

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Fair Share Amendment

The House Committee on Ways and Means budget proposal for Fiscal Year 2026 is the third year that revenue will be allocated from the Fair Share amendment, which continues to provide a new revenue stream for investments in education and transportation. The fair share revenue is expected to generate \$1.95B in fiscal year 2026.

- Provides \$998M for Education
 - Provides \$190M for universal school meals
 - Provides \$360M for C3 Operational Grants
 - Provides \$80M for MassGrant+ financial aid expansions
 - Provides \$240M for a Chapter 70 Minimum Supplement
 - Provides \$15M for Early Education and Care's income-eligible waitlist
 - Provides \$15M for Early Literacy
 - Provides \$24M for MassReconnect
 - Provides \$20M for endowment matching grants
 - Provides \$14M to the SUCCESS program at State Universities
 - Provides \$10M to expand the SUCCESS program to the UMass System
 - Provides \$10M to continue the Target Scholarships program
 - Provides \$20M to continue the Green SchoolWorks program
- Provides \$500M to the Commonwealth Transportation Fund
 - These funds will increase the CTF's bonding capacity by \$3.5B over the next 10 years in additional capital funds for transportation

Local Aid

The House Committee on Ways and Means budget proposal for Fiscal Year 2026 maintains significant aid to cities and towns across the Commonwealth, despite the economic challenges presented by aftereffects and recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. To ensure as much support as possible for the Commonwealth's municipalities, the Committee proposes increasing FY25 levels for the Unrestricted General Government Aid to a sum of \$1.28B in FY26. The Committee also proposes investing significantly in education aid to cities and towns. The Committee proposes funding Chapter 70 aid to school districts at \$7.12B, a \$257.2M increase over the FY25 GAA. The Committee also invests an additional \$240M in supplemental funding to bring Chapter 70 per pupil minimum aid from \$75 to \$150. This investment fully funds 5/6th of the Student Opportunity Act (SOA) goal rates. Acknowledging the significant costs that districts face, the Committee invests \$122.1M for regional school transportation, \$483.2M for Special Education Circuit Breaker reimbursements, and \$199M for Charter School aid.

- Provides \$7.12B for Chapter 70 aid
 - \$240M to further increase per pupil minimum aid to \$150
- Provides \$1.31B for Unrestricted General Government Aid
- Provides \$483.2M for Circuit Breaker Special Education reimbursement
- Provides \$199M for Charter School reimbursement
- Provides \$122.1M for Regional School Transportation reimbursement
- Provides \$54.5M for PILOT Payments
- Provides \$25.9M for the MA Cultural Council
- Provides \$28.7M for homeless student transportation

- Provides \$15.2M for regional public library systems
- Provides \$16.7M for state aid to public libraries
- Provides \$1.5M for the Sewer Rate Relief Fund

Program	FY26 HWM	\$ Above GAA
Unrestricted General Government Aid	\$1,308,713,668	\$0
Chapter 70	\$7,212,968,717	\$257,050,032
Minimum Aid Supplement	\$240,000,000	\$203,000,000
Circuit Breaker	\$483,177,484	(\$10,000,000)
Charter Schools	\$198,988,065	\$0
Regional Transportation	\$122,119,862	\$22,663,049
McKinney Vento	\$28,671,815	\$0
TOTAL	\$9,594,639,611	\$472,713,081

Early Education and Care

The Department of Early Education and Care provides services for the youngest members of our Commonwealth. The Department also provides subsidized childcare for some of the most vulnerable children served by the Department of Children and Families and the Department of Transitional Assistance, as well as low-income families. The Committee is proud to strengthen our commitment to the childcare provider workforce with significant investments in the childcare accounts

- Provides \$448.2M to fund childcare for children by the Department of Children and Families and the Department of Transitional Assistance
- Provides \$517.6M for childcare for children from income-eligible families in the Commonwealth
- Provides \$475M for Commonwealth Cares for Children (C3) Grants
- Provides \$15M to reduce the Income-Eligible Waitlist
- Provides \$18.5M for Head Start
- Provides \$20M for childcare resource and referral agencies
- Provides \$7.5M for the Early Educators Scholarship Program
- Provides \$7.5M for the Early Educator Loan Forgiveness Program

Elementary and Secondary Education

The Commonwealth continues to lead the nation in educational achievement, due, in no small part, to the work done by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. The House Committee on Ways and Means budget proposal continues funding for key grant programs within the Department, while also investing in programs that work to close achievement gaps and provide key services for students statewide, such as mentoring grants, after-school programming and literacy programming.

