



PLEASE CO-SPONSOR THESE BILLS TO PROMOTE HEALTH EQUITY!

January 22, 2019

<p>Prevention & Wellness Trust Fund</p> <p>SD916/HD2182 <i>by Senators Lewis, Chandler and Welch & Reps. Vega and Chan</i></p>	<p>People’s health is influenced primarily by the conditions where they live, work, and play. Yet, we spend nearly \$60 billion on health care in Massachusetts, primarily to treat people after they’re sick. PWTF is first large scale initiative that invests in evidence-based community strategies to <u>prevent illness</u> and <u>reduce health inequities</u>. Between 2014-2018, PWTF funded regional partnerships to address childhood asthma, falls among older adults, hypertension, and tobacco use. An independent evaluator found that these programs improved health outcomes and controlled costs. This bill funds PWTF through a combination of marijuana revenue (passed in the House in 2018) and a modest assessment on health insurers (passed in 2012).</p>
<p>State Action for Public Health Excellence (SAPHE) Program</p> <p>SD922/HD2682 <i>by Reps. Kane and Garlick & Sen. Lewis</i></p>	<p>Spread across 351 municipal health departments, the Massachusetts local health system faces significant structural and financial challenges meeting responsibilities under current law to safeguard our food, water, and air quality; ensure safe and healthy housing conditions; and control communicable diseases. The SAPHE Act will advance the recommendations of the Special Commission on Local and Regional Public Health by increasing training opportunities, incentivizing sharing of services across municipalities to increase efficiency and effectiveness, and laying the groundwork to establish 21st century local public health standards for Massachusetts.</p>
<p>Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention</p> <p>SD2085/HD2563 <i>by Sen. Cyr & Rep. Scaccia</i></p>	<p>Childhood lead poisoning can cause irreversible neurological damage; it disproportionately impacts low income kids and kids of color in Gateway Cities and Boston. Current funding is insufficient to meet statutory requirements to prevent and respond to cases of childhood lead poisoning - including providing family case management, housing inspections, and code enforcement to eliminate lead hazards. This bill will modestly increase licensing fees (in most cases by \$10-25) which have not been updated since they were established <u>more than 25 years ago</u>. The bill also increases tax credits for lead abatement and increases penalties for housing discrimination.</p>
<p>SNAP Gap & Common Application</p> <p>SD1501/HD791 <i>by Sen. DiDomenico & Rep. Livingstone</i></p>	<p>The SNAP Gap refers to the over 740,000 people who are receiving MassHealth and likely eligible for SNAP (food assistance), but aren’t receiving benefits. This bill will allow low-income households to apply for MassHealth and SNAP at the same time, and it directs the Executive Office of Health & Human Services to develop a common application portal for all needs-based safety-net benefits. This will help more residents meet their basic needs, reduce duplicate data collection, and increase efficiency of state government.</p>
<p>Healthy Incentives Program</p> <p>SD1106/HD1083 <i>by Rep. Mark & Sen. Gobi</i></p>	<p>The Healthy Incentives Program, or HIP, doubles SNAP (food assistance) recipients’ purchasing power to buy fresh fruits and vegetables directly from farmers, improving health outcomes for low-income families and increasing sales for local farms. This bill codifies the existing program into law, creating a stronger framework for the program's long-term sustainability. SNAP sales at farm retailers increased by 600% - to \$8.3m - from 2016 to 2017, thanks to HIP.</p>