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### **Massachusetts Caregivers Urge the Passage of Foster Parent Bill of Rights**

**BOSTON, MA** - On March 26, 2019, foster parents and advocates are headed to Beacon Hill to testify in support for the establishment of the Foster Parent Bill of Rights in Massachusetts before the Joint Committee on Children, Families, and Persons with Disabilities.

*An Act establishing the Foster Parent Bill of Rights (H.113 & S. 30), filed by State Representative Tricia Farley-Bouvier (D-Pittsfield), State Representative Joe McKenna (R-Webster), and State Senator Jo Comerford (D-Northampton), is focused on bringing clarity to the rights of foster parents and setting a foundation to inform the expectations and interactions between caregivers and the Department of Children and Families.*

"Foster parents need to be treated as a respected part of the professional team. They open their hearts and homes to the children of the Commonwealth and the Commonwealth needs to support them," said State Representative Tricia Farley-Bouvier.

Ten foster parents will offer personal stories that illustrate how the Massachusetts Foster Parent Bill of Rights will support foster, pre-adoptive, and kinship caregivers to care and protect the children in their homes. The hearing will be in Hearing Room A-2 at the State House.

"The Foster Parent Bill of Rights is a good faith deal between foster parents and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. One that we can build on together to reform policy and practice with the goal of improving the foster care experience for the kids we love," explained Cathie Twiraga, Vice President of the Massachusetts Alliance for Families, the foster family association.

Foster parents will be joined by Mary McGeown, Executive Director of the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty, Tammy Mello, Executive Director of the Children's League of Massachusetts, and Cheryl Haddad, President of the Massachusetts Alliance for Families to tell legislators why it is time for Massachusetts to join the 17 other states who have adopted a Foster Parent Bill of Rights around the country.

This coalition of caregivers and advocates will address the issues that affect the everyday lives of more than 5,000 foster and caregiver families all across the Commonwealth and voice the urgent passage of the Foster Parent Bill of Rights.

**About the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children:** MSPCC's comprehensive array of programs and services includes child abuse prevention and intervention programs, mental health treatment, and adoptive and foster care support. Services are provided both in the home and through community-based locations across the state of Massachusetts. In addition, MSPCC is dedicated to protecting and promoting the rights and well-being of children and families and advocating for laws on their behalf. - See more at [www.mspcc.org](http://www.mspcc.org).

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