- Provides \$58.9M for adult basic education services
- Provides \$29.9M for METCO programs
- Provides \$8.4M for after-school and out-of-school grants
- Provides \$7.3M for school-to-career connecting grants
- Provides \$3.7M for English Language Acquisition programs
- Provides \$1M for the 21st Century Education Trust Fund
- Provides \$5.7M for literacy and early literacy grants
- Provides \$1.75M for YouthBuild
- Provides \$2.9M for Recovery High Schools
- Provides \$3.1M for expansion of career and technical assistance to address waitlists at vocational-technical high schools
- Provides \$2.5M for the Civics Project Trust Fund in addition to \$1M in civics education program grants
- Provides \$1.5M for Mentoring Grants

Higher Education

The Committee recognizes the importance of a quality, attainable degree for Massachusetts students, and is proud to continue our investment in the campuses, as well as funding the state scholarship item at \$175.2M. The Committee also provides \$14M for the SUCCESS fund to provide wraparound support for community college students from vulnerable populations.

- Provides \$835M for the University of Massachusetts system
- Provides \$416.7M for community colleges
- Provides \$409.6M for state universities
- Provides \$175.2M for the State Scholarship program
- Provides \$14M for the Community College SUCCESS program
- Provides \$14M to expand the SUCCESS program to State Universities
- Provides \$2.1M for the STEM Starter Academies
- Provides \$13.1M for the dual enrollment program
- Provides \$14.2M for Early College program
- Provides \$4M for Inclusive Concurrent Enrollment at higher education institutions

Health and Human Services

The Executive Office of Health and Human Services plays a crucial role in providing residents of the Commonwealth in need with access to services and supports. These services, including access to healthcare, food, and temporary assistance, are vital sources of relief for Massachusetts children, families, veterans, seniors and those with disabilities. The House Committee on Ways and Means Fiscal Year 2026 budget proposal supports this mission by ensuring investments that protect the needs and safety of our state's most vulnerable populations.

MassHealth

As the Commonwealth provides safety net services to those most in need, one of the most important investments has been ensuring that low-income residents have access to affordable, high-quality healthcare. The House Committee on Ways and Means budget proposal includes \$22.43B for MassHealth programmatic spending to fully support its roughly 2M members (or more than 1 in 4 residents in the Commonwealth) that will be served by this vital program in FY26.

- Provides \$13.8M to increase primary care rates and bolster the system at a time of severe strain
- Provides \$5.3M for behavioral health investments in outpatient and addiction services
- Provides \$132M in support for nursing facilities to meet the needs outlined in Chapter 197 of the Acts of 2024, An Act to Improve Quality and Oversight of Long-Term Care

Department of Developmental Services

The Department of Developmental Services empowers children and adults with developmental disabilities to become fully engaged members of their communities. The House Committee on Ways and Means budget proposal reflects the Commonwealth's commitment to supporting both individuals with developmental disabilities and their families to become active members in their communities through day and employment programs, as well as residential and respite services. The Committee's proposal fully funds the Turning 22 class, annualizes the costs of the Turning 22 population, and invests in programs to support consumers and their families.

- Provides \$105.9M for the Department of Developmental Services Administration and Operations
- Provides \$2.02B for Community Residential Services, a \$320.4M increase over fiscal year 2025
- Provides \$287.4M for Community Day and Work Programs
- Provides \$5.3M for Supportive Technology for Individuals
- Provides \$123.9M for Respite Family Supports
- Provides \$7.9M for Autism Division
- Provides \$77.9M for Autism Omnibus
- Provides \$47.2M for Transportation Services

Department of Children and Families

The Department of Children and Families strives to protect the children of the Commonwealth from abuse and neglect by providing family support services and family stabilization services, as well as foster care and adoptive services. The House Committee on Ways and Means budget proposal for Fiscal Year 2026 continues the trend of increasing support for this critical mission.

