



CITY OF BOSTON • MASSACHUSETTS

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
MARTIN J. WALSH

October 17, 2019

Senator James B. Eldridge
Chair, Joint Committee on the Judiciary
State House, Room 511-C
Boston, MA 02133

Representative Claire D. Cronin
Chair, Joint Committee on the Judiciary
State House, Room 136
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Chair Cronin, Chair Eldridge and Members of the Committee:

Today, I write in strong support of H.1518, *An Act to facilitate re-entry*, filed by Representative Liz Miranda, which requires state agencies to develop a comprehensive discharge plan. This type of planning is critical to ensuring individuals have access to services necessary to maintain stability in their lives, as well as to provide a comprehensive transition plan that helps these individuals navigate housing and employment resources, while also providing social and emotional support systems.

In 2017, Mayor Walsh established the Office of Returning Citizens. An office committed to helping the more than 3,000 individuals, who return to the city of Boston every year, reintegrate into society. The proposed bill would direct state agencies to develop a comprehensive discharge plan, incentivizing availability of community-based supportive services, like Operation Exit, making sure individuals have access to any services necessary to maintain stability in their life. Mayor Walsh and the Office of Public Safety established Operation Exit in 2014, and to date, we've seen 104 young adults graduate this program and enter a career within the building trades.

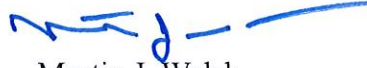
Housing, employment, healthcare, these are all pillars of a successful transition out of a residential recovery program, a foster home, or a corrections facilities. Unsurprisingly, an effective, structured and well-thought-out transition plan can make all the difference for a person transitioning out of these programs, in the absence of support from family, friends, and community. The difference, in this case, is the difference between stable housing and homelessness. It's the difference between recovery and relapse. It's the difference between a gateway to job opportunities and unemployment.

This bill will focus on quality improvement and to formalize current practices around planning. By implementing a more intentional focus on transition planning, we will have a positive impact on the lives of our most vulnerable people. I respectfully request your support of this bill and thank you for your thoughtful consideration of this matter. If you have any

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questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to me directly or you may contact Alyssa Ring in the Office of Intergovernmental Relations at (617) 635-1994.

Sincerely,



Martin J. Walsh
Mayor of Boston