



105 Chauncy St. #901  
Boston, MA 02111

[www.miracoalition.org](http://www.miracoalition.org)  
Voice: 617.350.5480  
Fax: 617.350.5499

## **MIRA FY10 Budget Analysis of Governor's Vetoes and Amendments**

On June 29, 2009, Governor Patrick signed the FY10 and sent a number of vetoes and amendments back to the legislature. The legislature now must decide which vetoes and amendments to keep and which to override. A few of MIRA's budget priorities were impacted by the Governor's vetoes and amendments.

In particular, the Governor amended **Outside Section 121 of the legislature's final budget, which cuts eligibility for 28,000 "special status" immigrants in Commonwealth Care, and partially restores funding for the population at \$70 million, subject to approval of his supplementary budget.** For more details, see the complete analysis below. If finalized, the cut would drive 28,000 immigrants currently in Commonwealth Care into Emergency Medicaid services or the Health Safety Net. This cut represents 15% of Commonwealth Care enrollment and is the first major setback in coverage since the passage of health reform legislation.

In another instance, **the Governor vetoed Outside Section 129 of the budget, which eliminates the \$2.5 million contribution of two agencies to the MassHealth Outreach Grant program.** If the veto is finalized, there would be no funding for this program in FY10.

As a member of the **Stop the Cuts Coalition**, MIRA recognizes the importance of increasing revenues to fund the vital programs and services upon which many jobs and lives depend. We need new, substantial and progressive revenue sources if we hope to restore funding to the programs that help change lives and give hope to so many.

As the budget moves back to the legislature, MIRA and its allies are committed to seeking the best results for programs serving immigrant communities across the Commonwealth and to restoring full coverage for the 28,000 legal immigrants whose well-being relies on a return to the promise and values of health reform and the goal of insuring all residents of Massachusetts. Over the next two weeks, MIRA and its health care allies will call on advocates across the Commonwealth to have their voices heard by the legislature in support of comprehensive coverage for "special status" immigrants.

The following is an analysis of how the Governor's vetoes and amendments impacted each of MIRA's budgetary priorities:

In a victory for MIRA and allies, the Governor amended **Section 121 of the legislature's final budget, which cuts eligibility for 28,000 "special status" immigrants in Commonwealth Care, and partially restored funding for the population at \$70 million, subject to approval of his supplementary budget.** The amendment involves a complex and confusing process for partially restoring coverage for the 28,000 immigrants impacted by the cuts.

The Governor amended Outside Section 121 in attachment L to the legislature's budget, which ends Commonwealth Care coverage for 28,000 legal immigrants as of August 1, 2009 with the month of July representing the required 30 days for notice of termination. In August, this population will qualify for MassHealth Limited and/or the Health Safety Net, both of which cover emergency services only.

During the month of July and August, the Commonwealth Connector Authority, the Executive Office of Administration and Finance, and the Executive Office of Health and Human Services will work with stakeholders to put together a different coverage plan to cover this group of 28,000 from September 1, 2009 to the end of June 2010. The Governor funds the changes through a supplemental budget that includes \$70 million for partial restoration of Commonwealth Care that comes in the form of vetoes, movement of funds, and an expected increase in Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP) reimbursement rate, due to an increase in the state's unemployment rate. There is no direct relationship between certain vetoes and the \$70 million. According to someone in State House leadership, the vote on overrides would likely take place the week of July 13th, which gives advocates time to organize.

Still, termination letters to this population are scheduled to go out on Wednesday and MIRA expects that it will create a lot of confusion and that advocates and providers will probably field a good number of calls. Please contact MIRA if you have any questions.

MIRA is appreciative of the Governor and his administration for making restoration of Commonwealth Care eligibility a priority and providing funding for partial restoration of comprehensive coverage at \$70 million. This is a first step in a long process that requires the legislature to be an equal partner in preserving coverage. However, we are concerned that creating a separate and substandard plan in Commonwealth Care for a population that is working and paying taxes like anyone else sets a bad precedent. MIRA will be working with allies in the legislature to ensure that this population of working, tax-paying residents maintains coverage at the highest level possible. Please contact your Senator and Representative at 617-722-2000 and urge them to preserve Commonwealth Care eligibility for 28,000 immigrants by adopting the Governor's amendment to Outside Section 121 of the legislature's budget.

**The Citizenship for New Americans Program (CNAP) (Line item 4003-0122) was not impacted by the Governor's vetoes.** CNAP was funded at **\$250,000** in the legislature's final budget, a decrease of 62% from initial FY09 funding levels. This low level of funding threatens the ability of providers to maintain their programs and provide needed services to low-income immigrants who wish to become naturalized U.S. citizens, but face numerous economic, legal and other barriers to doing so. The language of the line item was also changed so that priority is given to immigrants who, through naturalization, would move from state-funded benefits (EAEDC) to federally-funded benefits (SSI). CNAP will be funded at \$250,000 in FY10.

