

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same as follows:

SECTION 1. The executive office of health and human services, the executive office of housing and economic development, the executive office of elder affairs, the department of veterans' services, the department of housing and community development, the department of transitional assistance, the department of developmental services, the department of mental health, the department of children and families, the department of youth services, the department of correction, the department of public health, the Massachusetts rehabilitation commission, the Massachusetts commission for the blind, the Massachusetts commission for the deaf and hard of hearing, the Massachusetts Housing Finance Agency, the Massachusetts housing partnership and the Community Economic Development Assistance Corporation shall develop and execute a memorandum of understanding to be known as the community housing and services memorandum of understanding. The memorandum of understanding shall include an action plan to coordinate the procurement and availability of community-based supportive services, capital subsidies and operating subsidies for new and existing housing available to residents with very low and extremely low-incomes, as those terms are defined by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development in 24 C.F.R. § 5.603. The action plan shall establish benchmarks to assess financial savings to the commonwealth resulting from the avoidance of institutionalization, shelter or nursing care due to the availability of community-based housing supportive services. The memorandum of understanding shall identify and determine methods and procedures for eliminating barriers and reducing fragmentation for the provision of community-based supportive services and affordable housing. For the purposes of this act, "community-based supportive services" shall include, but not be limited to, resident service coordinators, housing support teams and other models to link very low and extremely low-income tenants with services necessary to maintain their tenancy or direct community-based social services, comprehensive institutional discharge planning services or other services necessary to maintain a successful tenancy; provided, that receipt of services by a tenant with a disability shall not be an eligibility requirement or a requirement of maintaining a tenancy under the action plan.

The community housing and services memorandum of understanding shall be filed with the governor, the lieutenant governor, the joint committee on housing, the joint committee on elder affairs, the joint committee on children, families and persons with disabilities and the house and senate committees on ways and means not later than December 31, 2012.

The memorandum shall facilitate the creation of a demonstration program that creates up to 1,000 units of permanent supportive housing that includes coordinated operating, capital subsidies and voluntary community-based supportive services by December 31, 2015; provided, that the aforementioned agencies shall assess the need for permanent supportive housing to serve the commonwealth's homeless or at-risk of homelessness, people with disabilities and elders and shall establish a long-range target to produce new supportive housing opportunities to meet the commonwealth's need.

SECTION 2. The department of elder affairs shall study the establishment of a comprehensive elder affairs ombudsmen program to service the needs of elderly citizens. The study shall include, but not be limited to, a review of the current ombudsmen programs in place and the identification of elderly citizens not currently being serviced by an ombudsmen program who could benefit from such services. The study shall address the implementation of a comprehensive elder care ombudsmen program that covers persons age 60 and over, acting on their own behalf or through any individual organization or government agency, utilizing the services of community-based programs, including but not limited to, the home care program established under chapter 19A of the General Laws, residents of long term care facilities, residents of nursing homes, residents of assisted living facilities, residents of supportive housing and other programs as defined by the secretary of the executive office of elder affairs. The study shall review the effectiveness of existing ombudsmen programs, address ways to improve and expand on existing ombudsmen programs and outline the department's current interaction with other state agencies providing a similar service to elders. The department shall prepare a report on the findings and recommendations together with recommendations for legislation necessary to implement those recommendations by filing

the same with the clerks of the house of representatives and the senate, the chairs of the joint committee on elder affairs and the chairs of the house and senate committees on ways and means not later than October 15, 2012.

Approved, March 22, 2012