

**SENATE . . . . . No. 121**

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**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

PRESENTED BY:

*Jason M. Lewis*

*To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:*

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the adoption of the accompanying bill:

An Act relative to economic mobility for families with low-income.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	
<i>Jason M. Lewis</i>	<i>Fifth Middlesex</i>	
<i>Diana DiZoglio</i>	<i>First Essex</i>	<i>3/1/2021</i>

**SENATE . . . . . No. 121**

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By Mr. Lewis, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 121) of Jason M. Lewis and Diana DiZoglio for legislation relative to economic mobility for families with low-income. Children, Families and Persons with Disabilities.

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[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION  
SEE SENATE, NO. 58 OF 2019-2020.]

**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

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**In the One Hundred and Ninety-Second General Court  
(2021-2022)**  
\_\_\_\_\_

An Act relative to economic mobility for families with low-income.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:*

1           SECTION 1. The executive office of administration and finance in conjunction with the  
2 executive office of health and human services, the executive office of housing and economic  
3 development, the executive office of labor and workforce development and the executive office  
4 of education shall conduct and report an impact study on the impacts of minimum wage increase  
5 as directed in the Chapter 121 of the Acts of 2018 on households with low incomes who would  
6 lose the eligibility of benefits due to the wage increase with decline in net resources and face  
7 cliff effects. The impact study shall also recommend directives to determine ways to adjust  
8 assistance in response to changes in income, including but not limited to automatic adjustments  
9 tied to minimum wage increases and options for increasing utilization of the earned income tax  
10 credit so as to prevent families from facing cliff effects. The report shall be submitted to the

11 clerks of the house and the senate, the house and senate committees on ways and means and the  
12 interagency council on housing and homelessness no later than January 1, 2022.

13 SECTION 2. The executive office of health and human services, executive office of  
14 housing and economic development, executive office of labor and workforce development and  
15 executive office of education shall examine economic mobility programs, recommend criteria for  
16 evaluation and create a mechanism for evaluating economic mobility programs for program  
17 outcomes including changes in earned income, education and state and federally funded services  
18 and the feedback of participants and those not enrolled in programs, for the purpose of producing  
19 a report. The report shall recommend directives for each executive office to expand outreach to  
20 eligible non-participants to boost enrollment. The report shall outline the outcomes for economic  
21 mobility and financial stability programs for families and individuals with extremely low  
22 incomes, as defined by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development. The  
23 report shall be submitted to the clerks of the house and the senate, the house and senate  
24 committees on ways and means and the interagency council on housing and homelessness no  
25 later than January 1, 2022.

26 SECTION 3. (a) The executive office of health and human services, executive office of  
27 housing and economic development, executive office of labor and workforce development and  
28 executive office of education shall file an annual report for the purposes of gaining a deeper  
29 understanding of housing instability faced by families in order to efficiently predict and better  
30 direct homelessness prevention and housing resources. The report shall include the following  
31 metrics:

32 (i) The number of client households that have been identified as homeless and at risk of  
33 homelessness; The numbers of households receiving Emergency Assistance Shelter also  
34 receiving benefits and services from the following: Department of Transitional Assistance  
35 (DTA) – Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, DTA – Transitional Aid for Families with  
36 Dependent Children; Workforce Development Programs; Department of Children and Families,  
37 Department of Public Health - Early Intervention Services, MassHealth; income sources for  
38 families in shelter; MassHealth data on housing instability screening for patients;

39 (ii) The stability of households that have received assistance from the HomeBASE  
40 program, including, the numbers of households that were evicted, the numbers that returned to  
41 shelter, number of households with DCF involvement, numbers with incomes below 150% of the  
42 Federal Poverty Level. The Department shall coordinate with programs under the Executive  
43 Office of Health and Human Services on matching data sets for the purposes of this report;

44 (iii) The number of contracted slots for homeless children and the current utilization, the  
45 number of childcare vouchers issued to homelessness households (to be submitted by Early  
46 Education and Care); and

47 (iv) The cross agency working groups and committees relative to homelessness, that are  
48 currently active at the state agencies, will submit their reports and finding on housing stability  
49 and economic mobility.

50 (b) The report shall be submitted to the clerks of the house and the senate, the house and  
51 senate committees on ways and means and the interagency council on housing and homelessness  
52 no later than January 1 of each year

53           SECTION 4. (a) the executive office of health and human services, executive office of  
54 housing and economic development, executive office of labor and workforce development and  
55 the executive office of education shall establish a telephone hotline for citizens to have the  
56 ability to get advice on program benefits and intersectionality with other programs.

57           (b) There shall be a benefits calculator for use by the public through a website with  
58 instructions for the public.

59           (c) Information about the assistance program including the phone number shall be posted  
60 on each office's website. Each executive office shall provide training for: calculating benefits  
61 using a benefits calculator in order to optimize benefits to avoid cliff effects.