

# MassEquality Priority Legislative Agenda

## **An Act relative to HIV routine screening and care**

*Sen. Julian Cyr & Rep. Jack Patrick Lewis*

[S.1405](#) | [H.2347](#)

This bill would modify the provisions around consent for HIV screening and care by altering existing written consent requirements to a notice and opt out provision. It also modifies the requirements for the disclosure of HIV status by healthcare providers by permitting it in the context of sharing electronic medical records between different providers.

## **An Act relative to Massachusetts home care eligibility**

*Sen. Pat Jehlen & Rep. Sarah Peake*

[S.405](#) | [H.752](#)

To address the growing crisis of early onset age-related health conditions among individuals living with HIV/AIDS, this bill will extend access to home care services before the age of 60 to this population.

## **An Act relative to HIV prevention access for young adults**

*Sen. Julian Cyr, Rep. Jack Patrick Lewis, & Rep. Chynah Tyler*

[S.1404](#) | [H.2349](#)

While MA law gives minors the right to access many STI health services without parental permission, regulations on HIV/AIDS prevention specifically have not kept up. This bill removes that inequity by allowing minors to consent to pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) and post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP).

## **An Act relative to healthy youth**

*Sen. Sal DiDomenico, Rep. Jim O'Day, & Rep. Vanna Howard*

[S.318](#) | [H.673](#)

MA is one of just a handful of states without substantive laws on sex ed. The vast majority of our schools exclude LGBTQ topics from health classes – and LGBTQ youth disproportionately experience negative outcomes as a result. The Healthy Youth Act will require public schools offering sex ed to teach medically-accurate, consent-based, LGBTQ-inclusive information.

## **An Act relative to LGBTQ+ inclusive curriculum**

*Sen. Julian Cyr, Rep. Natalie Higgins, & Rep. Jack Patrick Lewis*

[S.310](#) | [H.618](#)

Research strongly suggests that positive LGBTQ curricular inclusion improves school climate and decreases bullying. This bill therefore adds LGBTQ topics to the list of subjects for MA's history educational standards.

## **An Act Relative to Student Mental Health**

*Sen. Joanne Comerford, Rep. Jack Patrick Lewis, & Rep. Natalie Higgins*

[S.1266](#) | [H.2111](#)

This bill responds to the youth mental health epidemic, which disproportionately impacts our community, by mandating that public schools list suicide prevention hotlines on student IDs.

## **An Act requiring equality in state documents**

*Sen. Harriette Chandler*

[S.2012](#)

This bill calls for the MA Commission on LGBTQ Youth to promulgate guidelines to ensure that state forms and documents use appropriate, inclusive, neutral language around gender.

## **An Act relative to gender identity on Massachusetts state documents**

*Sen. Joanne Comerford, Rep. Mindy Domb, & Rep. Marjorie C. Decker*

[S.2282](#) | [H.3126](#)

To recognize the dignity and protect the safety of nonbinary citizens, this bill allows individuals to choose the gender marker "X" on state IDs. It codifies into law the RMV's recent regulatory decision to offer an "X" marker on licenses and expands its scope to cover more documents, including birth certificates, other ID options, and state forms.

## **An Act to provide identification to youth and adults experiencing homelessness**

*Sen. Harriette Chandler, Rep. Kay Khan, & Rep. Jim O'Day*

[S.2276](#) | [H.3515](#)

When 24% of trans MA residents have been homeless, ID access is a critical rights issue. This bill will ease ID access for people experiencing homelessness by waiving fees and offering alternate ways to verify residency.

## **An Act providing a bill of rights for people experiencing homelessness**

*Sen. Becca Rausch, Rep. Smitty Pignatelli, & Rep. Frank Moran*

[S.142](#) | [H.264](#)

This bill protects the rights of individuals experiencing homelessness in MA. Key provisions include affirming the right to rest, eat, pray, and be in public spaces by amending public spaces laws; protecting the right to vote by amending voting laws (including registering to vote without a permanent address); adding housing status to anti-discrimination laws; and affirming the rights to privacy of property and to confidentiality.

## **An Act relative to LGBTQ family building**

*Sen. Julian Cyr*

[S.652](#)

Due to a loophole in state law, health insurers are essentially required to cover pregnancy-related care, including assistive reproductive technology, for cis, heterosexual couples but not for LGBTQ couples, who often pay thousands of dollars out-of-pocket for the same procedures. This bill equalizes the law, so that all families are covered, and calls for a study of inequities in LGBTQ family planning care.

## **An Act to promote efficiency in co-parent adoptions**

*Sen. Becca Rausch & Rep. Kay Khan*

[S.1124](#) | [H.1712](#)

This bill streamlines the arduous, expensive process of co-parent adoption, which disproportionately impacts LGBTQ parents. By eliminating unnecessary procedures for adopting a spouse's biological child, such as checking the missing child registry or a DCF home study (which can cost thousands of dollars), it will allow LGBTQ families to secure parental rights at minimal cost without upsetting, discriminatory impositions.

## **An Act establishing a Foster Parents' Bill of Rights**

*Sen. Joanne Comerford, Rep. Tricia Farley-Bouvier, & Rep. Paul Donato*

[S.87](#) | [H.212](#)

In the context of growing national efforts to legalize homophobic and transphobic discrimination against foster parents, including the *Fulton* Supreme Court case, protecting foster parents' rights is more important than ever. This bill establishes a foster parents' bill of rights in MA, including freedom from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity.

## **An Act relative to accountability for vulnerable children and families**

*Sen. Joan Lovely & Rep. Kay Khan (Rep. Denise Garlick & Rep. Paul Donato)*

[S.32](#) | [H.239](#) ([H.88](#))

This bill updates the requirements for Department of Children and Families reports and mandates the inclusion of demographic data (age, race, ethnicity, language, gender identity, and sexual orientation). It specifically requires reports to examine rates of disproportionality, include for gender identity and sexuality.

## **An Act to eliminate disproportionality and inequities for at-risk children**

*Sen. Susan Moran, Rep. Natalie Higgins, & Rep. Jack Patrick Lewis*

[S.139](#) | [H.228](#)

This bill institutes critical data collection for child-serving state entities, which LGBTQ youth often access. It calls for an annual report on inequities in state services, which will include SOGI (sexual orientation and gender identity) data, and requires state entities to publicly produce corrective action plans if necessary.

## **An Act to promote rehabilitation including guaranteed health, treatment, and safety for incarcerated LGBTQI+ People**

*Sen. Julian Cyr & Rep. Jack Patrick Lewis*

[S.1566](#) | [H.2484](#)

This bill addresses the human rights crisis experienced by LGBTQ people incarcerated in our state's prisons. Key provisions include implementing safety procedures to protect LGBTQ individuals in shared housing; access to HIV prevention and treatment; prohibiting involuntary solitary confinement or punishment for LGBTQ status or disclosure of assault; allowing and facilitating culturally competent programming; and clearer data reporting and transparency (including PREA data).