

FY2017 House Ways and Means Budget Analysis for Building Blocks Priorities

Prepared by Eric Shupin
 Citizens' Housing & Planning Association
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BUILDING BLOCKS PRIORITIES

Included below are details on the Building Blocks Coalition budget priorities. The budget language is included when comparisons between the FY2016 budget and House Ways and Means budget are helpful. Additions and deletions in the line-item language reflect changes the HWM budget made to the FY2016 language. The HWM budget can be accessed here: <https://malegislature.gov/Budget/FY2017/House>

Priorities Summary

Program	HWM	FY2016	Difference b/w HWM & FY16	BBC Request
MRVP	\$ 100,000,000	\$ 90,931,597	\$ 9,068,421	\$ 120,000,000
AHVP	\$ 4,600,000	\$ 4,600,000	\$ 0	\$ 7,100,000
Public Housing Operating	\$ 65,500,000	\$ 64,500,000	\$ 1,000,000	\$ 72,000,000
Public Housing Reform	\$ 800,000	\$ 800,000	\$ 0	\$ 2,000,000
RAFT	\$ 12,500,000	\$ 12,500,000	\$ 0	\$ 18,500,000
HomeBASE	\$ 31,943,664	\$ 31,249,331	\$ 649,333	\$ 39,200,000
Foreclosure Counseling	\$ 2,350,000	\$ 2,350,000	\$ 0	\$ 3,650,000
Housing Court Expansion	\$ 0	\$ 0		\$ 1,000,000
Tenancy Pres.	\$ 500,000	\$ 500,000	\$ 0	\$ 975,000
Housing Consumer Ed. Ctrs.	\$ 2,641,992	\$ 2,891,992	Earmark removed	\$ 2,640,000
Brownfields				\$ 15,000,000
HPSTF		\$ 11,500,000	\$ (11,500,000)	\$ 11,500,000
Community Pres. Act	\$ 0	\$ 10,000,000	\$ (10,000,000)	\$ 25,000,000
Home & Healthy for Good	\$ 1,800,000	\$ 1,800,000	\$ 0	\$ 3,800,000
Housing Registry	\$ 80,000	\$ 80,000	\$ 80,000	\$ 80,000
Tenancy Stabilization Coordinator				\$ 2,500,000
Fuel Assistance				\$ 10,000,000

Massachusetts Rental Voucher Program (7004-9024)

HWM: \$ 100,000,000
FY2016: \$ 90,931,597
Difference: \$ 9,068,421

Building Blocks Request: \$ 120,000,000

Description of Changes: The \$100 million for MRVP includes \$14.7 million in unexpended funds from FY2016. The HWM budget also sets a \$30 base fee for administering vouchers.

Language:

For a program of rental assistance for low-income families and elderly persons through mobile and project-based vouchers; provided, that such assistance shall only be paid under a program known as the Massachusetts rental voucher program; provided further, that the income of eligible households shall not exceed 50 per cent of the area median income; provided further, that the department of housing and community development may award mobile vouchers to eligible households currently occupying project-based units that shall expire due to the nonrenewal of project-based rental assistance contracts; provided further, that the department, as a condition of continued eligibility for vouchers and voucher payments, may require disclosure of social security numbers by participants and members of a participant's household in the Massachusetts rental voucher program for use in verification of income with other agencies, departments and executive offices; provided further, that if a participant or member of a participant's household fails to provide a social security number for use in verifying the household's income and eligibility, then that household shall no longer be eligible for a voucher or to receive benefits from the voucher program; provided further, that notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, the monthly dollar amount of each voucher shall be the department-approved monthly rent of the unit less the monthly amount paid for rent by the household; provided further, that any household ~~that~~which is proven to have caused intentional damage to its rental unit in an amount exceeding 2 months of rent during any 1-year period shall be terminated from the program; provided further, that notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, if a mobile voucher's use is or has been discontinued, then the mobile voucher shall be re-assigned; provided further, that the department shall pay agencies not less than \$30 per voucher per month for the costs of administering the program; provided further, that subsidies shall not be reduced

due to the cost of inspections; provided further, that notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, each household holding a voucher shall pay at least 30 per cent, but not more than 40 per cent, of its income as rent; provided further, that the department shall establish the amounts of the mobile vouchers and the project-based vouchers so that the appropriation in this item is not exceeded by payments for rental assistance and administration; provided further, that the department shall not enter into commitments which shall cause it to exceed the appropriation set forth in this item; provided further, that the department may impose certain obligations for each participant in the Massachusetts rental voucher program through a 12-month contract which shall be executed by the participant and the department; provided further, that such obligations may include, but shall not be limited to, job training, counseling, household budgeting and education, as defined in regulations promulgated by the department and to the extent these programs are available; provided further, that each participant shall be required to undertake and meet these contractually established obligations as a condition for continued eligibility in the program; provided further, that for continued eligibility, each participant shall execute this 12-month contract on or before September 1, ~~2015~~2016 if the participant's annual eligibility recertification date occurs between June 30, ~~2015~~2016 and September 1, ~~2015~~2016, and otherwise on or before the annual eligibility recertification date; provided further, that any participant who is over the age of 60 years or who is disabled may be exempt from any obligations unsuitable under particular circumstances; provided further, that ~~the department no funds shall be expended from this item in the AA object class for the compensation of state employees; provided further, that the department~~ may assist housing authorities at their written request in the immediate implementation of a homeless prevention program utilizing alternative housing resources available to them for low-income families and the elderly by designating participants in the Massachusetts rental voucher program as at risk of displacement by public action through no fault of their own; provided further, that participating local housing authorities may take all steps necessary to enable them to transfer mobile voucher program participants from the Massachusetts rental voucher program into another housing subsidy program; and provided further, that the total amount appropriated and re-appropriated under this item shall include unexpended funds up to ~~\$8,000,000~~14,652,294 appropriated for this item in fiscal year ~~2015~~2016

which shall not revert, but shall be made available for purposes of this item for fiscal year ~~2016~~2017.

Alternative Housing Voucher Program (7004-9030)

HWM: \$ 4,600,000
FY2016: \$ 4,600,000
Difference: \$ 0

Building Blocks Request: \$ 7,100,000

Public Housing Authority Operating Subsidy (7004-9005)

HWM: \$ 65,500,000
FY2016: \$ 64,500,000
Difference: \$ 1,000,000

Building Blocks Request: \$ 72,000,000

Description of Changes: HWM removes a \$500,000 earmark for implementing public housing reform.

Public Housing Reform (7004-9007)

HWM: \$ 800,000
FY2016: \$ 800,000
Difference: \$ 0

Building Blocks Request: \$ 2,000,000

Residential Assistance for Families in Transition (7004-9316)

HWM: \$ 12,500,000
FY2016: \$ 12,500,000
Difference: \$ 0

Building Blocks Request: \$ 18,500,000

HomeBASE (7004-0108)

HWM: \$ 31,943,664
FY2016: \$ 31,249,331
Difference: \$ 649,333

Building Blocks Request: \$ 39,200,000

Description of Changes:

- More explicitly describes the uses for HomeBASE assistance;
- States that eligibility will be determined on an annual basis;
- Removes forward funding for HomeBASE;
- Protects HomeBASE assistance for a family with a head of household who is over 60 years of age or who is disabled; and
- Requires quarterly reporting on HomeBASE.

HomeBASE Pilot Program to Expand Eligibility:

The HWM budget creates a pilot program to dedicating \$300,000 in HomeBASE funds for families residing in substance abuse shelter (4512-0200), domestic violence shelters (4513-1130), and clients of the Department of Children and Families (4800-0038), if those families would otherwise be eligible for emergency shelter (7004-0101).

The pilot matches the program language proposed by the Governor in the House 2 budget. Governor Baker included the pilot in the HomeBASE line-item. However, HWM did not place the program language in the HomeBASE line-item. Instead, the HWM budget includes the program under the Emergency Assistance line-item (7004-0101). The language for the pilot program is included below after the HomeBASE language.

