

Housing Ends Homelessness: The Opportunity is Now

Western Massachusetts Network to End Homelessness

8th Annual Regional Gathering

Holyoke Community College

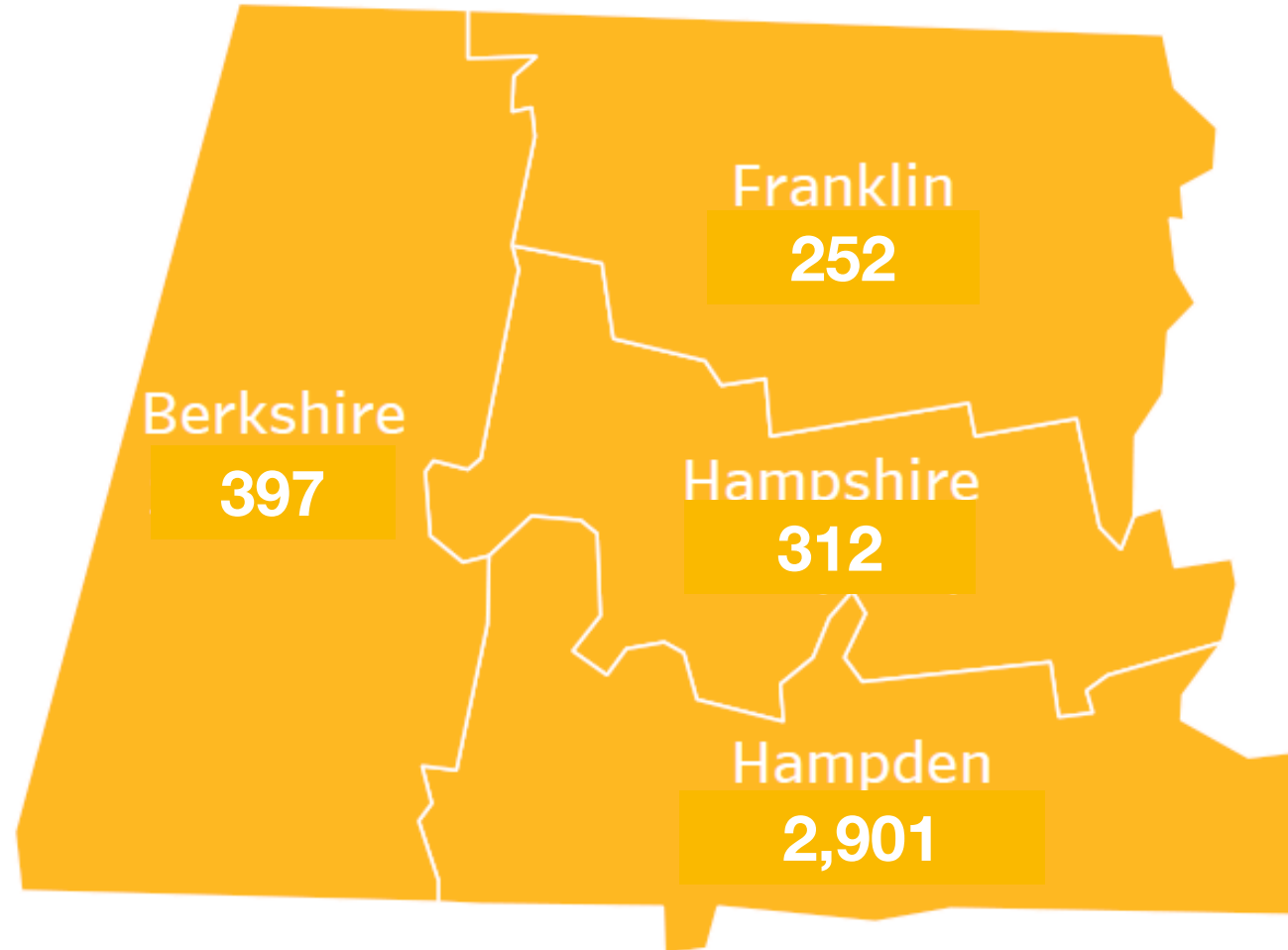
May 31, 2024

Homelessness is up

The Point-in-Time Count shows a one-year increase of 16.9%.