**The Governor did not alter funding for the Adult Basic Education and English for Speakers of Other Languages line item.** The legislature's budget included **\$28,085,096** for

ABE and ESOL (Line item 7035-0002). This figure represents a reduction of more than \$3 million from FY09 levels of \$31.1 million and a reduction of \$1.9 million after this year's 9-C cuts brought the value down to \$29.9 million. ABE/ESOL will be funded at \$28,085,096 in FY10.

**The Governor's supplemental budget includes an additional \$11 million for the Workforce Training Fund (WTF), which would bring the total level of funding to \$21 million.** The WTF was funded at **\$10 million** (line item 7003-0701) in the legislature's final budget, a decrease of \$11 million from initial FY09 levels. MIRA was asking for full funding at \$21 million to help facilitate the implementation of a Dedicated Fund for ABE/ESOL that combines funding from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's workplace education grants with funds from the WTF to create a single, streamlined fund that expands resources for workplace education. The WTF is funded exclusively through employer contributions in the form of a surcharge on Unemployment Insurance and, as such, should not impact the General Fund. The WTF will be funded at \$21 million in FY10 if the Governor's supplemental budget passes and \$10 million if it does not.

**The Governor did not propose any changes to the line item containing the Refugee and Immigrant Safety and Empowerment (RISE) Program (4513-1130).** The line item containing RISE was funded at **\$4,908,264** in the legislature's final budget, and **language referring to "immigrants and refugees" was included in the line item.** The cut brings the total reduction to 23% of FY09 levels for the line item. Furthermore, the Conference Committee added an additional program to the line item, which could have a negative impact on funding to other programs in the line item, including RISE. The severe cut in funding threatens the stability of programs and the provision of essential services for survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault. Because the Department of Public Health is responsible for administering the funds for RISE and other programs in the line item, it is unclear what the funding level of RISE will be in FY10. MIRA will provide information on the funding level as soon as possible.

**The Governor vetoed Outside Section 129 of the legislature's final budget, which would eliminate funding for the MassHealth Outreach Grant Program.** The program was funded through Outside Section 129 language in the legislature's budget, which asks two agencies (HEFA and the Connector) to continue their contributions to outreach at **\$2.5 million**. The grant program was eliminated in both the Governor's House 1 budget and the Final House budget. The inclusion of funding for the MassHealth Outreach Grant Program had been considered a victory, since indications from numerous legislators were that it was unlikely to be included in the budget. The grants are matched at 60.2% by the federal government, so the cost to the Commonwealth would only be \$980,000. If the Governor's veto is accepted, the MassHealth Outreach Grant program will be eliminated in FY10. If the legislature overrides the veto, it will continue to be funded, likely at \$2.5 million. Please contact your Senator and Representative at 617-722-2000 and ask them to override the Governor's veto to the MassHealth Outreach Grant Program.

## FY10 Budget Update

Budget Item	FY09 (9C)	House 1 (#1)	House W&M	Final House	Senate W&M	Final Senate	House 1 (#2)	Conference Committee
<i>Citizenship</i> 4003-0122	\$605,000	\$580,000	\$500,000	<b>\$500,000</b>	\$250,000	<b>\$250,000</b>	\$250,000	<b>\$250,000</b>
<i>ABE/ESOL</i> 7035-0002	\$29,995,000	\$29,223,195	\$28,058,646	<b>\$28,058,646</b>	\$28,058,096	<b>\$28,058,096</b>	\$28,223,195	<b>\$28,058,096</b>
<i>RISE</i> 4513-1130	\$6,353,000	Consolidated	\$4,058,264	<b>\$5,108,264</b>	\$4,058,264	<b>\$5,058,264</b>	Consolidated	<b>\$4,908,264</b>
<i>MassHealth O &amp; E</i> 4000-0352	\$3,500,000	\$0	\$0	<b>\$0</b>	\$2,500,000 (outside section 73 language)	<b>\$2,500,000</b> (outside section 73 language)	\$0	<b>\$2,500,000</b> (outside section 129)
<i>Workforce Training Fund</i> 7003-0701	\$12,000,000	\$21,000,000	\$15,000,000	<b>\$21,000,000</b>	\$5,000,000	<b>\$10,000,000</b>	\$18,000,000	<b>\$10,000,000</b>
<i>Commonwealth Care Eligibility</i> Senate Outside Section 73	X	X	X	<b>X</b>	Eliminates coverage for 28,000 special status immigrants	<b>Eliminates coverage for 28,000 special status immigrants</b>	X	<b>Eliminates coverage for 28,000 special status immigrants</b>
<b>Governor's Vetoed</b>								
<b>\$250,000</b>								
<b>\$28,058,096</b>								
<b>\$4,908,264</b>								
<b>Vetoed - \$0</b>								
<b>\$21,000,000 in supplemental budget</b>								
<b>Partial Restoration for 28,000 at \$70 million in supplemental budget</b>								

For more information or questions, please contact Toby Guevin at 617-350-5480 x216 or [tguevin@miracoalition.org](mailto:tguevin@miracoalition.org)

For more information on the state budget, visit: [www.miracoalition.org/state/budget](http://www.miracoalition.org/state/budget)