

# **All Five New Bedford state reps vote against one-year residency requirement to receive Right to Shelter benefits**

Late last week, New Bedford State Representatives Tony Cabral (D), Christopher Markey (D), William Straus, Paul Schmid (D) and Christopher Hendricks (D) voted against an amendment that would have required people prove they have lived in Massachusetts for at least a year before receiving benefits under the state's Right to Shelter Law. On a mostly party vote, the amendment was rejected 28-128.

Currently, the Right to Shelter Law in Massachusetts guarantees shelter for homeless parents with young children and pregnant women which has included newly arrived migrant families. The Shelter Law doesn't provide shelter for homeless individuals without children. Earlier this month, Governor Healey announced that the emergency shelter system is full and can't take any more families. This means Massachusetts families go on a waitlist even as temperatures drop to dangerous levels. Due to Massachusetts receiving twice as many migrants as last year the cost to house people in the emergency shelter system has spiked to \$40 million a month and the state legislators just approved another \$250 million to keep the system operational through the winter.

Newly arrived migrants, many in the country illegally, now received health care, housing and soon food benefits under SNAP program. Yesterday, Governor Healey announced that her administration has gotten 1,200 migrants work authorization permits.