



Massachusetts Catholic Conference  
66 Brooks Drive  
Braintree, MA 02184  
617-746-5630  
[www.macatholic.org](http://www.macatholic.org)

March 27, 2024

The Honorable Michael J. Rodrigues  
Chair, Senate Committee on Ways and Means  
State House  
24 Beacon St, Room 212  
Boston, MA 02133

The Honorable Aaron M. Michlewitz  
Chair, House Committee on Ways and Means  
State House  
24 Beacon St, Room 243  
Boston, MA 02133

Re: Access to Counsel

Dear Chairmen Rodrigues and Michlewitz,

The Massachusetts Catholic Conference is the public policy office of the Catholic Church in the state representing the Archdiocese of Boston along with the Dioceses of Fall River, Springfield, and Worcester. Please accept this letter on behalf of the Bishops of Massachusetts in strong support of the Access to Counsel line item in the budget.

I want to thank you for all your work over the years to prevent homelessness and housing insecurity in the Commonwealth. Without legal representation during eviction proceedings, many tenants risk becoming homeless. Laws and Courts are complicated for most people. Most tenants facing eviction are unrepresented and face eviction alone. The time is now to start a statewide Access to Counsel program.

On behalf of the Bishops, I urge the House and Senate Committees on Ways and Means to include in your respective FY25 budgets \$3.5 Million (Line-item 0321-1800) to start an Access to Counsel program in tandem with the full Access to Counsel language in S.864/H.4360, which provides the framework for a statewide program.

Very truly yours,

James Driscoll  
Executive Director