

# Network Priorities and the Senate Ways and Means Budget

There is a lot of good news in the Senate Ways and Means Committee's proposed budget that was released this week. Click [here](#) for a breakdown of the budget in relation to Network priorities.

The good news:

\* **Unaccompanied homeless youth** was funded at the requested \$5 million, an increase of \$1.7 million from last year as well as the Governor's and House budgets.

\* **Secure Jobs Initiative** received \$2 million, doubling its funding relative to last year and the Governor's and House budgets.

\* **Alternative Housing Voucher Program (AHVP)** was funded at \$8 million, an almost \$2 million increase, from FY19 (this program is key for housing chronically homeless individuals), higher than the Governor's and House budgets.

\* **Mass Rental Voucher Program (MRVP)** was funded at \$110 million, same as the House budget and up from level funding by the Governor (although we are seeking \$130 million so an Amendment to come), and language was also added to adjust rent levels to be consistent with the Fair Market Rent (BIG progress!).

\* **Adult Basic Education/ESOL** was funded at the Network (and Statewide ABE Coalition's) request of \$38.1 million, up from \$33.35 million in FY19, more or less consistent with the House's FY20 budget and up from the Governor's FY20 budget of \$37.6 million.

The not good news (for now):

\* **Homeless Individuals Assistance** line-item (funds emergency shelters) received \$5 million less than the House budget, down

to \$48.3 million from \$53.3 million, and just barely over the FY19 level.

\* **Regional Transit Authorities**, while funded at \$90.5 million – the requested amount – would have \$4 million of that total be performance-based and awarded at the discretion of the MassDOT. As the funding allocation currently stands, the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority would suffer a \$1 million deficit in FY20.

\***MassHire Career Centers** were funded at \$3.96 million, a decrease from FY19's level of \$4.06 million, up against significant federal cuts (the FY20 state request was at \$6 million).

### **Regional earmarks:**

\* An amendment will be filed by Senator Adam Hinds to fund the **Berkshire Regional Winter Overflow Shelter at \$150,000.**

\* An amendment will be filed by Senator Jo Comerford to fund the **Western MA Network to End Homelessness at \$75,000.**

\* An amendment will be filed by Senator Jo Comerford to explicitly attach **Craig's Doors shelter** to funding that is likely to be maintained in the budget (already explicitly included in the Governor's budget).

Amendments must be filed by noon today, May 10, and co-sponsors can sign-on in support of Amendments up until Senate debate begins the week of May 20.

Please stay tuned for further advocacy updates early next week.