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Please Support Priority Legislation FOR IMMIGRANT INTEGRATION AND STRONGER, SAFER COMMUNITIES

The Safe Communities Act ("An Act to Protect the Civil Rights and Safety of All Massachusetts Residents"), sponsored by Sen. Jamie Eldridge ([S.1305](#)) and Rep. Juana Matías ([H.3269](#)). This bill would protect *all* state residents by ensuring that state resources are not used for federal immigration enforcement, consistent with our Constitution and our laws. It is a powerful new version of the Trust Act filed last session, that prohibits state participation in enforcing any national registry based on religion or national origin, ensures basic due process rights for people in local immigration detention, prohibits collaboration agreements that deputize local law enforcement as ICE agents, and ensures that police resources are used to fight crime, not separate families.

An Act to Increase Health Access in Underserved Areas of Massachusetts, sponsored by Sen. Jason Lewis ([S.1216](#)) and Rep. Jack Lewis ([H.3248](#)). Although our state has the highest physician to patient ratio in the country, many rural and low-income state residents still lack access to basic care. This bill would establish an inter-agency commission to investigate ways to reduce entry barriers for foreign-trained medical professionals - including many refugees - in exchange for providing culturally and linguistically-appropriate care in rural and underserved areas. Multiple studies show improved outcomes when doctors and patients share membership in ethnic or racial minority communities.

OTHER PRO-IMMIGRANT BILLS WE SUPPORT

PROTECTING MASSACHUSETTS VALUES & CIVIL RIGHTS

[H.3033](#) - An Act relative to enforcing Federal law, sponsored by Rep. Antonio Cabral, prohibiting the use of state resources for partnerships between ICE and our sheriffs or correctional institutions to enforce federal immigration law, also known as "287(g) programs."

[H.3034](#) - An Act limiting the use of prison labor, sponsored by Rep. Antonio Cabral, would ensure that any prison-work program be performed within the boundaries of the Commonwealth. It would prohibit Massachusetts' participation in any national inmate work program to build a wall along the southern border of the United States using Massachusetts inmates.

[S.1279](#) - An Act protecting inmate safety and the expenditure of state funds, a related bill sponsored by Sen. Michael Barrett, would prohibit transporting prisoners out of state without the prior written approval of the the Secretary of Administration and Finance and the Secretary of the Executive Office of Public Safety and Security, absent a medical or other emergency, among other requirements.

[S.787](#) and [H.873](#) - An Act to Protect Fundamental Freedoms and Prohibit Discriminatory Registration Programs ("The Fundamental Freedoms Act") sponsored by Sen. Harriette Chandler and Rep. Jay Kaufman, would bar the Commonwealth or its employees from participating in any discriminatory national registry program and rejecting suspicionless surveillance of state residents.

[S.1308](#) - An Act Protecting Civil Rights, sponsored by Sen. Jamie Eldridge. This stand-alone anti-registry bill would prohibit any state agency from sharing or maintaining information or records for enforcement of any federal registry program.

EDUCATION

[S.232](#) and [H.2839](#) - An Act for Language Opportunity for Our Kids, sponsored by Sen. Sal DiDomenico, and related bill **An Act to Reform English Language Learning Education**, sponsored by Rep. Antonio Cabral. Both bills provide needed flexibility to school districts by allowing them to implement language acquisition programs in addition to “sheltered English immersion” to best address the needs of ELL students.

[S.669](#) and [H.644](#) - The Higher Ed Equity Act, sponsored by Sen. Sonia Chang-Díaz and Rep. Denise Provost, respectively, would ensure that all state residents who graduate from Massachusetts high schools have access to in-state tuition and state financial aid for attendance at public colleges and universities, regardless of immigration status. These bills are especially critical given the very real risk that students having temporary status through the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program will lose this status, and with it access to in-state tuition.

[S.311](#) and [H.285](#) - An Act to Promote Global Trade and Economic Development through Biliteracy, sponsored by Sen. Karen Spilka and Rep. Kay Khan, would establish a state seal of biliteracy to recognize high school graduates who speak, read and write in two languages, cultivating proficiency in both first and second languages, and preparing bilingual and bicultural graduates for participation in a 21st century global economy.

LABOR PROTECTIONS

[S.999](#) and [H.1033](#) - An Act to prevent wage theft and promote employer accountability, sponsored by Sen. Sal DiDomenico and Rep. Aaron Michlewitz, would ensure that employers that subcontract or outsource their work to other companies (like temp agencies) remain accountable to workers by updating our labor laws to protect against misclassification, low wages, wage theft and dangerous working conditions.

CIVIC PARTICIPATION

[H.388](#) - An Act enabling cities and towns to extend voting rights in municipal elections to certain noncitizens of the Commonwealth, sponsored by Rep. Byron Rushing, would give discretion to cities and towns to allow their non-citizens residents to vote in local elections by lifting the requirement of home rule petitions and allowing approval of such initiatives by local governments and local referenda instead.

HEALTHCARE ACCESS

[S.630](#) and [H.592](#) - An Act to restore affordable Health Connector coverage, by Sen. Patricia Jehlen and Rep. Ruth Balser, respectively, would ensure that premiums and cost-sharing remain affordable for people who receive subsidies to purchase health insurance through the Health Connector. This is especially important in light of recent ConnectorCare premium increases and impending federal changes to the Affordable Care Act.

[S.32](#) and [H.2216](#) - An Act Improving the Children’s Medical Security Plan and Simplifying the Administration Process, sponsored by Sen. Sal DiDomenico and Rep. Liz Malia. The Children’s Medical Security Program (CMSP) provides basic coverage to children without access to private insurance and who are ineligible for other public health insurance programs. This bill allows EOHHS to address the unmet health needs of these children by eliminating service caps that impede many children’s access to needed care, while staying within the Legislature’s appropriation for the program.

[S.1169](#) and [H.2474](#) - An Act Authorizing Dental Therapists to Expand Access to Oral Health, sponsored by Sen. Harriette Chandler and Rep. Smitty Pignatelli. The most vulnerable populations in Massachusetts often go without oral health care due to lack of easy access to a dentist. This bill authorizes a new type of midlevel dental professional, the dental hygiene practitioner (DHP). DHPs present a critical opportunity for Massachusetts to close gaps in dental access for low-income families, especially including immigrant families.

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