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Massachusetts



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Massachusetts



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**PRISONERS' LEGAL SERVICES  
OF MASSACHUSETTS**



**Massachusetts  
Voter Table**



Dear Representative/Senator,

We, the Democracy Behind Bars Coalition, are writing to request that you cosponsor the legislation filed by [Representatives Chynah Tyler and Liz Miranda, HD 3253](#) and [by Senator Adam Hinds, SD 2458](#) to ensure that eligible incarcerated voters have meaningful opportunity to cast a counted ballot, as is their right.

We are a statewide coalition of grassroots, advocacy, and community organizations and leaders working on both sides of the wall to ensure that our incarcerated citizens do not lose their political voice. In Massachusetts as in all other states, those held pre-trial and those serving misdemeanor convictions who are otherwise eligible maintain the right to vote while incarcerated. In practice, however, these eligible citizens are unable to vote because we have failed to implement a system ensuring access to ballot applications, information on candidates, and a secure and timely means of returning their ballots.

HD 3253 and SD 2458 would correct that. The legislation has been informed by incarcerated individuals, including the African American Coalition Committee in Norfolk Prison, and those of us in the Democracy Behind Bars Coalition who have worked to try to ensure eligible incarcerated voters can exercise their constitutional right. With the leadership of Senator Adam Hinds and Representatives Chynah Tyler and Liz Miranda, we believe this bill will meet a critical need in Massachusetts: to protect our democracy, and ensure that the right to vote for those disproportionately Black and POC voters who are eligible is no longer maintained in name only.

It has never been more important that we protect the right to vote, and prioritize racial equity in this fight. Incarcerated eligible voters *are eligible voters*, who must have the right to vote in practice as they do on paper. You can find [a detailed bill summary here](#) and [fact sheet here](#).

We hope that you will co-sponsor this important and timely legislation and work with us to get it passed. Please let us know if you have any questions.

Thank you for all you do,

The Democracy Behind Bars Coalition  
Al-Ameen Patterson, the African American Coalition Committee  
Rahsaan Hall, American Civil Liberties Union of Massachusetts (ACLU)  
Geoff Foster, Common Cause Massachusetts  
Linda Arian, Criminal Justice Policy Coalition  
Decarcerate Western Mass

Emancipation Initiative  
Pastor Franklin Hobbs, Healing Our Land Inc. Ministry (H.O.L.I.)  
Cheryl Clyburn Crawford, MassVOTE  
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