METROWEST HOUSING MATTERS

WELCOME TO *METROWEST HOUSING MATTERS*, THE METROWEST HOUSING COALITION'S QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

ABOUT US

THE METROWEST HOUSING COALITION

The MetroWest Housing Coalition (MWHC) is a diverse group of stakeholders who work together to support access to affordable housing in the region. We collaborate to share resources, engage in advocacy opportunities, and address systemic barriers to housing stability. The MWHC is convened by the MetroWest Care Connection.

CHECK OUT THE LATEST ON HOUSING IN MW

We're excited to share the **fifth edition** of our quarterly newsletter! Inside, you'll find updates on housing initiatives, valuable community resources, and upcoming events in MetroWest. Stay informed and connected by subscribing to our newsletter!

SIGN UP FOR OUR NEWSLETTER:

HTTPS://SHORTURL.AT/CICY3

COALITION UPDATES

>>> BUILDING POWER THROUGH PARTNERSHIP

This fall, the MWHC has been busy bringing residents, providers, and community partners together to take on regional housing challenges. Over the past several months, 16 residents with lived experience navigating housing systems have joined the coalition, offering invaluable insights and perspectives.

At the MetroWest Care Connection's October 2025 Downtown Framingham Resource Fair, resident leaders gathered signatures for a statewide rent control ballot initiative. We also kicked off a series of workshops to build skills, knowledge, and confidence in advocacy and systems change. Julia Garvey, Community Organizer & Legislative Advocate with the Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless, facilitated an "Advocacy 101" session that broke down the legislative process.

On October 15, the MWHC held its first fully merged meeting, convening residents, providers, and other stakeholders to set priorities for the year ahead. This gathering marked an important next phase of the coalition's work—rooted in co-creation, collaboration, and shared decision-making. By centering lived experience and creating ongoing feedback loops, the coalition is working to ensure that resident perspectives directly inform and improve local housing systems.

MWHC members discussing shared goals & housing priorities at the coalition's first meeting of residents, providers, & community partners.

MWHC resident members at the October Downtown Framingham Resource Fair, collecting signatures in support of a statewide rent control ballot initiative.

>>> FINAL MARLBOROUGH LISTENING SESSIONS

As part of our ongoing work to better understand housing challenges across the region, the MWHC is inviting Marlborough residents to share their experiences in our final listening sessions. These conversations help ensure that community voices are uplifted within housing discussions. Please share these upcoming opportunities to participate:

- Nov 12: Marlborough Public Library, 1:00–3:00 PM
- Nov 13: Marlborough Senior Center, 1:30–3:30 PM

ANNUAL PARTICIPATION FEEDBACK RESULTS

>>> ADMINISTERED JUNE - AUGUST 2025

Each year, we invite MWHC members to share feedback through our experience survey. Of our 2025 respondents:

90% UTILIZED A RESOURCE SHARED BY THE MWHC

90% ENJOYED THEIR PARTICIPATION IN THE MWHC & WOULD RECOMMEND PARTICIPATION TO A COLLEAGUE

30% PURSUED A FUNDING OPPORTUNITY THAT WAS SHARED BY THE COALITION

30% ENGAGED IN AN ADVOCACY OPPORTUNITY THAT WAS SHARED BY THE COALITION

Top areas of interest in the next year:

- Intersection of immigration & housing
- Public education around homelessness & combatting stigma
- Municipal-level housing policies & initiatives

Top suggestions for improvement or growth:

- Create an end-of-year newsletter edition to recap the coalition's work annually
- Host more frequent in-person meetings
- Continue to invite diverse guest speakers
- Expand relationships with elected officials at all levels & in more MetroWest communities

POLICY UPDATES

This legislative cycle, the MWHC is focusing on on six key housing policy priorities. Four of the six bills have been heard, and one of those bills was reported out favorably by the committee.

Bills Already Heard:

- H.216 / S.136 – Improving emergency housing assistance for children and families experiencing homelessness (reported out favorably) ✅
- H.1488 / S.961 – Providing upstream homelessness prevention assistance
- H.1469 / S.1011 – Strengthening the HomeBASE program for housing stability
- S.1447 / H.2328 – Enabling cities and towns to stabilize rents and protect tenants

On July 29, the MWHC participated in our first panel testimony, advocating for "An Act enabling cities and towns to stabilize rents and protect tenants." Coalition members Cayden Davis, Grace Snedden, Andrew Fagan, and Stephanie Di Dio spoke about skyrocketing rents, displacement, and the stories of community members directly impacted by the housing crisis.

Participating in these panel opportunities are crucial to ensuring that MetroWest voices are represented in housing policy discussions.

MWHC member Andrew Fagan testifying virtually before the MA State Legislature in support of S.1447 / H.2328, *An act enabling cities and towns to stabilize rents and protect tenants*

Hearing Scheduled for 10/21: ❗

- H.1952 / S.968 – Promoting access to counsel and housing stability (would ensure that low-income individuals who are facing eviction have access to legal representation)
- H.2020 / S.1152 – Rental protections for elderly, disabled, and low-to-middle income tenants (would allow individuals in market rate units to end their lease early without penalty if they are offered an affordable housing option)

The hearing is scheduled for 1pm on 10/21 & is hybrid (in-person at the MA State House in Boston or via Zoom). You must sign up at https://shorturl.at/vjv0s by 5pm on 10/19 in order to testify, either individually or as part of a panel. Please contact Cayden cadavis@bhpmw.info if you are interested in participating in a panel in support of either bills. Written testimony should be emailed to: Talia.Quinn@mahouse.gov & Christianna.Golden@masenate.gov.

STAY INFORMED

>>> RENT CONTROL BALLOT INITIATIVE LAUNCHED

Homes for All Massachusetts has launched a statewide rent control ballot initiative, seeking to give voters the option to reinstate rent control. If enough signatures are gathered to qualify for the 2026 ballot, Massachusetts residents will have the opportunity to vote on whether to set reasonable limits on rent increases—helping families stay in their homes and preventing displacement.

As we know, across MetroWest and Massachusetts, residents are facing skyrocketing rents, housing instability, and rising homelessness. This initiative is an important step toward giving communities a practical tool to address these challenges and ensure stable housing for all.

To get this measure on the ballot, organizers need over 100,000 signatures by mid-November. Learn how to volunteer or gather signatures by visiting www.homesforallmass.org. You can also reach out to Cayden cadavis@bhpmw.info directly if you're interested in assisting with signature collection.

>>> RESOURCE SPOTLIGHT: SOUTH MIDDLESEX OPPORTUNITY COUNCIL (SMOC) HOUSING CONSUMER EDUCATION CENTER (HCEC) WORKSHOPS

SMOC's HCEC offers free workshops on topics such as tenant rights, first-time home ownership, housing search strategies, and financial literacy.

These sessions are designed to equip participants with practical tools and knowledge to navigate housing systems and resources more confidently and effectively.

View & register for upcoming workshops:

https://tinyurl.com/3fc28zbu

MARK THE CALENDAR

NEXT MWHC MEETING: NOV 19 FROM 10-11:30 VIA ZOOM

JOIN MONTHLY MEETINGS HERE:

HTTPS://SHORTURL.AT/YKGFW

NO RSVP NEEDED!

THE MWHC MEETS MONTHLY ON THE THIRD WEDNESDAY FROM 10-11:30AM

DON'T FORGET TO CHECK OUT THE MWHC HOUSING TOOLKIT

WWW.MWCARECONNECTION.INFO

STAYING CONNECTED

VISIT THE MWHC LINKTREE:

HTTPS://LINKTR.EE/MWHOUSINGCOALITION