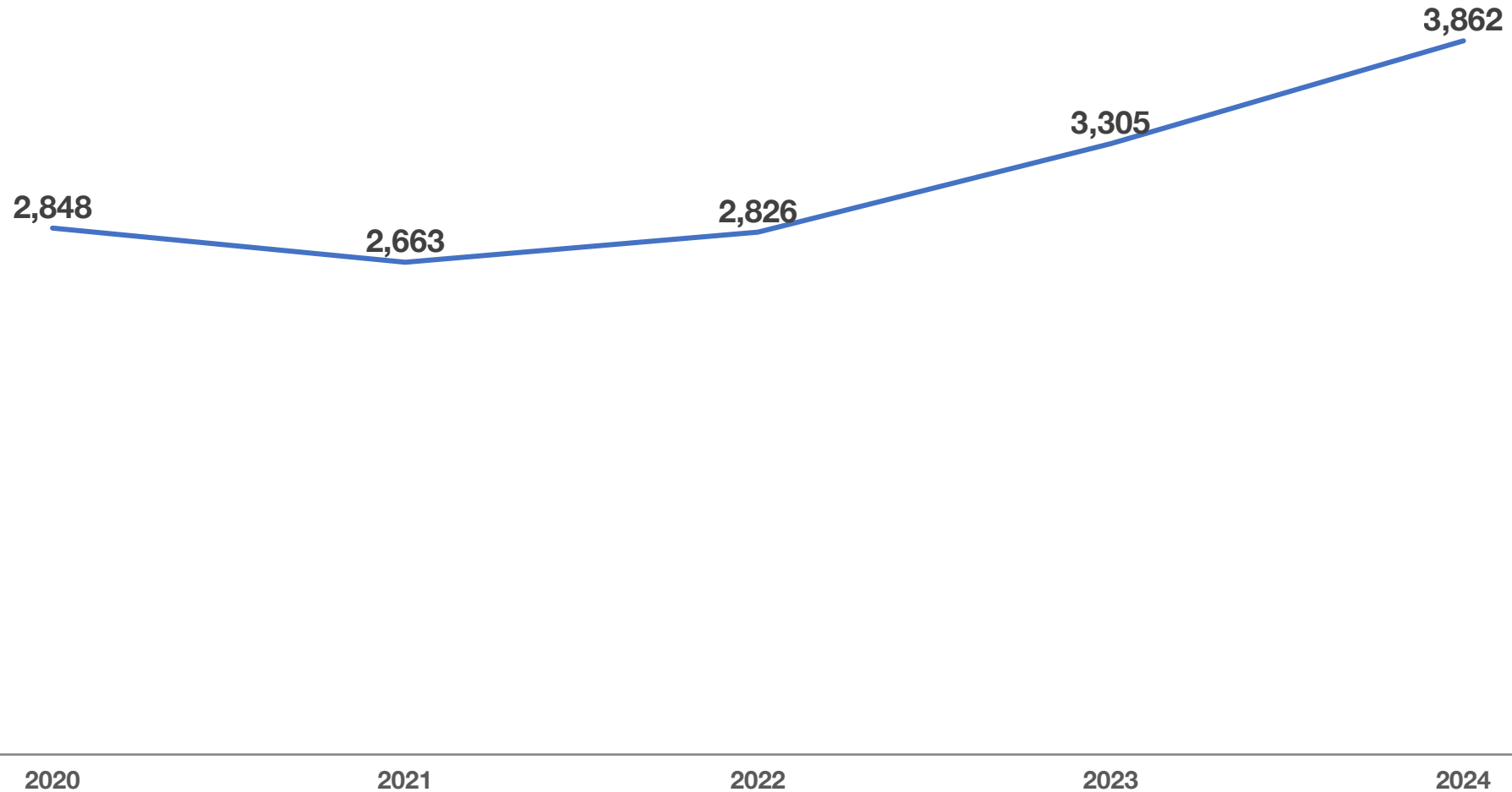
3,862 People Homeless on January 31, 2024

