



IN SUPPORT OF THE FOLLOWING AMENDMENTS TO HOUSE 4000

There have been 1,650 amendments filed to the House version of the FY'26 State Budget. Dignity Alliance respectfully recommends passage of the following 19 amendments that are consistent with our coalition's mission and goals. All of the recommended amendments are important to older adults, people with disabilities and their caregivers, however, our highest priority is #1247 to raise the personal needs allowance for nursing home and rest home residents.

Amendment #155 to H4000

Office of Adult Guardianship and Conservatorship Oversight

Mr. Stanley of Waltham moves to amend the bill by adding the following sections:

"SECTION XXXX. Section 1 of Chapter 215 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2022 official edition, is hereby amended by inserting after the second paragraph the following paragraph:-

There shall be an Office of Adult Guardianship and Conservatorship Oversight within the Administrative Office of the Probate and Family Court to increase court oversight of guardians and conservators and guardian and conservator arrangements to protect older adults and adults with disabilities from abuse, financial exploitation, and neglect. Within said office there shall be an ombudsperson who shall work across the divisions of the court to assist with the scheduling or expediting of cases before the courts or assist with other procedures, among other responsibilities.

SECTION XXXX. Said Chapter 215 of the general laws, is hereby further amended by inserting after section 63 the following section:-

Section 64. Probate courts may schedule weekly or bi-weekly block sessions of healthcare cases for matters within their jurisdiction addressing the appointment or expansion of guardians, conservators, health care proxies or other matters that may be placed within their jurisdiction.

SECTION XXXX. Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, the Secretary of Health and Human Services or a designee, in conjunction with the Administrative Office of the Trial Court, shall develop a public outreach campaign to recruit individuals including, but not limited to, retired attorneys, doctors, nurses, and social workers to serve as guardians and conservators for patients who have no identified persons to serve in these roles on their behalf. In the development of said outreach campaign, the Secretary shall consult with the Massachusetts

Health and Hospital Association, Inc., Honoring Choices Massachusetts, the Massachusetts Guardianship Policy Institute, Massachusetts Bar Association, and other organizations that serve in roles to support guardians and conservators."

Amendment #264 to H4000

Prevent Older Adults from Experiencing Homelessness

Ms. Uytterhoeven of Somerville moves to amend the bill in section 2, in item 7004-0107, by adding the following “; provided further, that not less than \$30,000 shall be expended to the city of Somerville for staffing and administration costs to continue their housing bridge pilot program to facilitate interim housing stability for individuals applying for more affordable permanent housing situations” and by striking out the figure “\$100,000” and inserting in place thereof the following figure:- “\$130,000”.

Amendment #265 to H4000

Matched Savings for Low-Income Asian Elders

Ms. Uytterhoeven of Somerville moves to amend the bill in section 2, in line item 7008-1116 by adding the following: “; provided further, that not less than \$25,000 shall be expended for the Asian Community Development Corporation for the purposes of expanding their retirement matched savings program for low-income Asian elders” and in said item by striking out the figures “\$100,000” and inserting in place thereof the figures “\$125,000”.

Amendment #277 to H4000

LGBTQIA+ Aging Project

Ms. Montaña of Boston moves to amend the bill in Section 2, line item 9110-1630, by inserting the following:

"provided further, that no less \$150,000 shall be expended to the LGBTQIA+ Aging Project for provider training and technical assistance, including health programs and outreach to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and questioning older adults and to caregivers, but not limited to, home care and home health providers, councils on aging, skilled nursing facilities and adult day."

Amendment #278 to H4000

Massachusetts Commission on LGBTQ Aging

Ms. Montaña of Boston moves to amend the bill in Section 2, line item 9110-0100, by inserting the following:

"provided further that not less than \$120,000 shall be expended to Massachusetts Commission on LGBTQ Aging through Fenway Health for staffing and operations to support the permanent commission on lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and questioning older adults and their caregivers established in section 71 of chapter 3 of the General Laws."