HomeBASE Language (7004-0108):

For a program of short-term housing assistance to help families eligible for temporary emergency shelter under item 7004-0101 in addressing obstacles to maintaining or securing housing; provided, that the assistance provided under this item shall include not less than 12 months of housing stabilization and economic self-sufficiency case management services for each family receiving benefits hereunder; provided further, that the assistance may include, but shall not be limited to, payments of rent and utility arrears, a portion of the household's monthly rent, first month's rent, last month's rent and security deposit, utility charges and extraordinary medical bills, so long as such assistance will maintain housing for the family; provided further, that no other assistance from this item shall exceed \$8,000 in a 12-month period; provided further, that a family shall not receive more than a combined sum of \$8,000 in a 12-month period

from this item and item 7004-9316; provided further, that so long as they meet the requirements of their housing stabilization plan, a family that received household assistance pursuant to this item whose income exceeds 50 per cent of area median income shall not become ineligible for assistance due to exceeding the income limit for a period of 6 months from the date that the 50 per cent level was exceeded; provided further, that the continued eligibility of the family shall be determined on an annual basis; provided further, that a family shall not be deemed ineligible as a result of any single violation of a self-sufficiency plan; provided further, that the department shall take all steps necessary to enforce regulations to prevent abuse in the short-term housing transition program, including a wage match agreement with the department of revenue; provided further, that a family that was terminated from the program or did not make a good faith effort to follow its housing stabilization plan during the term of its assistance shall be ineligible for benefits pursuant to item 7004-0101 and this item for 24 months from the last date the family received assistance pursuant to item 7004-0101 and this item, including housing stabilization and economic self-sufficiency case management services; provided further, that a family's housing stabilization plan shall adequately accommodate the ages and disabilities of the family members; provided further, that no family with a head of household who is over 60 years of age or who is disabled and who is in compliance with the requirements of a housing stabilization plan that accommodates disabilities shall be denied short-term housing assistance; provided further, that any such family with a head of household who is over 60 years of age or who is disabled shall not have engaged in, or be engaged in, any activity that threatens the health, safety or security of the family, other program participants or program staff; provided further, that families receiving benefits under this program who are found ineligible for continuing benefits shall be eligible for aid pending a timely appeal pursuant to chapter 23B of the General Laws; provided further, that families who are denied assistance pursuant to this item may appeal that denial pursuant to said chapter 23B, including subsection (F) of section 30 of said chapter 23B and regulations adopted to implement said chapter 23B; provided further, that benefits under this item shall only be provided to residents of the commonwealth who are citizens of the United States or aliens lawfully admitted for permanent residence or otherwise permanently residing under color of the law in the United States; provided further, that the department, as a condition of continued eligibility for assistance pursuant to this program, may require disclosure of social security

numbers by all members of a family receiving assistance hereunder for use in verification of income with other agencies, departments and executive offices; provided further, that if a family member fails to provide a social security number for use in verifying the family's income and eligibility, then the family shall no longer be eligible to receive benefits from this program; provided further, that the department shall administer this program through the following agencies unless administering agencies are otherwise procured by the department: the Berkshire Housing Development Corporation; Central Massachusetts Housing Alliance, Inc.; Community Teamwork, Inc.; the Housing Assistance Corporation; the Franklin County Regional Housing and Redevelopment Authority; HAP, Inc.; Metropolitan Boston Housing Partnership, Inc.; the Lynn Housing Authority and Neighborhood Development; South Middlesex Opportunity Council, Inc.; the South Shore Housing Development Corporation; and RCAP Solutions, Inc.; provided further, that the department shall reallocate financing based on performance-based statistics from under-performing service providers to above average service providers in order to move as many families from hotels, motels or shelters into more sustainable housing; provided further, that the department shall use funds provided for this program for stabilization workers to focus efforts on housing retention, and link households to supports including job training, education, job search and childcare opportunities available and may enter into agreements with other public and private agencies for the provision of such services, and that a stabilization worker shall be assigned to each household; provided further, that funds shall be used to transition families served by the program to more rapidly move them into temporary or permanent sustainable housing; provided further, that notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, 60 days before promulgating or amending any regulation, administrative practice or policy that would alter eligibility for or the level of benefits pursuant to this program to less than the benefit level available on June 30, ~~2015~~[2016](#), the department shall file with the house and senate committees on ways and means and the clerks of the house of representatives and senate a report setting forth the justification for such changes, including, but not limited to, any determination by the secretary of housing and economic development that available appropriations will be insufficient to meet projected expenses; provided further, that [the department shall submit quarterly reports to the house and senate committees on ways and means, which shall include the number of families served, the type of assistance given, the](#)

