



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

MASSACHUSETTS BLACK AND LATINO LEGISLATIVE CAUCUS

ROOM 460, STATE HOUSE

BOSTON, MA 02133-1054

TELEPHONE: (617) 722-2688

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2ND SUFFOLK DISTRICT

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

SIBUSISIWE MALABA

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For Immediate Release
Contact: Rep. Russell Holmes
617-722-2220

**The Massachusetts Black and Latino Legislative Caucus Sees Budget
Advocacy Wins in the Governor's Fiscal Year 2016 Budget**

Boston, March 2015: Just weeks after meeting with Governor Baker to discuss the state budget, the Massachusetts Black and Latino Legislative Caucus (MBLLC) was pleased to see increases to several Caucus priority programs in the Governor's FY16 budget.

During a February 18, 2015 budget meeting with Governor Baker, the MBLLC stressed the need for increases to several critical state-funded programs ranging from housing, civil rights, economic development, public safety to health. The Governor's budget, which was released this month, revealed gains to many of those programs, including Emergency Assistance-Family Shelters and Services, Massachusetts Short-Term Housing Transition Program (HomeBASE), and Massachusetts Rental Voucher Program (MRVP), which saw increases of \$14M, \$293,000, and \$10M respectively. Public safety initiatives like the Witness Protection program received a significant boost, as did the Safe and Successful Youth Initiative, a grant program that provides funds to municipalities that join with community partners to reduce youth violence in Massachusetts, which received an additional \$2.9M.

State funding for educational initiatives like Turnaround Schools and YouthWorks also saw increases of \$9M and \$300,000 respectively, while Metropolitan Council for Educational Opportunity (METCO) received level funding in the Governor's budget.

"We thank Governor Baker for his collaboration in the drafting of his FY16 budget. We recognize that the budget needs more work and the Caucus looks forward to continuing our advocacy throughout the budget process", said MBLLC Chair, Representative Russell Holmes.

The Caucus was surprised and disappointed to see that some programs they pushed for did not receive increases or instead saw funding cuts, including Massachusetts Legal Assistance Corporation (MLAC); Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination; Aid to Incarcerated Mothers Program; Head Start; Adult Basic Education; HIV/AIDS Prevention, Treatment and Services; Small Business Technical Assistance and Access to Capital; Charter School

Reimbursement; New England Center for Arts and Technology; Homelessness Reduction (Homeless Individuals Assistance); Municipal Police Staffing Grants; and the Early Education Waiting List. “We plan to tackle these programs and many others in the House and Senate budget debates”, said Representative Holmes.

The Governor’s budget now moves to the House’s Committee on Ways and Means for consideration.

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