Pignatelli's office at [eugenia.frank@mahouse.gov](mailto:eugenia.frank@mahouse.gov) or 617-722-2017 (x7655).
  - If your legislator already is listed on the letter below, please thank her/him for their prompt participation.
- **Weigh in directly with House Speaker Robert DeLeo, House Ways and Chairman Dempsey, and Senate leadership in support of this bill moving forward in the weeks ahead.**

To contact your state legislators, you can find their information via [www.wheredoivotema.com](http://www.wheredoivotema.com) or by calling the State House switchboard at 617-722-2000.

If you haven't done so already, please also sign our one-minute [online action to legislators](#) and share this email with your colleagues and friends.

Thank you so much for your sustained commitment and action during these final days of 2016!

-Kelly

Kelly Turley  
Director of Legislative Advocacy  
[kelly@mahomeless.org](mailto:kelly@mahomeless.org)  
781-595-7570 x17

**Text of Sign-On Letter on the Bill of Rights for People Experiencing Homelessness**

December 21, 2016

Brian S. Dempsey, Chairman  
House Committee on Ways and Means  
State House, Room 243  
Boston, MA 01233

Chairman Dempsey:

We are writing to you today to respectfully ask that *H.1129, An Act providing a homeless bill of rights*, be favorably reported out of the House Committee on Ways and Means. It would be wonderful to see the Committee affirm that all citizens of the Commonwealth should have equal rights regardless of housing status in time for the holiday season.

This legislation would create a homeless bill of rights to ensure that people in Massachusetts are not mistreated or denied access to services based solely on their housing status. Included in the bill of rights is the right to use and move freely in public spaces, the right not to face discrimination while seeking or maintaining employment, and the right to vote, the right to register to vote and receive documentation necessary to prove identity for voting, and several other common-sense measures.

This bill would simply serve as a statement of legislative intent and would therefore incur no costs to the Commonwealth. The language was modeled after the law that was passed in Rhode Island in 2012, and since then, similar legislation protecting the rights of homeless persons has become law in Connecticut and Illinois.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Representative Smitty Pignatelli  
Fourth Berkshire District

*Co-signers as of 12/19, 10:30 a.m.:*

Representative Ruth Balsler, Twelfth Middlesex  
Representative Diana DiZoglio, Fourteenth Essex  
Representative Sean Garballey, Twenty-third Middlesex  
Representative Paul Heroux, Second Bristol  
Representative Kay Khan, Eleventh Middlesex  
Representative Paul McMurtry, Eleventh Norfolk  
Representative Frank A. Moran, Seventeenth Essex  
Representative James O'Day, Fourteenth Worcester  
Representative Dave Rogers, Twenty-fourth Middlesex  
Representative Byron Rushing, Ninth Suffolk  
Representative Timothy J. Toomey, Jr., Twenty-sixth Middlesex  
Representative Tom Sannicandro, Seventh Middlesex

**SPEAK OUT TO END HOMELESSNESS!**

JOIN THE MASSACHUSETTS COALITION  
FOR THE HOMELESS FOR



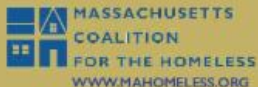
# LEGISLATIVE ACTION DAY 2017

Hosted by Representative Jim O'Day

Monday, February 27<sup>th</sup>  
9:00 am - 3:00 pm

**The Great Hall, Massachusetts State House**  
24 Beacon St., Boston, MA

REGISTER HERE: <https://goo.gl/forms/ftwqNXmmkuFLJCKv1>



For more information or to volunteer, contact:  
[alliemahomeless@gmail.com](mailto:alliemahomeless@gmail.com),  
[kelly@mahomeless.org](mailto:kelly@mahomeless.org),  
781-595-7570 ext. 22 or 17

STAY CONNECTED:

