



September 27, 2023

Sen. Elizabeth Warren
Washington, DC 20510

Sen. Ed Markey
Washington, DC 20510

Rep. Richard E. Neal
Washington, DC 20515

Rep. James McGovern
Washington, DC 20515

Rep. Lori Trahan
Washington, DC 20515

Rep. Jake Auchincloss
Washington, DC 20515

Rep. Katherine Clark
Washington, DC 20515

Rep. Seth Moulton
Washington, DC 20515

Rep. Ayanna Pressley
Washington, DC 20515

Rep. Stephen Lynch
Washington, DC 20515

Rep. William Keating
Washington, DC 20515

Re: Request for continued congressional support of Gov. Maura Healey's state shelter system emergency declaration

Dear elected members of the Massachusetts congressional delegation:

On behalf of the Providers' Council — Massachusetts' largest human services membership association — and our members who provide critical care and support to thousands of Massachusetts residents, we seek your support to help the thousands of new migrants arriving in the Commonwealth. We are pleased to live in a state that doesn't turn its back on newly arriving migrants, but we need your support for Gov. Maura Healey's plea to the Biden administration for help in addressing the state's current shelter system crisis. We request that you press the issue further as the situation requires significant attention and resources.

As you know, Gov. Healey has implored the Biden administration for more than a month to quickly grant work permits to the thousands of migrants who have overwhelmed the state's shelter system, as well as provide much-needed disaster relief funding for emergency housing, food and water. While work permits alone won't solve the crisis, access would be enormously helpful as many of the new migrants want the opportunity to work, and our vast statewide human services system has jobs. If we can get approval and support, this could be *win-win* here. There are now more than 6,000 families, including children and pregnant women, in emergency shelters — up from just 388 in January — and that number continues to rise with each passing day. *The Boston Globe* reported that officials have estimated that roughly 1,000 families are expected to keep entering the emergency shelter system each month.

The situation has worsened to the point that the governor has had to activate the National Guard to help overwhelmed human services workers deliver much-needed services to these families, such as providing them with food, helping them access medical care, securing transportation and enrolling their children in school.

Yet despite the gravity of the situation, Massachusetts has not yet received the needed aid. As stated, many of these migrants are eager and prepared to work, but the federal government's long backlog of

work permit applications has prevented them from doing so. As Massachusetts is the only state in the country with a “right-to-shelter” law, our state must provide shelter and other necessities to homeless parents with children, pregnant women and now thousands of migrant families arriving in Massachusetts. It is the right moral action to take.

We greatly appreciate that this delegation sent a letter to the secretary of Homeland Security and the director of U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services in July urging them to streamline work authorizations for new arrivals. The need for help, however, has grown dramatically since then. The Council and our undersigned members are urging you to ramp up your efforts in pressuring the administration for an appropriate level of support and we are here to continue helping as much as possible.

The Providers' Council and our members thank you for responding to this crisis. We appreciate the opportunity to share our input and perspective, and we would be willing to set up a forum for you and the Biden Administration meet with providers from Massachusetts and/or your district. For more information, please contact me at mweekes@providers.org or our Chief Operating Officer Bill Yelenak at byelenak@providers.org.

Sincerely,



Michael Weekes
President & CEO
Providers' Council

CC: Gov. Maura Healey
Lt. Gov. Kimberly Driscoll
EOHHS Secretary Kate Walsh
EOHLC Secretary Edward Augustus

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The following Providers' Council members have chosen to co-sign this letter in support:

Stephanie Steed
President & CEO
18 Degrees

Michelle Smith
CEO
AIDS Project Worcester

Angela Bovill
President & CEO
Ascentria Care Alliance

Diane Gould
President & CEO
Advocates

Thomas M. Connors
President & CEO
American Training, Inc.

Zulmira Allcock
CEO
Associates for Human Services

Gena Johnson
Executive Director
*Berkshire Area Health
Education Center, Inc.*

Christopher Tuttle
President & CEO
Bridgewell

Sandra Frechette
CEO
Bristol Elder Services, Inc.

Kim McElholm
President & CEO
Cape Abilities

Kelly Tuthill
President & CEO
Catholic Charities Boston

Mark DeJoie
CEO
Centerboard, Inc.

Jim Goodwin
President & CEO
*Center for Human
Development*

Meg Coffin
CEO
*Center for Living & Working,
Inc.*

Juan A. Gomez.
President & CEO
Centro Las Americas, Inc.

Sandra McCroom
President & CEO
*Children's Services of
Roxbury*

Sheila Skane
Executive Director
Coastal Connections, Inc.

Craig Gordon
CEO
Communities for People

Gerry Wright
President
Community Caring Institute

Deborah O'Brien
President & CEO
*Community Resources for
Justice*

Karen Frederick
CEO
Community Teamwork

John Pallies
CEO
Delta Projects

Lisa Orgettas
Executive Director
Disability Resource Center

Patricia Kelleher
President & CEO
*Family and Community
Resources, Inc.*

Lois Nesci
CEO
*Gandara Mental Health
Center*

Kathryn Burns
CEO
GLSS

Danielle Ferrier
CEO
Heading Home, Inc

Daniel Mumbauer
President & CEO
High Point & SEMCOA

Julie Watt Faqir
Executive Director
Home Care Aide Council

Shaheer Mustafa
President & CEO
HopeWell

Helena DaSilva Hughes
President
*Immigrants' Assistance
Center, Inc.*

Jean Phelps
CEO
Incompass Human Services

Jeffrey D. Thielman
President & CEO
*International Institute of New
England*

Andy Pond
President & CEO
Justice Resource Institute

Lisa Morgan
CEO
Kennedy-Donovan Center

Bette Bohlke O'Gara
Executive Director
KeySteps, Inc.

Daniel Burke
President & CEO
Lifeworks

Barbara Salisbury
CEO
MAB Community Services

Elizabeth Becker
Executive Director
*Massachusetts Association of
Approved Special Education
Schools (MAAPS)*

Marlene D. Warner
CEO
*Massachusetts Council on
Gaming and Health*

Robert Mills
CEO
*Middlesex Human Service
Agency*

Joanne K. Hilferty
President & CEO
*Morgan Memorial Goodwill
Industries*

Lisa Gurgone
CEO
Mystic Valley Elder Services

Lydia Todd
Executive Director
NFI Massachusetts, Inc.

Jo Ann Simons
President & CEO
Northeast Arc

Damien Cabezas
President & CEO
*North Suffolk Community
Services, Inc.*

Laura Perille
President & CEO
Nurtury Early Education

Kenneth Bates
President & CEO
*Open Sky Community
Services, Inc.*

Kim L. Dawkins
President & CEO
Pathways for Change, Inc.

Eric Mitchell
President & CEO
Pathways for Children

Megan Stirk
President & CEO
People, Incorporated

Lyndia Downie
President & Executive
Director
Pine Street Inn

Amarely Gutierrez Oliver
Executive Director
*REACH Beyond Domestic
Violence, Inc.*

Marsha Medalie
CEO
Riverside Community Care

Christopher White
President & CEO
Road To Responsibility, Inc.

Mia Alvarado
Executive Director
Roxbury Youthworks, Inc.

Marianne Winters
Executive Director
Safe Passage

Sue Stubbs
President & CEO
ServiceNet, Inc.

Kathleen Jordan
President & CEO
Seven Hills Foundation

Dawn DiStefano
President & CEO
Square One

Damaris Jones
Interim CEO
Tapestry Health Systems Inc

Larry Spencer
CEO
Tempus Unlimited, Inc.

Amy Sousa
CEO
*The Guild for Human
Services*

Lesli Suggs
President & CEO
*The Home for Little
Wanderers*

Tammy Mello
President & CEO
The Key Program, Inc.

Dafna Krouk-Gordon
President & Founder
TILL, Inc.

Sarah Gyorog
Executive Director
Transition House

Coleman Nee
CEO
Triangle, Inc

Michael Hyland
President & CEO
Venture Community Services

Colleen Holmes
President & CEO
Viability, Inc.

Leandrea Brantle
CEO
Victory Human Services

Sarah Porter
Executive Director
Victory Programs, Inc.

Jean Yang
President & CEO
Vinfen

Sara McCabe
President & CEO
*Wayside Youth & Family
Support Network*

Sharon Smith
CEO
WORK Inc.

James Cassetta
President
WORK, Inc

David Shapiro
CEO
YMCA of Greater Boston