



Immigrants' Day at the State House 2024

Support a Massachusetts Immigration Agenda!

MIRA Coalition's State Legislative Priorities

Language Access and Inclusion Act, [S.1990](#) (DiDomenico) and [H.3084](#) (Madaro, González), State agencies provide government services and information on which all state residents depend – whether applying for unemployment or food assistance, staving off an eviction, or navigating the child welfare system. This bill would ensure that state agencies meet the needs of our Commonwealth's increasingly diverse population by building their capacity to provide public information and services in the primary languages of limited English-proficient state residents.

NEW **Physician Pathway Act** (An Act Improving Healthcare Delivery for Underserved Residents of the Commonwealth), [S.1402](#) (Lewis) [H.2224](#) (Lewis, Domb), would leverage the skills of seasoned, internationally-trained physicians to address acute physician shortages in Massachusetts by providing a streamlined pathway to full licensure. Endorsed by the Massachusetts Medical Society, the Massachusetts League of Community Health Centers, and the Massachusetts Health and Hospital Association.

Safe Communities Act, [S.1510](#) (Eldridge, Miranda) and [H.2288](#) (Balsler, Cruz).

For nearly 20 years, the federal government has leveraged our public safety resources to identify and deport immigrants. This misuse of state resources continues to separate families and undermine community trust in our public institutions. That's why California, Connecticut, Illinois, New Jersey, Oregon, and Washington State have all passed similar laws. This bill would end state and local involvement in civil immigration enforcement, increasing immigrant access to court and police protection and public services.

Cover All Kids Act, [S.740](#) (DiDomenico) and [H.1237](#) (D. Rogers). In Massachusetts, nearly 98 percent of children have some form of health insurance, the result of our Commonwealth's longstanding commitment to attaining universal coverage for children. But serious gaps in coverage remain for tens of thousands of low-income immigrant children, limiting or effectively denying them access to critical mental health services, medical care, medical devices, and prescription drugs. This bill would expand comprehensive MassHealth coverage to children and young adults whose only barrier to eligibility is their immigration status, as 12 other states have done.

(See reverse for MIRA's FY25 Budget Priorities!)

MIRA' Coalition's FY25 Budget Priorities

Essential services for newly arrived immigrants in emergency shelter

\$2.2M for Year 2 of the Immigrant Assistance Services (IAS) Program in Line Item 4003-XXXX

Administered by MIRA Coalition under contract with the Office of Refugees and Immigrants, IAS funds the critical work of our 15 frontline partner organizations to provide case management, legal and other culturally-competent services to EA-eligible immigrant families at shelter sites throughout Massachusetts. This established, successful network is ready to grow, and to help realize our Commonwealth's goal of integrating newly arrived immigrants into our workforce. **Increase over FY24 contract: \$450,000.**

Resettlement services for refugees

\$2.5M to support refugee resettlement agency services in Line Item 4003-0123

Our Commonwealth's resettlement agencies provide housing, case management, and other resettlement support for refugees and new arrivals in Massachusetts. This funding request would continue the federal and state partnership that has supported this work for several years, especially as the cost of living and housing continues to climb in Massachusetts. **Level funding.**

Adult English classes for immigrants and refugees

\$65.5M for Adult Education & English Classes (ABE/ESOL) in Line item 7035-0002

Ten percent of Massachusetts adult residents do not speak English well, limiting their employment opportunities, and civic engagement. ESOL providers are struggling to serve growing numbers of newly arrived immigrants and refugees to Massachusetts, including those in shelters. Yet class waitlists hover at 20,456, limiting access for thousands of adult learners. **Increase: \$5M.**

Economic self-sufficiency for immigrants and refugees

\$3M for Employment Support Services Program (ESSP) in Line Item 4401-1000

ESSP is a targeted program for TAFDC recipients whose first language is neither English nor Spanish, providing immigrants and refugees with occupational skills training and other support services to enter the workforce, including training in vocational English. **Level funding.**

Credentialing for internationally-trained nurses

\$190,000 for the Boston Welcome Back Center within in Line Item 7518-0100

Since 2005, the Boston Welcome Back Center has helped over 660 internationally-trained nurses from 125 countries return to their profession. Founded at Bunker Hill Community College to meet our Commonwealth's healthcare workforce needs, the Center provides mentoring, foreign credential evaluation, and test prep for the nursing licensure exams. **Level funding.**

Citizenship services for low-income immigrants

\$1.5M for the Citizenship for New Americans Program (CNAP) in Line item 4003-0122

The Citizenship for New Americans Program (CNAP) helps eligible low-income immigrants apply for citizenship with English and civics classes and legal assistance. Participants in citizenship programs are far more likely to succeed in acquiring citizenship. **Increase: \$213,000.**