Amendment #350 to H4000

Behavioral Health Outreach for Aging Populations (BHOAP) Program

9110-1640 - For the geriatric mental health program, including outreach, counseling, resource management and system navigation for community-dwelling older adults with mental health needs \$2,473,357

Mr. Stanley of Waltham moves to amend the bill section 2, line 9110-1646. By striking the n “\$2,473,357.” and inserting in place thereof, the figure, “\$2,973,357.”

Explanation: Without the amendment, this would be the third year in a row when this line item is level funded. If passed it will increase funds for BHOAPs by \$ 500,000. Currently, only about half of the state is covered, The additional funds would provide coverage for the entire state and be more equitable since no services are available for people who are black or brown, LGBTQ, or for those who do not speak English.

Amendment #400 to H4000

Rest Homes Incremental Funding

Mr. Stanley of Waltham moves to amend the bill in section 2, in item 4405-2000, in line 17, by inserting after "item" the following:

"provided further, that rates for residential care facilities and rest homes effective July 1, 2025, established under section 13D of chapter 118E of the General Laws, shall cumulatively total not less than \$8,000,000 more than rates effective January 1, 2025"; and in said item by striking out the figures "\$195,347,995" and inserting in place thereof the figures "203,347,995";

and further moves to amend the bill in section 2, in item 4408-1000, in line 76, by inserting after "7004-9316" the following:

"provided further, that rates for residential care facilities and rest homes effective July 1, 2025, established under section 13D of chapter 118E of the General Laws, shall cumulatively total not less than \$3,000,000 more than rates effective January 1, 2025"; and in said item by striking out the figures "\$208,990,924" and inserting in place thereof the figures "\$211,990,924".

Amendment #589 to H4000

Meals on Wheels

Mr. Donato of Medford moves to amend the bill in section 2, in item 9110-1900, by striking out the figures “\$12,657,217” and inserting in thereof the figures “16,057,217”

Amendment #642 to H4000

Dementia Care Coordination

Mr. Stanley of Waltham moves to amend the bill in section 2, in item 9110-1630, in line 31, by inserting after "caregivers" the following:

“provided further, that not less than \$300,000 shall be expended for the Alzheimer's Association, Massachusetts Chapter, to expand access to and administer an evidence-based program, Dementia Care Coordination, DCC, in order to reduce hospitalizations, emergency department visits and delay long-term care placements”; and by striking the figure “\$236,882,945” and inserting in place thereof the following figure:- “\$237,182,945”.

Amendment #643 to H4000

SHINE Benefits Counseling Program

Mr. Stanley of Waltham moves to amend the bill in section 2, in item 9110-1455, in line 33, by striking out the figures "\$1,000,000" and inserting in place thereof the figures "\$2,000,000"; and in said item by striking out the figures "\$19,635,432" and inserting in place thereof the figures "\$20,635,432".

Amendment #644 to H4000

Home Care Case Management

Mr. Stanley of Waltham moves to amend the bill in section 2, in item 9110-1633, by striking out the figures, "\$110,705,880" and inserting in place thereof the figures, "\$115,205,880."

Amendment #645 to H4000

Home Care Purchase of Services

Mr. Stanley of Waltham moves to amend the bill in section 2, in item 9110-1630, by striking out the figures, "\$280,355,704" and inserting in place thereof the figures, "\$293,655,704."

Amendment #808 to H4000

Supporting caregivers running for public office

Mrs. Fluker-Reid of Boston moves to amend the bill by adding the following sections:

SECTION 1. Section 1 of chapter 55 of the General Laws, as so appearing, is hereby amended by inserting after the definition of "Candidate's committee" the following definition:

"Adult-care services," care services provided to a candidate's parent or other adult dependent, including, but not limited to, caregiving services by an individual, non-profit or for-profit organization that provides such services, and any other costs directly related to such services that occur as a result of campaign activities; provided, however, that expenses related to adult-care services shall not include payments to a family member, as defined in section 1 of chapter 50, of the individual receiving care, unless the family member owns, operates, or is employed by a professional caregiving service, and the cost of the service is not greater than the family member would otherwise charge.

