



MASSACHUSETTS COALITION FOR THE HOMELESS

Committed to ensuring that everyone has a place to call home

Take Action to Establish a Bill of Rights for People Experiencing Homelessness

Please cosponsor and actively support House Bill 274, An Act establishing a bill of rights for individuals experiencing homelessness and Senate Bill 1120, An Act providing a bill of rights for people experiencing homelessness

Sponsored by Representative Frank Moran and Senator Adam Gómez

House Bill 274, An Act establishing a bill of rights for individuals experiencing homelessness and Senate Bill 1120, An Act providing a bill of rights for people experiencing homelessness would:

- Extend anti-discrimination protections in Chapter 151B and Chapter 272 of the Massachusetts General Laws to people experiencing homelessness, including protections when people are seeking employment, housing, voter registration, and access to public spaces and places of public accommodation
- Secure the right of people experiencing homelessness to rest, seek shelter from the elements, occupy a legally parked car, pray, eat, and avoid needless harassment in public spaces
- Provide people experiencing homelessness with the right to a private right of action in the event of a violation of their rights provided under this bill
- Repeal Sections 63 through 69 of Chapter 272 of the Massachusetts General Laws, which includes archaic and derogatory terminology and laws criminalizing homelessness

Importance of this legislation: People experiencing homelessness often are subjected to discrimination and mistreatment based on their housing status. The bill of rights is a guide for state and local officials emphasizing that people experiencing homelessness are entitled to the same rights as any other resident of Massachusetts. The bill of rights seeks to outline those rights to prevent discrimination based on housing status. The legislation recognizes the increased prevalence of homelessness in Massachusetts due to widespread economic hardship, the insufficient availability of safe, affordable housing, and a weakened social safety net. The passage of a bill of rights for people experiencing homelessness is critical as an increasing number of municipalities across the Commonwealth enact encampment and loitering bans criminalizing being unhoused rather than addressing the root causes of homelessness. The bills are modeled after landmark legislation passed in 2012 in Rhode Island, with similar legislation passed since then in Connecticut, Illinois, and Puerto Rico.

Legislative sponsors/cosponsors of the bill of rights: As of October 20th, the bill has been sponsored or cosponsored by Representatives Frank Moran (**sponsor**), Arena-DeRosa, Connolly, Decker, Domb, DuBois, Higgins, Holmes, and Tyler, and Senators Gómez (**sponsor**), DiDomenico, Eldridge, Kennedy, and Rausch.

62 statewide organizational endorsers of the bill of rights: As of October 20th, the bill has been endorsed by organizations across the Commonwealth, including Abby's House, Action Inc., Alliance of Cambridge Tenants (ACT), Allston Brighton Health Collaborative, Amherst Survival Center, Attleboro Area Interfaith Collaborative, Boston Center for

Independent Living, Brazilian Women's Group, Breaktime, Catholic Charities Worcester County, Central Massachusetts Housing Alliance, City Life / Vida Urbana, Community Action Agency of Somerville, Inc., Community Service Network, Inc., Cooperative Metropolitan Ministries, Disability Law Center, Dismas House of Massachusetts, DOVE, Inc., Emmanuel Church in the City of Boston, Family Health Center of Worcester, Family Promise North Shore Boston, Fenway Health, First Church Shelter, Friends of Boston's Homeless, Grandmothers' Village Project, Greater Boston Legal Services (GBLS), Grow Food Northampton, Hearthway, Inc., Homes for All Massachusetts, HomeStart, Inc., Horizons For Homeless Children, Housing Greenfield, Justice 4 Housing, Lawrence CommunityWorks, Lazarus House Inc., Legal Key Partnership for Health and Justice, LEO, Inc., Many Angels Needed Now and Always (MANNA), Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless, Massachusetts Commission on LGBTQ Youth, Massachusetts Law Reform Institute, Mass Senior Action Council, My Brother's Table, My Life My Choice, One Family, Opportunity Communities, LLC, Out Now, Poor People's United Fund, Progressive Massachusetts, Rosie's Place, Safe Passage, SeniorCare Inc., Somerville Community Corporation, St. Clare of Assisi, Stop Bullying Coalition, Sweet Scents, Tapestry Health, Temple Sinai of Sharon, MA, The Center for Teen Empowerment, United South End Settlements, United Way of Greater Fall River, and Western Massachusetts Network to End Homelessness.

Bill status: The bills were filed in January 2025. On February 27, 2025, House Bill 274 was assigned to the Joint Committee on Children, Families, and Persons with Disabilities, and Senate Bill 1120 was assigned to the Joint Committee on the Judiciary. House Bill 274 will be heard on October 21, 2025, in front of the Joint Committee on Children, Families, and Persons with Disabilities, and Senate Bill 1120 will be heard on October 21, 2025, in front of the Joint Committee on the Judiciary.

Please cosponsor and actively support [House Bill 274](#) and [Senate Bill 1120](#) to establish a bill of rights for people experiencing homelessness!

**For more information, please contact Kelly Turley at the Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless:
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-Last updated October 20, 2025