

HOUSE No.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Chynah Tyler

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 to promote access to housing and improve educational outcomes.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>Chynah Tyler</i>	<i>7th Suffolk</i>	<i>1/16/2025</i>

HOUSE No.

[Pin Slip]

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

**In the One Hundred and Ninety-Fourth General Court
(2025-2026)**

An Act to promote access to housing and improve educational outcomes.

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 General Laws are hereby amended by inserting after chapter XXX the
2 following chapter:-

3 Chapter XXX. Access to Housing and Improve Educational Outcomes

4 SECTION 1. Whereas, the number of homeless students attending Massachusetts public
5 schools has increased by 59% in the past 10 years and exceeded 30,000 in school year 2023-
6 2024; and

7 Whereas, Gateway Cities have experienced the highest increase in student homelessness
8 and account for all or more of the student homelessness increase statewide; and

9 Whereas, homelessness negatively impacts the educational outcomes for not only the
10 homeless students, but their classmates and the entire community served by the schools; and

11 Whereas, stable housing is foundational to improved educational outcomes, health
12 outcomes, and economic circumstances of the families; and

13 Whereas, Boston’s Higher Ground, in collaboration with three city agencies and three
14 community-based service providers, has demonstrated an effective collective impact model to
15 address student homelessness in Boston schools and there are effective models of intervention
16 through coordinated effort by public agencies and community-based service providers to the
17 address this growing challenge in Boston and communities throughout the Commonwealth; and

18 Whereas, coordinating efforts across Massachusetts communities would result in more
19 communities implementing effective programs and improving education and health outcomes for
20 students and their families;

21 Now, Therefore, notwithstanding any act to the contrary, this act provides that there shall
22 be established within the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities, a pilot program
23 to encourage and facilitate implementation of effective collaborative efforts in communities
24 across the Commonwealth.

25 SECTION 2. EOHLC shall issue a request for proposals for five communities to
26 participate in a pilot program to achieve “functional zero” in student homelessness within 5-
27 years, and substantially reduce student homelessness within 10 years.

28 SECTION 3. Selected communities will have access to the following resources for up to
29 five years:

30 A. The number of MRVPs sufficient to annually house up to 10% of the currently
31 homeless students and their families. The vouchers would be administered by the local housing
32 authority or Metro Housing but committed to the pilot program.

33 B. \$500,000 annually for developing and maintaining the infrastructure to implement
34 the pilot program.

35 C. Commitment of annual vouchers and resources would be adjusted each year
36 depending on the progress and outcomes of the prior year.

37 D. Priority would be given to Gateway Cities and communities that demonstrate the
38 highest need based on DESE data on homelessness as well as student educational outcomes.

39 SECTION 4. Criteria for participation:

40 A. Support from the Mayor, School Superintendent, and Housing Departments and
41 their commitment to coordinate with each other and with the service providers within the
42 community and implement the pilot program.

43 B. The community commits to an annual goal of housing currently homeless
44 students and their families.

45 C. Communities agree to share data and agree to meet regularly and share lessons
46 learned and best practices.

47 D. To qualify for support the students and their families have to be residents of the
48 participating community starting in 2025 and continuing throughout the five years of the pilot.

49 SECTION 5. Programs and activities shall be implemented through contracts with
50 qualified community-based organizations with the demonstrated capacity to serve as backbone to
51 public-private-community collaboratives to implement the program.

52 SECTION 6. The programs and activities shall include but not be limited to the
53 following: (1) a research component to address issues pertaining to replication of successful
54 strategies identified; (2) a community coordination function to assure that service delivery are
55 coordinated in order to limit any unwanted duplication and/or overlapping; (3) to document and
56 analyze resources and services targeted for the participant population; (4) identification of the
57 services needed to advance the goals of the program; (5) develop and/or join-in with existing
58 initiatives in order to utilize “best practices” in addressing student homelessness and improving
59 health and educational outcomes; (6) an enhanced management information system support
60 procedure to develop a common intake and referral system to increase the use of preventive
61 services, share resource information, avoid duplication and to allow participants to engage in,
62 hands-on applications and learn state-of-the-art computer use; (7) coordinate mini-grants to
63 various community agencies; and (8) develop needed services as required for the success of the
64 program.

65 SECTION 7. There is hereby established and set up on the books of the
66 commonwealth a separate fund to be known as the Access to Coordinated Housing and
67 Education Fund. There shall be credited to fund an amount sufficient to sustain such an initiative
68 in the immediate fiscal year Commonwealth’s budget, and thereafter for a period of five (5)
69 years.