- Provides \$327.1M for Social Workers for Case Management
- Provides \$347.5M for Services for Children and Families
- Provides \$463.8M for Congregate Care Services
- Provides \$125.5M for Family Support and Stabilization
- Provides \$28.2M for Family Resource Centers
- Provides \$11.1M for Lead Agency Coordination of Services

Department of Youth Services

The Department of Youth Services is charged with rehabilitating youthful offenders through a continuum model of services and supervision. The House Committee on Ways and Means budget proposal highlights the importance of instilling positive change through education and skill development for the youths under the Department's care. The Department through the

Committee's proposal will continue to be able to operate effective programs by partnering with all available organizations to reduce recidivism, promote positive change, and protect the public.

- Provides \$112.8M for Residential Services for Committed Population
- Provides \$30.9M for Residential Services for Detained Population
- Provides \$22.0M for the Non-Residential Services for Committed Population
- Provides \$1.9M for the Massachusetts Youth Diversion Program

Department of Transitional Assistance

The Department of Transitional Assistance works to ease the burdens on the Commonwealth's most vulnerable, ensuring that children, the elderly, the disabled, the unemployed and the underemployed have access to the services and the benefits that they need to achieve economic self-sufficiency and a better quality of life. The Department reaches one in eight Massachusetts residents through its economic assistance, food assistance, and workforce training programs, and the House Committee on Ways and Means budget proposal would protect and preserve these standards of support through the post-pandemic recovery and help guarantee opportunity for every resident of the Commonwealth.

- Provides \$467.4M for Transitional Aid to Families with Dependent Children
- Provides \$208.9M for Emergency Aid to the Elderly, Disabled, and Children
- Provides \$15M for Healthy Incentives Program

Department of Public Health

The Department of Public Health aims to ensure that all people of the Commonwealth remain healthy by promoting wellness and establishing health and safety regulations to prevent injury, illness, and premature death. The Department of Public Health also strives to eliminate health disparities within the Commonwealth by acknowledging and addressing social determinants of health. The House Committee on Ways and Means supports the Department's patient health and safety protection efforts and proposes increases for the Division of Health Care Quality and healthcare facility plan review to fund oversight initiatives related to the Long-Term Care Bill.

- Provides \$194.5M for the Bureau of Substance Addiction Services
- Provides \$37.7M for Early Intervention Services
 - \$12M for targeted workforce development and staffing recovery initiatives
- Provides \$5.9M for the Division of Health Care Quality
- Provides \$5.5M for Healthcare Facility Plan Review
- Provides \$31.9M for the Bureau of Infectious Diseases and Laboratory Sciences

Department of Mental Health

As the Commonwealth's mental health authority, the Department of Mental Health provides community-based and continuing care inpatient services for over 20,000 individuals. The Department serves the severely, persistently mentally ill with the goal of enabling as many individuals as possible to live, work, and participate in their communities. The House Committee on Ways and Means Fiscal Year 2026 budget proposal continues this effort by supporting emergency department diversion boarding efforts, investing in the hospital and community based mental health workforce and continuing the Loan Forgiveness Program to address workforce retention and development issues within clinical behavioral health.

- Provides \$661.9M for Adult Support Services
- Provides \$376.2M for Hospital Facilities and Community-based Mental Health
- Provides \$128.6M for Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services
- Provides \$5M for DMH Loan Forgiveness Program

Executive Office of Aging and Independence

The Executive Office of Aging and Independence provides services that promote independence and sustain a high quality of life for seniors with support to their families and caregivers. These services range from community-based services as well as nutrition programs, protective services, and housing, which are provided through a network of Aging Service Access Points and Councils on Aging across the state. During the COVID-19 pandemic, these services became even more critical to keep older adults healthy. The House Committee on Ways and Means budget proposes a funding level of \$963.5M to ensure that these important services continue, while recognizing the unprecedented, continued growth in the elder population and desire to age in the community.

