



**Testimony submitted to the Joint Committee on Children, Families
and Persons with Disabilities
In Support of H.4622 An Act to provide short-term relief for families
in deep poverty
By Clarice B. Gordon – LWVMA Basic Human Needs Specialist
April 13, 2020**

The League of Women Voters of Massachusetts urges your support of H.4622 An Act to Provide Short-term Relief for Families in Deep Poverty. This bill would provide immediate one-time supplemental cash assistance to Massachusetts families with children who receive Transitional Aid to Families with Dependent Children (TAFDC) and elders and persons with disabilities who receive Emergency Aid to Elders, Disabled and Children (EAEDC) benefits. We understand this would benefit approximately 49,000 households who are among the poorest residents in the state.

The COVID-19 pandemic and the disruption it has caused have very severely affected poor families and individuals. They are routinely struggling to meet their basic needs, so the lack of meals ordinarily available in school, the loss of income from low-paid and part-time jobs, and increased utility and other costs because everyone is home all day add to their expenses. They are often in marginal and cramped housing situations which make widespread closures (even of playgrounds) more stressful. We do not want the result to be an increase in homelessness or worsening health.

Providing an emergency benefit to our poorest families at this time is a wise response to this public health crisis. Please act expeditiously so that funds can reach TAFDC and EAEDC families as soon as possible.

Thank you for your consideration.