SECTION 2. Section 6 of said chapter 55, as so appearing, is hereby amended by inserting, after the word "office," in line 66, the following:

or expenses relating to the provision of adult-care services that would not otherwise exist but for the existence of the campaign.

SECTION 3. The director of campaign and political finance shall promulgate regulations for the implementation of this section within 90 days of enactment.

Amendment #1016 to H4000

Senior Farm Share Program

Ms. Domb of Amherst moves to amend the bill in section 2, in item 9110-1900, in line 3, by inserting after “program” the following: “; provided that not less than \$190,000 shall be expended for the senior farm share program”; and in said item by striking out the figures “\$12,657,217” and inserting in place thereof the figures “\$12,847,217”.

Amendment #1100 to H4000

Program of All Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE)

Mr. Stanley of Waltham moves to amend the bill in section 2, in item 4000-0601, in line 69, by inserting after "expansion" the following:

"provided further, that not less than \$9,000,000 shall be allocated to the Program of All Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE) for a rate increase above rates effective as of January 1, 2025, to ensure the financial stability of said programs and their ability to continue to provide services to older adults and disabled individuals”; and in said item by striking out the figures “\$5,117,088,567” and inserting in place thereof the figures “\$5,126,088,567”.

Amendment #1247

4000-0601 For health care services provided to MassHealth members who are seniors, including those provided through the Medicare Savings Program, and for the operation of the MassHealth senior care options program under section 9D of chapter 118E of the General Laws; provided, that funds may be expended from this item for health care services provided to recipients in prior fiscal years;...

provided further, that funds shall be expended from this item to maintain a personal needs allowance of \$72.80 per month for individuals residing in nursing and rest homes who are eligible for MassHealth, emergency aid to the elderly, the disabled and children program or supplemental security income;

XXX moves that the bill be amended in section 2 in item 4000-0601, after the phrase, ‘personal needs allowance of,’ by striking the figure “\$72.80,” and inserting in place thereof the figure \$113.42,” and by striking at the end of the item, the figure, “\$5,117,088,567,” and inserting in place, thereof, the figure, “\$5127,088,567.”

Explanation: The amendment seeks to increase the monthly amount withheld from a nursing home resident’s income to be used for personal needs (PNA) not covered by the nursing home where they reside. It has been set at \$72.80 per month since FY 2008 and has not been increased to meet the buying power reduction caused by inflation. If inflation calculations had been included from FY 2008, the monthly allotment should be \$113.42. The PNA would be increased to that amount and would be annually adjusted to account for inflation helping nursing home residents to live with dignity.

Amendment #1402 to H4000

Alternative Housing Voucher Program

Representatives Consalvo of Boston and Decker of Cambridge move to amend the bill by adding the following:

SECTION 1. Section 16 of Chapter 179 of the Acts of 1995, and any associated regulations in 760 C.M.R. 53, are hereby stricken.

SECTION 2. Chapter 121B of the General Laws is hereby amended by adding the following section:

Section 61. (a) The following words whenever used in this section shall, unless a different meaning clearly appears from the context, have the following meanings: —

“Disability”, with respect to an individual, a person who has: (i) a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities of such individual; (ii) a record of such an impairment; or (iii) being regarded as having such an impairment.

(b) The department shall, subject to appropriation, establish and administer through administering agencies, including, but not limited to, local housing authorities and regional housing agencies, the Alternative Housing Voucher Program to provide rental assistance for low-income persons with disabilities through mobile and project-based vouchers. The program established under this section shall include any voucher supported by budget line-item 7004-9030 as of the effective date of this section. The department shall establish the amounts of the mobile and project-based vouchers so that the appropriation in this item shall not be exceeded by payments for rental assistance and administration. The vouchers shall be in varying dollar amounts set by the department based on considerations including, but not limited to, household size, composition, household income, and geographic location.

(c) To be eligible to receive assistance under this section, a household shall have an income that does not exceed 80 percent of the area median income, as determined annually by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Further, the head of household must be a person with a disability no younger than 18 years and no older than 62. The department may award mobile vouchers to eligible households occupying project-based units created under this section that shall expire due to nonrenewal of project-based rental assistance contracts. Households shall meet eligibility requirements as required in this section and regulations by the department.