Annual Point-in-Time Count



Source: Continuum of Care Point-in-Time Count, January 31, 2024

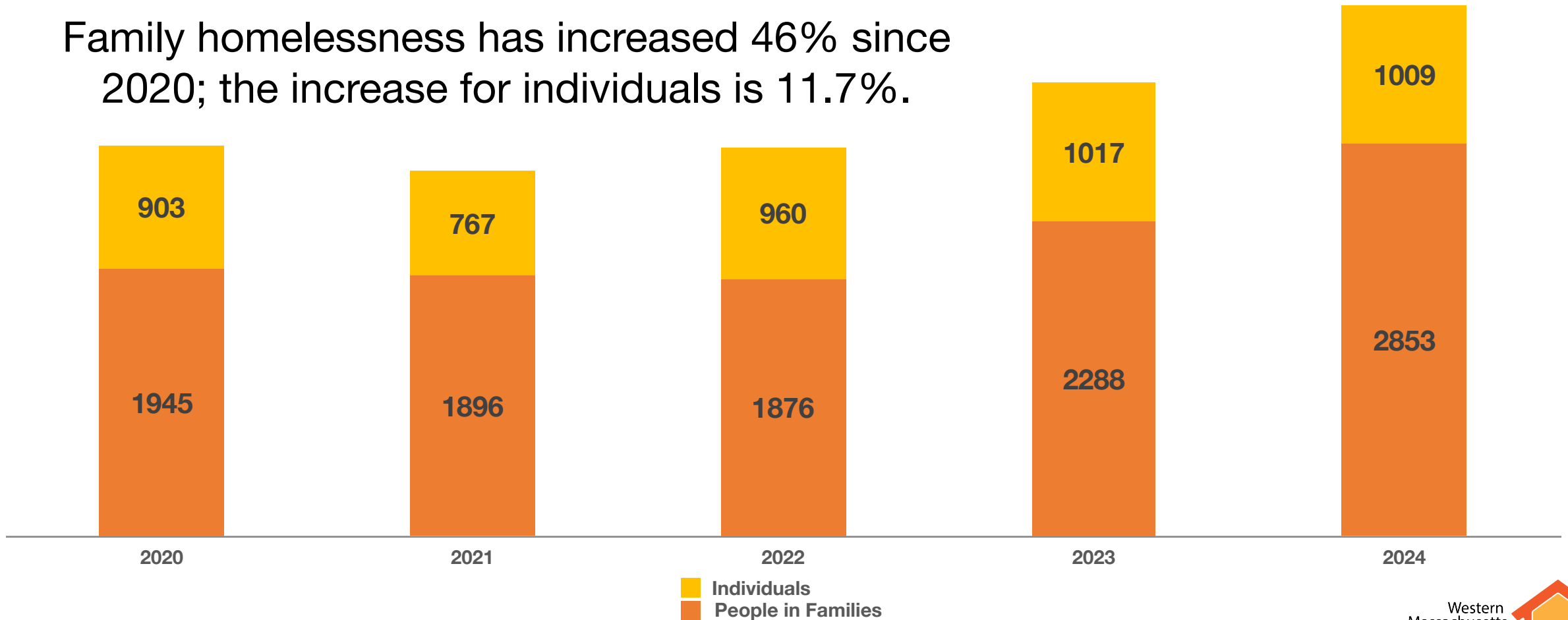
Homelessness in Western Massachusetts Trend 2020–2024



