

Career Services Committee Meeting - 12/16/24

In attendance: Linda Candage, Dept. of Veterans Affairs, Meghan Donnelly, BCC, Linda Candage, Dept. of Veterans Affairs, Jose Lopez-Figueroa, STCC, Madeline Martinez, Way Finders, Ben Ostiguy, HCC, Judy Raper, GCC, Pamela Schwartz, WMNEH, Elizabeth Veillette, CHD, Pamela Wojtkowski, MassHire Berkshire

Discussion and Recommendations: The Network's FY26 budget and legislative priorities

After a few announcements and updates, we devoted the meeting to discussion of the Network's FY26 budget and legislative priorities. Pamela sought the group's experiences and perspectives that will inform the Network Steering Committee's decision making for this next year's budget debate and upcoming Legislative Session.

FY26 Budget Recommendations

We looked at our [FY25 budget priorities](#) as a starting point for discussion. Feedback included:

- Prevention resources are critical - budget item: increase RAFT
- Access to counsel is crucial - budget item: increase funding for Access to Counsel
- Young people who are being told to leave their homes (breakdown with parents for various reasons) and have nowhere to go - budget item: unaccompanied homeless youth funding
- Lack of affordable and available housing - budget item: Mass Rental Voucher Program funding
- Permanent supportive housing programs have had great success - need more of them - budget item: Home and Healthy for Good funding

2025-2027 Legislative Session - begins in January, 2025

We looked at our [last Legislative Session's priorities](#) as a starting point for discussion.

We treated our group as a "focus group" for ranking our most important legislative priorities (among those that we know will be refiled). The group was evenly divided on this order of priorities:

One group:

- Rent Control
- Transfer Fee for Affordable Housing
- Access to Counsel
- Tenant's Right of First Refusal (Tenants Opportunity to Purchase Act - TOPA)

Another group:

- Access to Counsel
- Rent Control
- Transfer Fee for Affordable Housing
- TOPA

This feedback will inform the discussions and decision making of the Network Steering Committee that will take place at the end of the January. Big thanks to the Committee for their engagement and their perspectives - a very instructive conversation!

Next meeting date: Wednesday, March 12, 3 pm