



MASSCAP

Massachusetts Association for Community Action
Creating Opportunity. Changing Lives. Ending Poverty.

Public Policy Priorities

COVID-19 is affecting our lives in profound and unexpected ways. We realize that the effects of the pandemic, and our necessary collective response to it, are compounding the needs of the people we serve and are causing many families to seek our help for the first time.

Our public policy priorities not only support our mission to collectively advocate along with MA's 23 Community Action Agencies for an end to poverty, but also support helping our most vulnerable residents stabilize their lives and continue to thrive during and following this crisis.



Our Top FY21 Budget Priorities



Bridging the Wage Gap

For low-income wage earners, the resources they access at VITA sites make all the difference. VITA sites not only provide free tax prep and access to EITC and other tax credits, but also offer financial education and links to other critical services, strengthening families and the local economy.

- **Increase Resources for Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Program Sites (1201-0100): \$800,000**



Creating a Foundation for Economic Opportunity

Fuel assistance is critical in helping families meet fundamental needs and achieving stability serving as a platform for economic opportunity and mobility.

- **Add State Fuel Assistance Line Item for FY21: \$10M**
Fuel assistance is a defacto federal and state partnership; the state has supplemented the federal program about half of the time over the past 30 years.



Strengthening Families through Affordable and Accessible Early Education and Care

Early Education and Care programs prepare children for success in school and life. Support for retaining early educators and the Head Start program is essential.

- **Provide Incentive Funding (6 months): \$70M**
We must address the challenges and risks early education and Out of School Time (OST) services face during the pandemic.
- **Ensure Pre-Pandemic Level Monthly Program Funding: Early Education/OST**
It is essential to continue Early Education/OST subsidy funding policies previously established by emergency order for in-person care inclusive of virtual comprehensive services for the fiscal year.

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