Source: Continuum of Care Annual Point-in-Time Counts 2020–2024

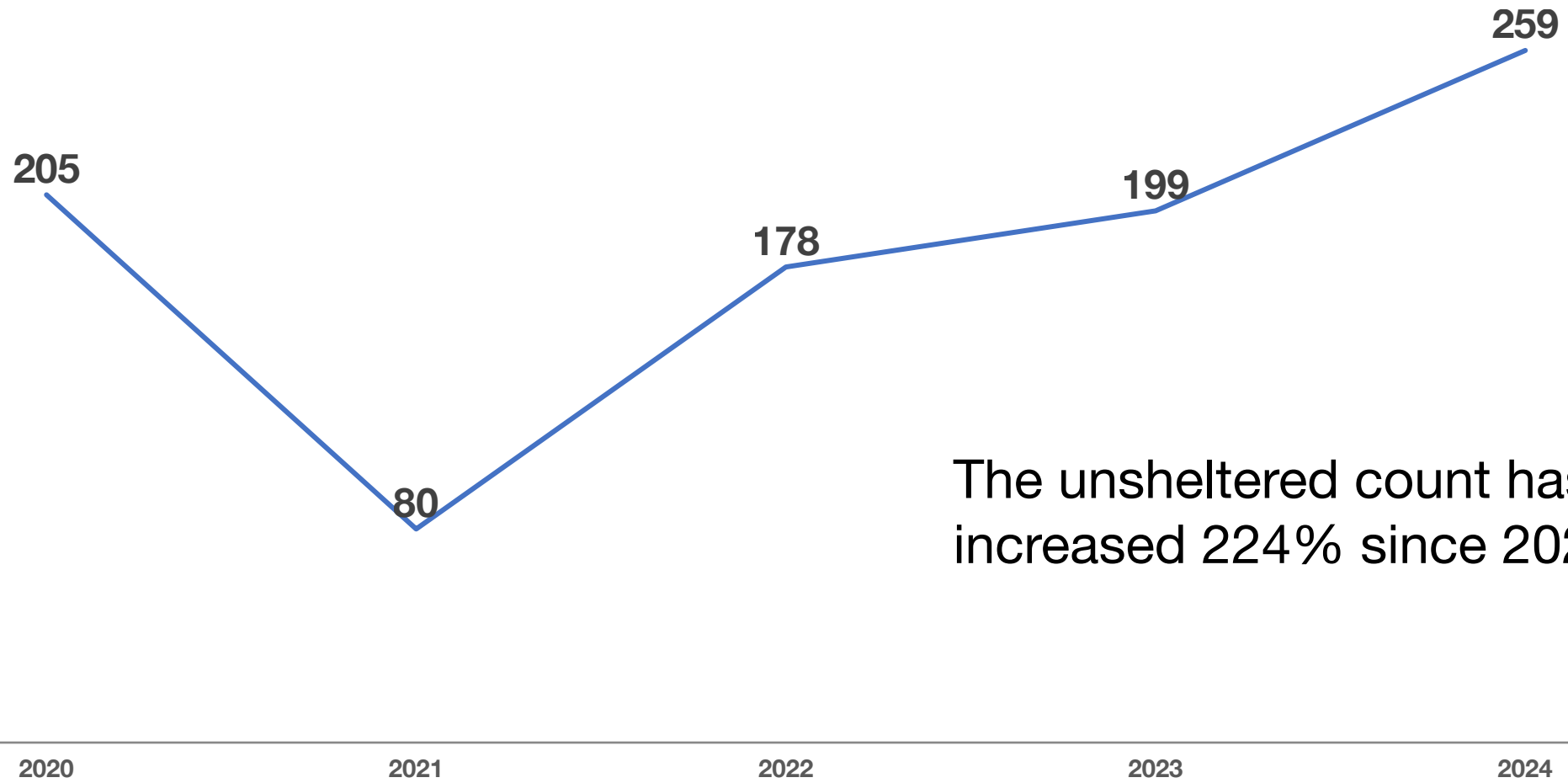
Western Massachusetts Reflects Statewide Pressure on Family Shelter

Family homelessness has increased 46% since 2020; the increase for individuals is 11.7%.