number of families assisted through this program, the average, minimum and maximum cost per family of such assistance, the current housing stability of each family who received assistance within the prior 12 months and any obstacles encountered with the administration of this program; and provided further, that this item shall be subject to appropriation and, in the event of a deficiency, nothing in this item shall give rise to or shall be construed as giving rise to any enforceable right or entitlement to services in excess of the amounts appropriated herein; ~~and provided further, that household assistance funds shall be advanced to the administering agencies at the end of each month and prior to the next month's disbursement, the amount of which shall be estimated based on the prior month's expenditure with a reconciliation not less than annually~~

HomeBASE Eligibility Expansion Pilot Program (contained in 7004-0101):

provided further, that as a one-year pilot program, the department may expend not more than \$300,000 under item 7004-0108 on families residing in time-limited temporary emergency shelters and residential treatment programs under items 4512-0200, 4513-1130, and 4800-0038 if such families otherwise meet all eligibility requirements applicable to emergency shelter under item 7004-0101, except that, solely for the purpose of item 7004-0108, the fact that a family is residing in a temporary emergency domestic violence shelter under items 4513-1130 or 4800-0038 or in a residential treatment program under item 4512-0200 shall not preclude such family from receiving assistance; and provided further, that any unit in such temporary emergency shelters or residential treatment programs under items 4512-0200, 4513-1130, or 4800-0038 vacated through use of funds under this pilot program shall be filled by a family (i) eligible both for emergency shelter under item 7004-0101 and for entry into such temporary emergency shelter or residential treatment program under item 4512-0200, 4513-1130, or 4800-0038 and (ii) referred to such temporary emergency shelter or residential treatment program under item 4512-0200, 4513-1130, or 4800-0038 by the department

Foreclosure Prevention Counseling (7006-0011) – Retained Revenue

HWM: \$ 2,350,000
FY2016: \$ 2,350,000
Difference: \$ 0

Building Blocks Request: \$ 3,650,000

Housing Court Expansion (NEW)

HWM: \$ 0
FY2016: \$ 0
Difference: \$ 0

Description of Changes: The HWM budget does not authorize or provide funding for the expansion of Housing Court.

Tenancy Preservation Program (7004-3045)

HWM: \$ 500,000
FY2016: \$ 500,000
Difference: \$ 0

Building Blocks Request: \$ 975,000

Housing Consumer Education Centers (7004-3036)

HWM: \$ 2,641,992
FY2016: \$ 2,891,992 (including \$250,000 earmark)
Difference: \$ 0 (earmark removed)

Building Blocks Request: \$ 2,640,000

Brownfields Redevelopment Funds (NEW)

HWM: \$ 0
FY2016: \$ 0
Difference: \$ 0

Building Blocks Request: \$ 15,000,000

Housing Preservation and Stabilization Trust Fund (HPSTF)

HWM: \$ 0
FY2016: \$ 11,500,000
Difference: \$ (11,500,000)

Building Blocks Request: \$ 11,500,000

Community Preservation Act

HWM: \$ 0
FY2016: \$ 10,000,000
Difference: \$ (10,000,000)

Building Blocks Request: \$ 25,000,000

Home and Healthy for Good (7004-0104)

HWM: \$ 1,800,000
FY2016: \$ 1,800,000
Difference: \$ 0

Building Blocks Request: \$ 3,800,000

Mass. Access Affordable Housing Registry (4120-4001)

HWM: \$ 80,000
FY2016: \$ 80,000
Difference: \$ 0

Building Blocks Request: \$ 80,000

Tenancy Stabilization Coordinator (NEW)

HWM: \$ 0
FY2016: \$ 0
Difference: \$ 0

Building Blocks Request: \$ 2,500,000

Fuel Assistance (NEW)

HWM: \$ 0
FY2016: \$ 0
Difference: \$ 0

Building Blocks Request: \$ 10,000,000