



On Solid Ground 2019-2020 Legislative Agenda

The On Solid Ground Coalition is a cross-sector group of more than 40 organizations committed to a research-based approach to increasing housing stability and economic mobility. This package of legislation will encourage systems change to better coordinate our resources to serve low-income households; help families find housing that is affordable; increase access to necessary support services; and allow us to track our progress as we work to help all families succeed across the Commonwealth.

Advance System Coordination & Alignment

An Act Relative to Economic Mobility for Families with Low-Income (HD.2519/ SD.910)

Filed by Rep. Aaron Vega & Sen. Jason Lewis

This bill directs the Secretariats to study the impacts of minimum wage increases on cliff effects and accordingly make changes in assistance programs to avoid the cliff effects. The bill also makes data and information around economic mobility and assistance programs more accessible to families so that they are better informed and can benefit from the available resources.

An Act Improving Public Health through a Common Application for Core Food, Health and Safety-Net Programs (HD.791/ SD.1501)

Sponsored by Rep. Jay Livingstone & Sen. Sal DiDomenico

This bill increases access to vital social safety-net programs by creating a common application for these resources. The common application will allow individuals to apply in one place for programs including Mass Health, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), income supports, veterans services benefits, and housing resources.

Increase Access to Housing

And Act relative to the Massachusetts Rental Voucher Program (HD.387/ SD.864)

Sponsored by Rep. Adrian Madaro & Sen. Jamie Eldridge

This legislation would codify and make programmatic fixes to the Massachusetts Rental Voucher Program (MRVP) including: raising the fair market rent standard for rental vouchers; increasing administrative fees; requiring inspections; and improving data collection.

An Act to further provide a Rental Arrearage program (HD.2395)

Sponsored by Rep. Decker

This bill re-establishes a statewide rental arrearage program as a part of RAFT to help households avoid homelessness by providing back rent assistance as an upstream approach to prevent eviction and homelessness.

Increase Access to Support Services

An Act Providing Immediate Child Care Assistance to Homeless Families (HD.2469/ SD.1499)

Sponsored by Rep. Marjorie Decker & Sen. Joan Lovely

This legislation will allow families living in homeless shelters to qualify for state-funded child care vouchers, providing children with subsidized early education and parents with a safe environment to leave their children while they pursue employment opportunities. Simply put, it is not feasible to job hunt or go on interviews with a child present; this piece of legislation would provide child care opportunities to homeless parents as they enter shelter, so they can immediately start working to get their families back on a path to success.

An Act improving the Earned Income Credit for Working Families (HD.3052/ SD.863)

Sponsored by Rep. Marjorie Decker & Sen. Jamie Eldridge

This bill would increase the MA EITC to 50% of the state credit, expand MA EITC eligibility to taxpayers who file taxes using an Individual Tax Identification Number, and direct the department of revenue to engage in a comprehensive outreach plan to ensure everyone who is eligible for EITC are aware of the credit and claim it when they file taxes.

An Act to Lift the Cap on Kids (HD.3043)/ An Act relative to Well-being and Care of a Child (SD.1452)

Sponsored by Rep. Marjorie Decker & Sen. Sal DiDomenico

The family cap is a failed policy that denies subsistence benefits to 8,700 children because they were conceived while their family was poor. We want the cap on kids repealed. The proposed bill eliminates the requirement that families pursue child support in order to access TAFDC and allowing families to keep all of the child support they are awarded without losing benefits if they choose to pursue it.

Improve Data Transparency and Evidence driven Policy

An Act Providing for Coordinated Data and Assistance to Address Family Homelessness (SD.1433)

Filed by Sen. Comerford

This bill increases data transparency and system coordination by directing state agencies to report on certain homelessness related measures and their current system coordination efforts to improve access to support services to families. The bill also makes benefit program information more accessible to families through an agency telephone hotline and website.

For more information, please contact

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