



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

MASSACHUSETTS SENATE
STATE HOUSE, BOSTON 02133-1054

James B. Eldridge

STATE SENATOR

Middlesex & Worcester District

ROOM 413-A, STATE HOUSE

TEL. [\(617\) 722-1120](tel:6177221120)

**Chair, Joint Committee
on Housing**

Vice Chair, Global Warming and

Climate Change

Committees on Mental Health

and Substance Abuse

& Telecommunications, Utilities

& Energy

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

11/8/2013

CONTACT: Megan Montgomery

[\(617\) 722-1120](tel:6177221120), megan.montgomery@masenate.gov

LEGISLATURE SENDS HOUSING BOND BILL TO GOVERNOR

BOSTON – The Senate and House passed final legislation authorizing \$1.4 billion in capital spending over the next five years to fund the production and preservation of affordable housing in the Commonwealth.

“I am very pleased that the Senate and House voted to pass the housing bond bill,” said **Senator James B. Eldridge** (D-Acton), Senate Chair of the Joint Committee on Housing. “This \$1.4 billion bond will ensure that Massachusetts has the capacity to build and maintain affordable housing for residents across the Commonwealth and will expand access to safe and quality housing. I strongly believe the passage of the housing bond bill is a critical step toward assisting thousands of families currently living in full shelters and motels that has reached a human and moral crisis in our state.”

“This legislation will provide assistance to struggling communities in the Commonwealth by building off of our current housing options and encouraging the growth of more affordable housing,” **Senate President Therese Murray** (D-Plymouth) said. “In addition to helping communities meet their housing needs, this bill will provide much-needed support at the local level by increasing economic development and creating more job opportunities.”

“Providing safe and secure housing is a crucial step to helping families across the Commonwealth achieve economic stability,” **House Speaker Robert A. DeLeo** (D-Winthrop) said. “Massachusetts has been able to improve its economy because we consistently address the most basic needs of our citizens. The housing bond bill is an important step in this direction and I commend the conferees for their thorough work on this legislation.”

“The cost of owning a home in Massachusetts continues to rise and we must continue to invest in affordable housing. This bill provides a plan for these investments to create and preserve affordable housing for low and moderate income residents, and to modernize, repair, and develop state assisted public housing. This bill will provide relief for more residents in the Commonwealth for whom safe and realistic housing options are a vital need,” said **Senator Stephen M. Brewer** (D-Barre), Chair of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means.

"The House and Senate have worked together successfully to produce a conference committee report that will ensure these important investments address the Commonwealth's most pressing housing issues, particularly homelessness and high housing costs," said **Representative Brian S. Dempsey** (D - Haverhill), chair of the House Committee on Ways and Means. "With this bill we are not just looking to the future, improving facilities and housing infrastructure, but we are also addressing immediate housing concerns to improve the quality of life for our citizens statewide."

“The Legislature has shown unwavering support for public and affordable housing in the Commonwealth by passing the largest ever – \$1.4 billion – housing bond bill,” said **Representative Kevin Honan** (D-Brighton), House Chair of the Joint Committee on Housing. “This bill provides \$500 million for the modernization of our public housing stock, which is vital for our local housing authorities to get vacant units back online. It also provides for innovative strategies to address homelessness, funds to promote mixed use and transit oriented development, and critical housing services for the mentally and physically disabled.”

“This bill is a tremendous economic development and job creation tool that will keep elderly and disabled people in their homes, revitalize neighborhoods, and provide work to our tradespeople who were hit hardest in the recession,” said **Senator Brian A. Joyce** (D-Milton), Chair of the Senate Committee on Bonding, Capital Expenditures and State Assets.

“This Housing Bond bill will provide critical funds and fund innovative programs to increase housing, including a new program to strengthen neighborhoods by encouraging people to occupy and renovate two to six unit properties in challenged neighborhoods,” said **Representative Antonio F.D. Cabral** (D-New Bedford), Chair of the House Committee on Bonding, Capital Expenditures and State Assets.

This is the first long-term housing finance bill to come before the Legislature since 2008 and includes \$500 million for the rehabilitation and modernization of state-assisted public housing.

The legislation establishes the Early Education and Out of School Time Capital Fund to provide grants to non-profit childcare organizations for capital improvements to their facilities. Eligible providers must reserve at least 25 percent of their childcare slots for families receiving a public subsidy.

This plan also allows for development projects within a half-mile of a mass transit hub to be eligible for funding by expanding the definition of transit-oriented development in the MassWorks Infrastructure Program.

The bill also includes:

- \$55 million for a home modification program for blind and severely disabled homeowners;
- \$47 million for a loan program to provide community-based or supportive housing for individuals with mental illness or intellectual disabilities;
- \$38 million for a loan program for community-based or supportive housing for individuals with disabilities who are institutionalized or at risk of being institutionalized;
- \$305 million to the Affordable Housing Trust Fund to create and preserve affordable housing for households at or under 110 percent of the area median income;
- \$135 million to the Housing Stabilization and Investment Trust Fund for acquisition, preservation and rehabilitation of affordable housing;
- \$50 million for a five-year grant program within the Department of Housing and Community Development to test cost-effective revitalization methods for family and elderly-disabled public housing;
- \$80 million to the Housing Innovations Trust Fund to support innovative and alternative forms of housing;
- \$100 million to the Capital Improvement and Preservation Trust Fund to purchase housing whose affordability restrictions have expired or are expiring;
- \$45 million to develop residential housing and mixed-use and transit-oriented developments; and,
- \$45 million for the Early Education and Out of School Time Capital Fund.

In addition, the bill requires the Department of Housing and Community Development to file an annual capital plan with the Legislature.

The final bill now goes to the Governor for his signature.

###