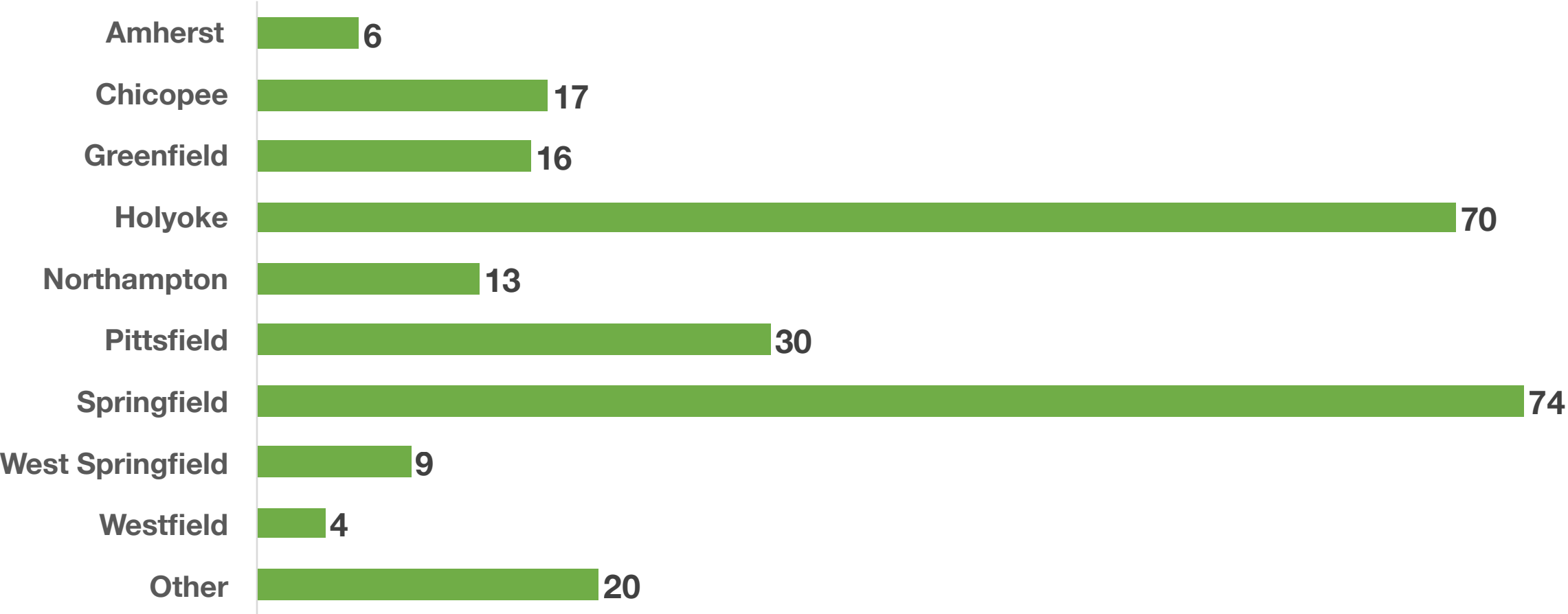
Source: Continuum of Care Annual Point-in-Time Counts, 2020–2024

