



CITY OF BOSTON • MASSACHUSETTS

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
THOMAS M. MENINO

November 5, 2013

Members of the Boston Delegation
Massachusetts House of Representatives
State House
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Members of the Boston Delegation,

As the House of Representatives debates welfare reform this week, I am writing to **strongly urge you to support Amendment #74 filed by Representative Marjorie Decker** to preserve key protections in our public programs that help low-income families achieve economic security. The legislation before you includes elements that would result in significantly more denials and deeper poverty, by making it difficult for individuals and families to enroll or re-enroll for benefits and to build and maintain assets. Other aspects undercut efforts by persons on welfare to break the cycle of poverty, for example, by furthering their post-secondary education at a 4-year college.

The Greater Boston labor market is among the most competitive in the country. Our highly educated workforce is a great economic driver for the region, but for those with low levels of educational attainment, it presents a significant barrier to finding employment. For years, I have worked with many of you to support, fund, and promote quality skills training programs, and GED and ESOL programs to enhance educational levels. These have been some of the most successful mechanisms in transitioning individuals who rely on government assistance to the labor force and economic independence.

Please support Amendment #74. State policy efforts should be focused on investing in programs that work, not on creating barriers to enrollment, if we truly want to end the cycle of poverty. I appreciate your consideration of this request and thank you for your support. If you have any questions, please contact me directly or Katie King in my Office of Intergovernmental Relations at (617) 635-4478.

Sincerely,

Thomas M. Menino
Mayor of Boston