(d) A household that receives assistance under this section shall be required to pay not less than 25 percent of its net income, as defined by regulations issued by the department, for units if utilities are not provided by the unit owner, or not less than 30 percent of its income for units if utilities are provided by the unit owner.

(e) Except as provided under paragraph (f), the payment standard for each size of a dwelling unit in a market area shall not exceed 120 percent of the fair market rent, or Small Area Fair Market Rent as established annually by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, for the same size of dwelling unit in the same market area and shall be not less than 110 percent of that fair market rent, except that no administering agency shall be required as a result of a reduction in the fair market rent to reduce the payment standard applied to a household continuing to reside in a unit for which the household was receiving assistance under this section at the time the fair market rent was reduced. The department shall allow administering agencies to request exception payment standards within fair market rental areas subject to criteria and procedures established by the department.

(f) An administering agency may use a payment standard that is greater than 120 percent of the fair market rent as a reasonable accommodation for a person with a disability, but only with the approval of the department. In connection with the use of any increased payment standard established or approved pursuant to either of the preceding sentence as a reasonable accommodation for a person with a disability, the department may not establish additional requirements regarding the amount of adjusted income paid by such person for rent.

(g) Payments for rental assistance under this section may be provided in advance, and shall be authorized to pay for, but not be limited to, the following: (i) the first month of rent; (ii) the last month of rent; (iii) security deposit; and (iv) moving expenses.

(h) The amount of rental assistance voucher payment for an eligible household shall not exceed the rent less the household's minimum rent obligation.

(i) The department shall promulgate regulations to implement this section.

(j) Any unspent funding appropriated for this section through budget line-item 7004-9030 in any fiscal year shall not revert to the General Fund but shall be made available for the purposes of the item in the next fiscal year.

Amendment #1572 to H4000

Improving Public Awareness of the State Home Care Program Caseload and Waitlist

Ms. Kerans of Danvers moves to amend the bill by adding the following section:

“SECTION XXXX. (a) Chapter 19A of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2022 Official Edition, is hereby amended by inserting after section 4 the following section:-

Section 4½. The department shall post to the department’s website, on a monthly basis, data on the routine enrollment and payment obligations of the home care program established by section 4 of this chapter. Monthly data shall be published no later than 75 days after the last day of each service month. Published monthly data will include historic data since the pre-pandemic month of October 2019. The first such posting of monthly data shall be completed no later than August 31, 2025. For each sub-program of the home care program, such posted data shall include, but not be limited to: (A) the number of actively enrolled consumers; (B) the number of billable units generated for the service types “Home Care Program Services Direct Services” or “Enhanced Community Options Program (ECOP) Direct Services” as defined by 101 CMR 417.00; and (C) the number of consumers actively waitlisted for enrollment.”

Amendment #1635 to H4000

Office of the Veteran Advocate

Mr. McGonagle of Everett moves to amend the bill in section 2, in item 0960-1000, by inserting after the word “advocate”, the following:

“provided further that not less than \$1,300,000 shall be expended to the Office of the Veteran Advocate to enable this new independent agency, which has yet to establish a foundational annual budget, to meet the scope and scale of its responsibilities.” And in said item by striking out the figures “\$2,000,000” and inserting in place thereof the figures “\$3,300,000”

Dignity Alliance Massachusetts is dedicated to transformative change to ensure the dignity of older adults, people with disabilities, and their caregivers. We are committed to advancing new ways of providing long-term services, support, living options, and care, while respecting choice and self-determination. Through education, legislation, regulatory reform, and legal strategies, this mission will become reality throughout the Commonwealth. As a non-profit, all-volunteer, grass-roots coalition of aging and disability service and advocacy organizations and supporters, Dignity Alliance Massachusetts works to secure fundamental change. For more information on the “Dignity Dozen +1” 2025-2026 Legislative package, contact Former Senator Richard T. Moore, Legislative Chair, at rmoore8743@charter.net or visit the Dignity Alliance web site. info@dignityAllianceMA.org