



## Media Advisory: Important State House Briefing Tomorrow, September 19<sup>th</sup> on Housing and Services for Unaccompanied Youth and Young Adults Experiencing Homelessness

**WHAT:** The Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless, youth and young adults experiencing homelessness, legislative leaders, and allies will be participating in a State House briefing to push for increased resources to provide housing and services to youth and young adults under the age of 25 who are experiencing homelessness out on their own.

**WHO:** Scheduled speakers include:

- Representative Jim O'Day
- Senator Harriette Chandler
- Representative Marjorie Decker
- Preston, Boston Youth Advisory Board Member
- Dustin, Boston Youth Advisory Board Member
- Young adults who have experienced homelessness
- Kelly Turley, Associate Director, Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless

**WHEN:** Tuesday, September 19, 2017, 1-2:30 p.m.

**WHERE:** Massachusetts State House, House Members' Lounge, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor (near the House Chamber)

**WHY:** In July, Governor Charlie Baker [zeroed out the unaccompanied youth homelessness line item](#), 4000-0007, saying that the \$675,000 appropriated by the Legislature was too small: "I am vetoing this item because it is too small to be effective at the enacted level of funding." Last week, the House of Representatives voted 140-12 to override this veto, but the veto will stay in effect until the Senate takes up the override and at least two-thirds of Senators vote in favor of restoring the funding. While the veto override is the first goal, mid-year supplemental funds also will be need to bring statewide programs online again and back to their FY'17 scale. At a time when rates of unaccompanied youth homelessness remain high, youth need additional resources in this line item and related programs. In particular, a veto override also is critical to restore \$2 million in homelessness prevention funds through the Residential Assistance for Families in Transition program (RAFT, line item 7004-9316) and reinstate expanded eligibility criteria that would allow youth, young adults, elders, people with disabilities, and households without minor children to participate in RAFT.

**HOW:** For interviews, please contact Kelly Turley at [kelly@mahomeless.org](mailto:kelly@mahomeless.org) or [617-652-0472](tel:617-652-0472) (cell). Please also find resources at <http://www.mahomeless.org/advocacy/item/restore-funding-for-youth>.

**QUOTES:** "The issue of ensuring safe shelter for our most vulnerable children and young adults experiencing homelessness is urgent and tragic. We have the ability to accomplish concrete legislative goals in order to solve these chronic issues of homelessness and ensure basic human rights in the Commonwealth. Our primary goal is to reduce the risk of harm by providing key resources to keep children, youth, and young adults safe." – Representative Jim O'Day

"We are grateful for the House of Representatives' recent vote to override the Governor's elimination of all funding for the state's unaccompanied youth homelessness line item in the fiscal year 2018 Massachusetts budget. We hope that the Senate swiftly will do the same. Ultimately, we hope that the Legislature and Baker Administration can work with youth, young adults, providers, advocates, and people of conscience to bring housing, wraparound services, and opportunities to scale so that all young people have safe, permanent places to call home." – Kelly Turley

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