Unsheltered Homeless at Point-in-Time Count Trend 2020–2024

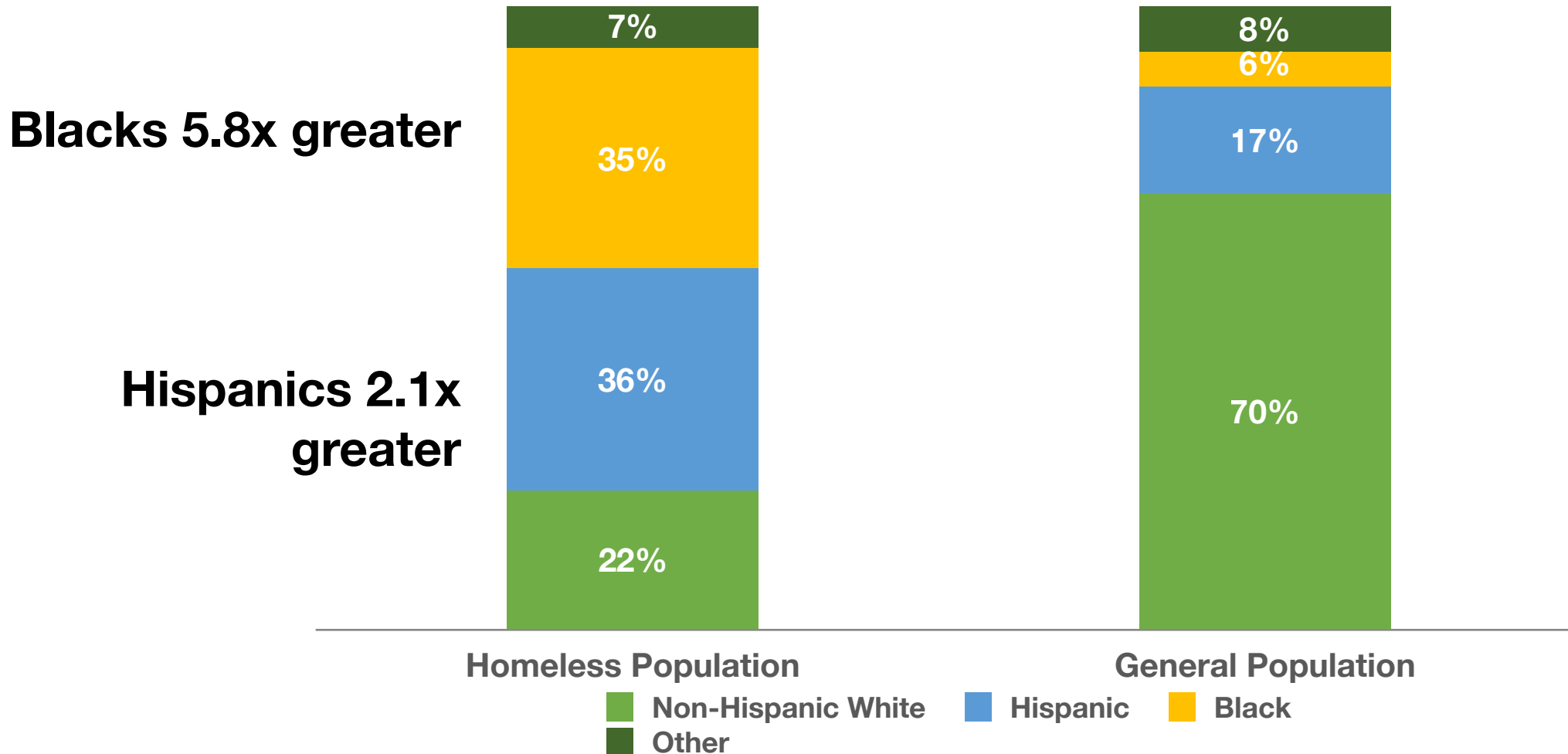


The unsheltered count has increased 224% since 2021.

Location of Unsheltered Homeless

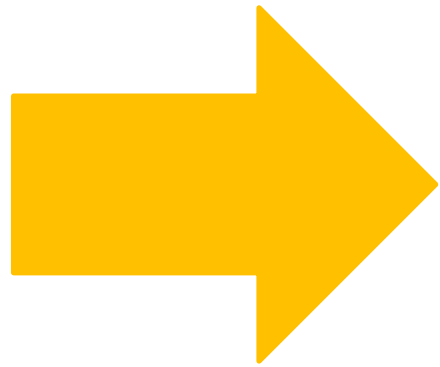


People of Color are Overrepresented in the Homeless Population



Sources: Continuum of Care 2024 Point-in-Time Count; General Population, U.S. Census 2022, ACS 5-year