- Provides \$435.3M for the Community Choices Program, which provides MassHealth eligible elders with nursing facility levels of need with home care support
- Provides \$280.4M for the Elder Home Care program, along with \$110.7M for Elder Home Care Case Management Services, to support the overwhelming desire among seniors to age at home and in their communities
- Provides \$29.5M for Grants to Councils on Aging, increasing the formula grant by \$1, from \$15 per elder to \$16 per elder
- Provides \$11.6M in funding for 24 Senior Supportive Housing Sites

Veterans' Services

The Executive Office of Veterans' Services provides veterans with access to programs and services throughout the Commonwealth. The Executive Office provides educational opportunities, outreach centers and service benefits, as well as personal care services through the Soldiers' Homes in Chelsea and Holyoke.

- Provides \$81.8M for Veterans' Benefit Payments
- Provides \$79.8M for the Soldiers' Homes in Chelsea and Holyoke
- Provides \$9.5M for Veterans' Outreach Centers
- Provides \$4.0M for Veterans' Homelessness Services

Economic Development

The Executive Office of Economic Development promotes economic opportunity for residents of the Commonwealth and fosters job creation and business growth. The House Committee on Ways and Means Fiscal Year 2026 budget proposal prioritizes funding crucial support programs to advance the Commonwealth's economic viability. This budget invests in business development and grant opportunities as well as tourism support and job training programs to help foster economic activity across the Commonwealth.

- Provides \$5M for support grants for anti-poverty efforts at Community Action Agencies
- Provides \$7.5M for Small Business Technical Assistance Grants

- Provides \$1M for Urban Agenda Economic Development Grants
- Provides \$1M for Regional Economic Development Organization Grants

Housing and Livable Communities

The Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities provides affordable housing options and essential financial support to vulnerable families and communities in the Commonwealth. A safe housing environment provides a solid foundation from which families and individuals can lead stable, successful lives. As such, the House Committee on Ways and Means budget proposal preserves or expands funding for all emergency homeless assistance programs, as well as homelessness prevention and rapid rehousing for both families and individuals. The Fiscal Year 2026 budget includes an historic \$1.14B to ensure that these important programs continue to support and provide safe housing for thousands of individuals and families across the Commonwealth.

- Provides \$275.3M for the Emergency Assistance Family Shelter Program
- Provides \$258.1M for the Massachusetts Rental Voucher Program (MRVP)
- Provides \$115.5M for Public Housing Authorities
- Provides \$115.8M for Homeless Individuals Assistance
- Provides \$57.3M for the HomeBASE Program
- Provides \$207.4M for Residential Assistance for Families in Transition (RAFT)
- Provides \$16.5M for Rental Subsidies to Eligible Department of Mental Health Clients
- Provides \$19.5M for the Alternative Voucher Housing Program (AVHP)
- Provides \$5M for Rapid Re-Housing Programs for Homeless Individuals
- Provides \$8.4M for the Home and Healthy for Good Program
- Provides \$6.5M for the Service Coordinators Program
- Provides \$10M for Shelter Workforce Assistance
- Provides \$11.9M for Sponsor-Based Permanent Supportive Housing

Labor and Workforce Development

The Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development's mission is to help the residents of the Commonwealth enter and adapt to the labor market by offering workforce training, education, and unemployment benefits. The House Committee on Ways and Means Fiscal Year 2026 budget continues to support the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development's work in assisting individuals with their job search and ensuring all Commonwealth residents are provided with a safe, healthy, and fair working environment.

- Provides \$15.2M for Summer Jobs for At-Risk-Youth
- Funds a \$10M transfer to the Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund
- Provides \$8.9M for Career Technical Institutes
- Provides \$2.7M for a prisoner re-entry workforce development program
- Provides \$2M for the Massachusetts Manufacturing Extension Partnership
- Provides \$3.3M for the Registered Apprenticeship Program
- Provides \$1M for SEIU Training and Upgrading Fund
- Provides \$150K for AFL-CIO Workforce Development Programs
- Provides \$8.3M for One Stop Career Centers

Transportation

The Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) works to provide a safe and reliable transportation network across the Commonwealth. Maintaining infrastructure from roads to rails, MassDOT supports a growing economy and improves the quality of life for residents while investing in innovative solutions to meet the transportation needs of both today and tomorrow. The House Committee on Ways and Means budget supports the complex demands of our dynamic transportation network. The Committee's recommendation enables the Department, the MBTA, and the Regional Transit Authorities to meet the increasing demand for public transportation and actively maintain core services.

