



On Solid Ground Full Coalition Meeting

January 11, 2018 (9.30 am – 11.00 am)

Taking Forward On Solid Ground's Advocacy Priorities

Meeting Notes

1. Welcome and Introductions

2. Advocacy Updates

- a. February 7th is the Joint Rule Day – last day for Joint Committees to report out pending bills.
- b. Status of each OSG priority bill:

- i. [Click here](#) for the list of OSG's Legislative priorities
- ii. [An Act Relative to Interagency Efforts to Reduce and Prevent Homelessness](#) (H.2245/ S.725).

Click [here](#) for the fact sheet.

- This legislation establishes a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between multiple state agencies to provide a structure for concrete interagency work through data sharing and regular meetings.
- The MOU bill is pending in the Joint Committee on Housing. Advocacy is needed for the bills to be reported favorably out of the Committee.
- **Please contact the members of Joint Committee on Housing to advocate reporting the bills out of the committee before Feb 7th. Contact info below:**

House leadership:

- ❖ Chair – Rep. Honan (617-722-2470) Kevin.Honan@mahouse.gov
- ❖ Vice Chair – Rep. McGonagle, Jr. (617-722-2017)
Joseph.McGonagle@mahouse.gov

Senate leadership:

- ❖ Chair – Sen. Boncore (617-722-1634) Joseph.Boncore@masenate.gov
- ❖ Vice Chair – Sen. Forry (617-722-1150) Linda.DorcenaForry@masenate.gov

[Click here](#) for other Committee members

- iii. [An Act Relative to Economic Mobility and Stability Program](#) (H3020/ S724). Click [here](#) for fact sheet.
 - This bill encourages data sharing and evidence based policy by creating a commission to study self-sufficiency programs across the state to help shape an economic mobility and financial stability program.

- The Economic Mobility bill is also pending in the Joint Committee on Housing. Advocacy is needed for the bills to be reported favorably out of the Committee.
- iv. [*An Act Improving Public Health through a Common Application for Core Food, Health and Safety-Net Programs*](#) (S.612/H.101). [Click here](#) for Fact sheet.
 - Common Application for SNAP & MassHealth bill is pending in the Joint Committee on Health Care Financing. The Committee is awaiting a feasibility report to evaluate impact of the bill.
 - [Click here](#) for info on Joint Committee on Health Care Financing.
 - v. [*An Act Financing the Production and Preservation of Housing for Low and Moderate Income Residents*](#) (H.4108). [Click here](#) for Fact sheet.
 - Housing Bond Bill is reported favorably out of Housing Committee and then out of House Bonding Committee. The bill is currently pending with the House Ways and Means Committee. After House Ways and Means reports it out the bill goes for a vote before the full House of Representatives. The bill will then be sent to the Senate to go through a similar process.
 - [Click here](#) for info on the House Ways and Means Committee
 - vi. [*An Act Relative to the Massachusetts Rental Voucher Program*](#) (S719). [Click here](#) for Fact sheet.
 - This bill codifies the Massachusetts Rental Voucher Program (MRVP) into the General Laws. Currently, MRVP is only authorized through the annual state budget. Codifying the program will create a more permanent authorization and allow for a more deliberative process through legislation to improve the program as it grows.
 - The MRVP bill is also pending in the Joint Committee on Housing. Advocacy is needed for the bills to be reported favorably out of the Committee.
 - vii. [*An Act Providing Immediate Child Care Assistance to Homeless Families*](#) (H.2796/ S.257).
 - Childcare Assistance House bill is pending in the Joint Committee on Children, Families and Persons with Disabilities. Advocacy is needed for the bill to be reported favorably out of the Committee. Senate bill is reported out of Joint Committee on Education.
 - [Click here](#) for info on Joint Committee on Children, Families and Persons with Disabilities

3. Moving MOU and Economic Mobility bill forward

- a. The Economic mobility bill is an essential starting point to mitigate cliff effects.
 - i. This legislation will help determine which self-sufficiency programs have the most favorable outcomes so that these can be adjusted and scaled-up so that families can benefit from them across the state. With increase in the minimum wage, the cliff effects can be steep and the need to adjust and scale the self-sufficiency programs is more urgent than before. This bill creates a commission to study the many self-sufficiency programs, examine the

impact of cliff effects, provide recommendations, and help shape programs that will better assist families reach economic independence.

- b. The MOU bill can be a good tool to improve system coordination
 - i. The bill will direct state agencies to focus on homelessness prevention efforts through assessment, data sharing, and resource delivery systems. The bill helps to formally realign the state's resources to provide more seamless access to resources for families with low income.

4. OSG Budget Priorities FY19

- a. System Coordination:
 - i. Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)
 - Add language in the budget for the MOU, legislation pending
 - ii. Establish a Common Application for SNAP and MassHealth
 - Add language in the budget/ funding request
 - Feasibility report to the legislature by January 2018
- b. Affordable Housing:
 - i. Line item 7004-9024: Restore funding to \$120M to the Massachusetts Rental Voucher Program; increase the Fair Market Rent Cap.
 - Funding increased from \$86.5M to \$92.7 in FY18; income eligibility increased from 50% to \$80%; voucher management system funding granted
 - Push for reporting requirements
- c. Support Services:
 - i. Line item 7004-0108: Amend HomeBASE language to allow renewals in certain cases
 - Also ensure that all homeless families in domestic violence shelters and residential recovery programs have access to HomeBASE rather than limiting eligibility to a pilot program
 - Awaiting Admin's lead on access for DV for BSAS to be able to focus on renewal language. Works needs to be done on HomeBASE expansion.
 - ii. Commission to study self Sufficiency programs
 - Add language to the budget, Economic Mobility legislation pending
 - iii. Line item 7002-1080: "Lean to Earn" program
 - Funded at \$1M in FY18, ask for continued investment to allow expenditure on cliff effect tool
 - iv. Line item 7004-0101: Emergency Assistance
 - Adjustment to income cap/6-month clock so that clock does not apply until and unless income is sustained for a period of 90 consecutive days
 - v. Child Care Access for families who are homeless
 - Add Bill language in the budget
 - vi. Line item 1599-0043: Childcare Rare Reserve Fund – continued investment of \$15M
 - Funded at \$15M in FY18 from \$12.5 in FY17
 - vii. Line item 4403-2000: Lift the TAFDC family cap so that all children in TAFDC-eligible families receive assistance
 - Add Bill language in the budget

viii. Line item 7030-1500: Maintain Head Start funding at \$9.1M

- Funded at \$9.1 in FY18

d. Data:

- i. Continued investment in data system and staffing

5. Next Steps

- a. **Contact members of Joint Committee on Housing to advocate for favorably reporting out the MOU bill and Economic Mobility Bill.**
- b. Set up meetings with DTA, EEC to advocate for focus on Child Care and early education to mitigate Cliff effects.

6. Announcements

- a. Cookie Day – Feb 7th – Homes For Families
- b. [Legislative Action Day](#) – Feb 27th – Mass Coalition for Homeless
- c. [Commonwealth Workforce Coalition Conference](#) – May 3rd – Center for Social Policy, UMass