**Policy/Advocacy Update – 2/6/2019**

**Federal Legislation Update:**

**Continuing Resolution – *Update* –** On Friday 1/25 Congress passed and the President signed a “clean” short-term CR, funding the government until 2/15, ending the longest government shutdown in history. Congress still needs to enact full FY 19 funding for offices and Departments not yet fully funded, including HUD.

**FY19 THUD Appropriations bill – No new u*pdate*** – The House and Senate have come to agreement on the FY 19 T-HUD bill, which would provide approximately $1.3 billion more funding for HUD programs vs. the FY 18 enacted funding. However, it still must be passed in Congress and signed by the President – the hold up for which has been around border security/wall funding.

**Ending Homelessness Act of 2019** **– *New –*** Reintroduced by House Financial Services Committee Chair Maxine Waters (D-CA). This bill would provide a path to end homelessness in the United States, and for other purposes. This bill would, among other things:

* Authorize $1 billion in funding between 2020 and 2024, for emergency relief grants to address the unmet needs of homeless populations in jurisdictions with the highest need;
* Authorize $500 million in funding between 2020 and 2024, in addition to existing renewal funding, for special purpose rental assistance for persons and households who are homeless;
* Authorize $100 million in funding between 2020 and 2024 to provide outreach and coordination services for persons and households who are homeless or formerly homeless; authorize $1 billion in funding in 2019, and every year after that, for the National Housing Trust Fund, $50 million dedicated for incremental project-based voucher assistance or project-based rental assistance – both of which prioritizing persons and households who are homeless;
* Authorize $20 million in McKinney-Vento funding for McKinney Vento technical assistance funds to assist states and local organizations align health and housing systems;
* Permanently authorize appropriations for the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Grants Act; and
* Permanently reauthorize USICH.

**H.R. 508: Trafficking Victims Housing Act of 2019 – *New –*** Sponsored by Rep. Joyce Beatty. This bill would require a study and report on the housing and service needs of victims of trafficking and individuals at risk for trafficking.

**H.R. 232: Landlord Accountability Act of 2019 – *New –*** Sponsored by Rep. Nydia Velazquez. This bill would amend the Fair Housing Act, to prohibit discrimination based on use of section 8 vouchers, and for other purposes.

**H.R. 715: To amend section 428 of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act to provide incentives to grantees under the Continuum of Care program to re-house all former members of the Armed Forces, and for other purposes – *New –*** Sponsored by Rep. Steve Stivers. Content of bill and bill summary not available.

**S. 8: Preserving Our Commitment to Homeless Veterans Ac**t **– *New –*** Sponsored by Sen. Marco Rubio. This bill would require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to ensure that the supported housing program of the Department of Veterans Affairs has not fewer than one program manager for every 35 rental assistance cases under such program, and for other purposes.

**State Legislation Update:** Governor Mills was sworn into office on 1/2/19, the official start of the new Legislature. This is the first year of the biennium, where legislators can introduce any number of bills, and the Legislature will be considering the Biennial Budget.

**Medicaid Waiver & Work Requirements – *Update* –** Governor Mills pulled Maine out of its approved Section 1115 Medicaid waiver that would have imposed work requirements on Medicaid recipients, as well as impose monthly premiums.

**Bills of note:** There is a list of submitted bill titles pertaining to homelessness and housing (see attachment) which have not been given LD numbers or referred to a committee. The following list are bills which have been given LD numbers and will be considered as of the date of this update:

* LD 48, An Act to Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue To Invest in Housing for Persons Who Are Homeless" (Presented by Representative BRENNAN of Portland). This bill would authorize a $15million bond, to go to referendum, to invest in the creation of housing for people experiencing homelessness, to be administered by MaineHousing. A Public Hearing in front of the Appropriations Committee was held on 1/22, 1:00 PM, State House, Room 228.
* LD 184 – An Act To Amend the Veterans' Homelessness Prevention Coordination Program – Rep. John DeVeau. Referred to the Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs. A Public hearing in front of the Veterans and Legal Affairs Committee has been scheduled for Monday, 2/4, at 10am, State House, Room 437.
* LD 459, An Act To Include Homelessness in the Laws Governing Emergency General Assistance – Sen. Ben Chipman. Bill summary: This bill defines "homelessness" for the purposes of the laws governing general assistance and specifies that a person experiencing or facing homelessness who meets the conditions for receiving emergency assistance in current law is eligible for emergency general assistance.
* LD 447, An Act Regarding the Substance Abuse Disorder Continuum of Care – Sen. Geoff Gratwick. Bill Summary: This bill proposes to provide support for persons with substance use disorder along a continuum of care that includes prevention, law enforcement diversion, treatment, harm reduction and recovery. The bill proposes to provide: 1. Funding for programs that reduce the use of marijuana and so-called "vaping" by youth in Maine in order to reduce the likelihood of neural pathway changes that can lead to addiction later in life; 2. Ongoing support for detoxification as a path to recovery; 3. Reimbursement under the MaineCare program for substance use disorder peer recovery coaches; 4. Funding to the Bangor Area Recovery Network for addiction recovery support; 5. Support for regional 2-1-1 hotlines to offer referrals to persons with substance use 16 disorder for local services; and 6. Access to evidence-based approaches to prevent substance use and treat substance use disorder in rural areas.
* LD 80. An Act To Create the Department of Substance Use Disorder Services – Rep. Perry. Bill summary: This bill establishes the Department of Substance Use Disorder Services as a separate cabinet-level department. It removes from the Department of Health and Human Services, and transfers to the Department of Substance Use Disorder Services, functions and services for individuals with substance use disorders, prevention programs and administrative assistance for the Substance Use Disorder Services Commission.
* LD 195, An Act To Continue MaineCare Coverage for Parents During the Rehabilitation and Reunification Process – Rep. Patty Hymanson. This bill requires the Department of Health and Human Services to continue to provide MaineCare coverage to parents who are MaineCare members while they are participating in reunification efforts with child welfare. Public Hearing: Thursday, 2/7, 1:00 PM, Cross Building, Room 209
* LD 510, An Act To Authorize Funding for Transitional Housing for Women Veterans and Their Families – Rep. Bettyann Sheats. This bill would provide a one-time $150,000 General Fund appropriation in fiscal year 2019-20 to the Department of Defense, Veterans and Emergency Management for the Betsy Ann Ross House of Hope to provide suitable housing for women veterans in transition and their families.
* LD 613, Resolve, Concerning the Adoption of Rules To Carry Out the Purpose of the Bridging Rental Assistance Program – Rep. Dick Farnsworth. This resolve directs DHHS to adopt rules for BRAP in order to ensure fairness, equity and access to the program for those persons with mental illness who qualify for the program. The department would be required to submit a report to the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services if the department anticipates a delay in the adoption of the rules.
* LD 578, Resolve, To Create a Pilot Program To Assist the Transition to Recovery of Persons Suffering from Opioid Use Disorder – Rep Patty Hymanson.
* LD 501, An Act To Provide Funding for the Homeless Veterans Center in Caribou –Sen. Pres. Troy Jackson. This bill would provide $200,000 in a one-time appropriation of funds to the homeless veterans center in Caribou.
* LD 578, Resolve, To Create a Pilot Program to Assist the Transition to Recovery of Persons Suffering from Opioid Use Disorder – Rep. Patty Hymanson.
* LD 46, An Act to Establish a Substance Use Disorder Clinic at the Cumberland County Jail – Rep. Michael Brennan. This bill would provide funding ($250,000 in each year of the biennium) to create a substance use disorder clinic at the Cumberland County jail.