- Provides \$577.6M for MassDOT, of which \$55M comes from funds collected through the Fair Share Amendment
- Provides \$687M for the MBTA, of which \$500M comes from funds collected through the Fair Share Amendment. This appropriation will stabilize the MBTA's operations while supporting:
 - Low-income fare relief
 - MBTA Academy, a program that bolsters workforce development for the agency
 - Water transportation
- Provides \$204M for the Regional Transit Authorities, of which \$110M comes from funds collected through the Fair Share Amendment. These Fair Share dollars will be allocated towards:
 - \$66M for additional State Contract Assistance for RTAs to support operational enhancements and improvements, including expanded service hours, weekend services, and route expansions.
 - \$30M for fare free RTAs
 - \$10M for connectivity projects
 - \$4M for the Community Transit Grant Program to expand mobility options

Energy and Environmental Affairs

The Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs is the steward of the Commonwealth's rich ecosystems and habitats, from the Atlantic to the Appalachian Trail, and protector of those environments on behalf of all the animals – and people – that live in them. Through a focus on environmental justice, climate change mitigation, natural resources and sustainable development, the Executive Office seeks to ensure that Massachusetts communities, in both city and countryside, live up to our long legacy of conservation and see an even brighter future for everyone in the Commonwealth. The House Committee on Ways and Means budget would strengthen this ecological commitment and defend clean energy jobs and food systems across Massachusetts.

- Provides \$163.4M for DCR State Parks and Recreation
- Provides \$85.3M for the Department of Environment Protection
- Provides \$63.4M for the Clean Water Trust Contract Assistance
- Provides \$55M for Emergency Food Assistance
- Provides \$46.2M for the Department of Fish and Game

Public Safety and Security

The House Committee on Ways and Means budget proposal provides funding for the Executive Office of Public Safety and Security and the fourteen sheriff's departments, allowing the Commonwealth to continue to develop and implement programming that ensures the safety and security of residents. The Fiscal Year 2026 budget proposal provides targeted increases to carry on with this important endeavor. Moreover, this budget proposal incorporates investments related to criminal justice and police reform that impact an array of state functions, from the development of core infrastructure and technology to the provision of vital clinical care and re-entry services. Services provided by the public safety agencies include, but are not limited to, enforcing statewide laws, protecting the state against fire and other emergency situations and all other correctional related programs.

- Provides \$882.2M for the Department of Correction
- Provides \$745.3M for the Commonwealth's 14 sheriffs' offices
- Provides \$600.7M for the Department of State Police
- Provides \$68.6M for the Executive Office of Public Safety
- Provides \$45.7M for the Department of Fire Services
- Provides \$10M in the Communications Access Trust Fund for no-cost calls in prisons and jails
- Provides \$10.1M for the Shannon Anti-Gang Grant Program
- Provides \$8M to reimburse tuition and fees for National Guard members at public higher education institutions
- Provides \$9.5M for the Peace Officer Standards and Training Commission and four other small police reform related commissions
- Provides \$7M for an emerging adults re-entry program to reduce recidivism among adults 18-25 years old
- Provides \$4M for a non-profit security grant

Judiciary

The Judiciary is responsible for upholding the Massachusetts General Laws as well as the Constitution of the United States. The House Committee on Ways and Means budget aims to ensure that every resident has equal access to justice through the court system. The Committee's proposal furthers this mission by sustaining funding for civil legal aid programs that provide vital support in areas such as housing and employment for the Commonwealth's most vulnerable individuals and their families continuing to navigate the aftereffects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

- Provides \$967.6M for the Department of the Trial Court
- Provides \$329.2M for the Committee for Public Counsel Services
- Provides \$180.7M for the District Attorneys' Offices of the Commonwealth
- Provides \$51M for the Massachusetts Legal Assistance Corporation
- Provides \$16.1M for Community Based Re-entry Programs
- Provides \$3M for the Access to Counsel Program for low-income individuals facing eviction proceedings