



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

House of Representatives

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **House Passes Legislation to Expand Benefits for Families in Need**

*Legislation lifts the family welfare cap*

March 14, 2019 – (BOSTON) – Representative Jon Santiago joined his colleagues today announcing the House passed legislation that lifts a decades-old family welfare cap.

The family cap limited access to Transitional Aid to Families with Dependent Children (TAFDC) benefits to children born prior to the date a family first began receiving benefits. Lifting the cap will extend cash benefits to the 8,700 Massachusetts children and their families who have previously been excluded due to this policy. Children will no longer be denied \$100 a month in welfare benefits based on when they were conceived.

This change will be retroactive to Jan. 1, 2019.

"This legislation provides vital assistance to our most vulnerable families in Massachusetts," said House Speaker Robert A. DeLeo (D-Winthrop). "I am grateful to Chair Decker for her tireless work on this issue as well as the work of Chair Khan that will help support so many children and families across the Commonwealth."

"By lifting the cap the House will reverse an antiquated policy that has hindered working families," said Representative Aaron Michlewitz (D-Boston), Chair of the House Committee on Ways & Means. "This legislation will benefit hundreds of children and their parents throughout the Commonwealth."

"I am so pleased to see that H.104, Lift the Cap on Kids, one of the Speaker's priorities, passed today in the House of Representatives," said Representative Kay Khan (D-Newton), Chair of the House Committee on Children, Families and Persons with Disabilities. "When the bill was in my committee, I heard time and time again about the cap's detrimental impact on families. Thank you to Representative Marjorie Decker and Senator Sal DiDomenico for their perseverance, all of the bill co-sponsors and of course thank you to Speaker DeLeo for his leadership."

"I'm proud today that once again the House is voting to repeal the family welfare cap, a policy which denies assistance to our neediest families," said Representative Marjorie Decker (D-Cambridge), Chair of the Committee on Mental Health, Substance Use and Recovery. "The family cap has been a failed policy since it was enacted, and it has only served to deny families living in poverty the resources that they desperately need. I want to thank Speaker DeLeo and my colleagues in the House who, for a third time, are affirming their support for vulnerable families and children and who also recognize the importance of these resources by voting to retroactively provide these benefits."

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