Exiting Homelessness to Housing

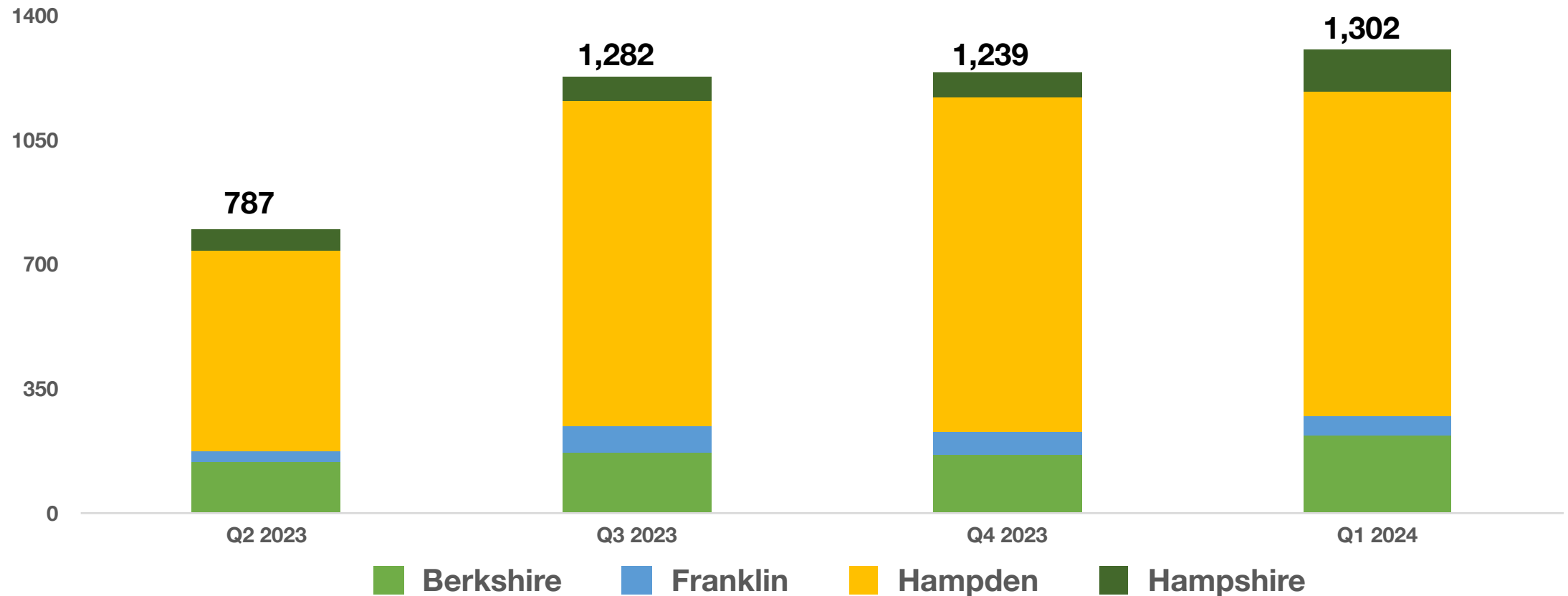


Over the last year, homeless providers in Western Massachusetts helped **1,050 people** move from homelessness into permanent housing.

Alarming level of
housing instability

Eviction Filings Are High and Rising

Trend by Quarter: Q1 2023–Q1 2024



Source: MassCourts, as compiled by MassLandlords

Housing Instability in Hampden County

- **Hampden County leads Massachusetts with the highest eviction filing rates over the six month period** ending February 2024 with 24.3 filings per one thousand renter households.
- **Springfield leads Hampden County with 31.1 eviction filings per thousand renter households**—nearly double the statewide average—followed closely by Holyoke and Chicopee.
- **Hampden County experienced significantly lower eviction rates in 2020 and 2021** due to the eviction moratorium and the high rate of use of emergency rental assistance.

Rents Have Spiked Post-COVID



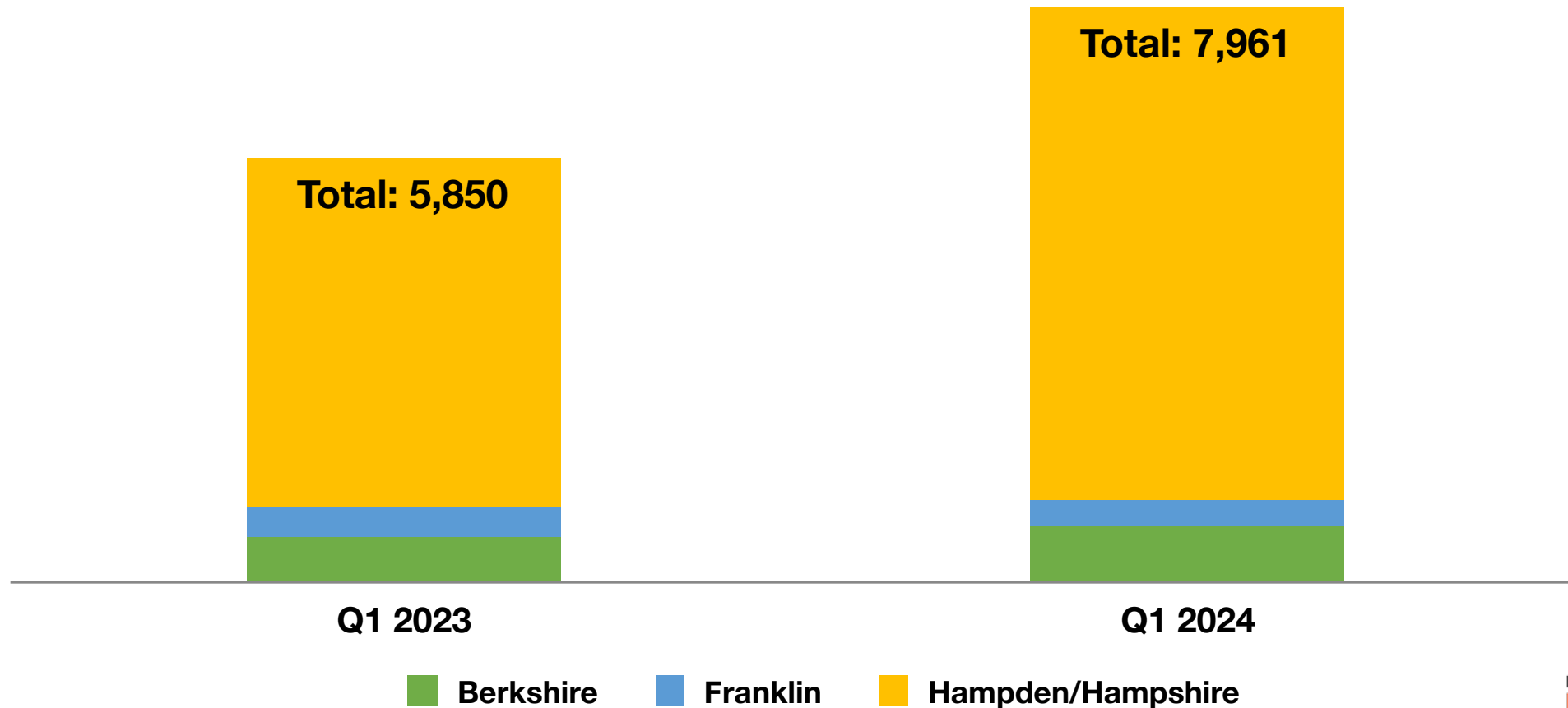
- Hampden, Hampshire, Franklin Counties: **up 23.3% since 2020**
- Berkshire County: **up 31.0% since 2020**

