



Testimony submitted to the Joint Committee on Housing  
In support of H.1428 An Act codifying the Massachusetts Rental Voucher Program (MRVP)  
and S.898 An Act relative to the Massachusetts Rental Voucher Program (MRVP)  
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These identical bills codify the Massachusetts Rental Voucher Program (MRVP) by placing it in General Law 121B (Public Housing), as a new section 61, for both mobile and project based vouchers. The income ceiling is 80% of the area median income (AMI) and 75% of vouchers must go to households whose income is 30% of AMI or less. Rental payments cannot exceed 110% of market rent and those receiving tenant-based assistance shall not pay more than 30% of adjusted household income. Initial and biennial inspections for safety are required. Monthly administrative fees are capped and the Dept. of Housing and Community Development is charged with certain data reporting requirements.

MRVP is an extremely important program that helps people with low incomes afford rent by covering a portion of the cost. About 11,000 households have been helped each year recently. These bills would improve and stabilize the program, making it less subject to changes with each budget cycle. It is critically important that families with vouchers know they can depend on the program and count on the stability it provides, particularly that the share of their income for rent will be capped at 30% and that their unit will be inspected and kept habitable for them. H.1428 and S.898 would increase the administrative fee so that regional agencies and housing authorities can better cover the cost of the program and continue their sponsorship. These bill also improve data collection to give the legislature and administrative personnel the information needed to evaluate and possibly improve the MRVP program.

The League of Women Voters supports affordable housing in order to provide a decent home and a suitable living environment for every American family. State and local governments should assist by establishing effective agencies to aid, promote, coordinate, and supplement the housing programs of the federal government and the private sector. Government at all levels must make available sufficient funds for housing assistance programs. When families or individuals cannot afford decent housing, government should provide assistance in the form of income and/or subsidized housing.

The Massachusetts League is made up of 47 local Leagues across the Commonwealth. Our members are very supportive of the MRVP program and the stabilizing changes made by H.1428 and S.898. We urge the Joint Committee on Housing to recommend passage of these bills and to follow the course to successful enactment during this 192<sup>nd</sup> session.