



## House Bill 1164

### *Counties and Municipalities – Homelessness – Local Laws*

Position: **OPPOSE**

To: Judiciary Committee

Date: March 6, 2025

From: Chip Bertino, Worcester County Commissioner

I am Worcester County Commissioner Chip Bertino and I am writing to oppose House Bill 1164. While it's put forward as a way to provide support for unhoused individuals, in doing so it takes away the rights of counties. It negates the public safety function of local government and represents a preemption of local policies. It exposes counties to new liabilities and public health issues.

In Worcester County, the Homeless Outreach Team, a multi-agency effort that includes the health department, law enforcement, medical professionals and social services, among other entities, has been working since 2018 to support individuals experiencing homelessness. The team helps people get vital records needed for employment, provides mental health services and puts people in touch with shelters. We are already doing what we can to ensure individuals in need of housing are connected with resources.

I urge you to provide this bill with an unfavorable report. Thank you for your time, your consideration and your service.