Throughout Western Mass, **50% of renters are cost-burdened**, meaning they pay more than 30% of income for rent.
25% of renters pay more than 50% of income for rent.

Demand for RAFT Continues

36% more applications in first quarter 2024 than first quarter 2023

First quarter RAFT applications



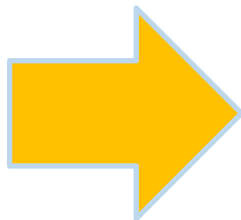
Housing ends homelessness:
We're building more housing.

Creating the Housing

Our current affordable housing development pipeline:

1,404 units

This includes 259 units of permanent supportive housing



Western Massachusetts has a 19,000 unit gap in the number of affordable units needed.

We need legislative support:
pass the Affordable Homes Act!

Improve the Affordable Homes Act (AHA)

Western Massachusetts Network to End Homelessness Priorities

Support the proposed \$4.1 billion bond authorization! And include:

- **Transfer Fee for Affordable Housing: AMEND** to provide a more flexible threshold (remove the minimum sales price of \$1 million) so western Massachusetts communities can use it.
- **Eviction Record Sealing: AMEND to align with the HOMES Act (H.4356) and include automatic sealing** for cases that are dismissed, decided in a tenant's favor or are no-fault evictions so tenants receive the relief this measure aims to provide.
- **Flex Pool for Permanent Supportive Housing: AMEND** to align with the pending bills (H.1354/S.855) so that supportive housing is more available to the growing number of people who need it.
- **Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Act (TOPA) (S.1880/H.135):** Add to help preserve naturally occurring affordable housing in our communities.

Western Massachusetts Housing Coalition Priorities

Transfer Fee: remove the minimum sales price of \$1 million as a threshold.

Commonwealth Builder: remove the 10-unit minimum.

Homeownership Tax Credit: remove the 10-unit minimum.

Seasonal Communities: expand the Seasonal Communities Coordinating Committee to an Office of Rural and Seasonal Communities.

HousingWorks: expand eligibility to include septic and water projects for HousingWorks infrastructure funding.

Public Housing: revise the funding formula for small and rural housing authorities to account for the total number of buildings and developments managed.

Eviction Record sealing: allow automatic sealing in certain cases.

Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs): allow ADUs as-of-right in single-family zoning districts.

Additional Key Legislation

- **Local Option for Rent Control (S.1299/H.2103)** to repeal the ban on local rent control and enable municipalities to enact rent control and just cause ordinances.
- **Foreclosure Prevention Program (H.942/S.653)** to require servicers and homeowners to participate in pre-foreclosure conferences and explore alternatives to foreclosure.

Key FY25 Conference Budget Priorities

- **Access to Counsel in Evictions:** \$2.5 million to fund pilot program (House)
- **Housing Consumer Education Centers:** \$8.974 million (Senate)
- **Shelter Workforce Development for Individual Shelters:** \$10 million (House)
- **Public Housing:** \$115 million (Senate)
- **Foreclosure and Housing Counseling:** \$3.05 million (Senate)
- **Cliff Effect Pilot Program:** \$100,000 (Senate)
- **HomeBASE language** to allow families to stay in the program after exceeding income eligibility for more than 12 months if needed to retain housing stability (Senate)

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