

HOUSE No. 3911

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

**In the One Hundred and Ninetieth General Court
(2017-2018)**

An Act to establish the family caregiver tax credit.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 6 of chapter 62 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2016
2 Official Edition, is hereby amended by inserting after subsection (t) the following new
3 subsection:-

4 (u)(1) As used in this subsection, the following words shall have the following meanings
5 unless the context clearly requires otherwise:

6 "Activities of daily living", everyday functions and activities, which individuals usually
7 do without help, including, but not limited to, bathing, continence, dressing, eating, toileting and
8 transferring.

9 "Eligible family member", an individual who (1) is at least 18 years of age during a
10 taxable year, (2) requires assistance with at least one activity of daily living and (3) qualifies as a
11 dependent, spouse, parent or other relation by blood or marriage, including an in-law,
12 grandparent, grandchild, step-parent, aunt, uncle, niece or nephew of the family caregiver.

13 “Evaluation year”, the year in which an evaluation of the tax credit is to be complete. The
14 evaluation year shall be every 5 years after the effective date of this subsection.

15 "Family caregiver", an individual who is a resident taxpayer for the taxable year and had
16 eligible expenditures, as described in paragraph (3) of this subsection, with respect to 1 or more
17 eligible family members during the taxable year. In the case of a joint return, the term includes
18 the individual and the individual's spouse. The family caregiver claiming the credit must have a
19 Massachusetts adjusted gross income of less than \$75,000 for an individual and \$150,000 for a
20 couple and incur uncompensated expenses directly related to the care of an eligible family
21 member.

22 (2) A taxpayer who is a family caregiver is eligible to receive for a taxable year is equal
23 to a refundable credit against the taxes imposed by this chapter. The credit shall be equal to 100
24 per cent of the eligible expenditures incurred by the taxpayer during the taxable year, with a
25 maximum allowable credit of \$1,500.

26 (3) Expenditures eligible to be claimed for the tax credit include the costs associated
27 with:

28 (i) the improvement or alteration to the family caregiver's primary residence to permit the
29 eligible family member to remain mobile, safe, and independent;

30 (ii) the purchase or lease of equipment that is necessary to assist an eligible family
31 member in carrying out one or more activities of daily living; and

32 (iii) other goods, services or supports that assist the family caregiver in providing care to
33 an eligible family member, such as expenditures related to hiring a home care aide or personal

34 care attendant, respite care, adult day health, transportation, legal and financial services and
35 assistive technology.

36 (4) No taxpayer shall be entitled to claim a tax credit under this subsection for the same
37 eligible expenditures claimed by another taxpayer. The total amount of tax credits claimed by
38 family caregivers shall not exceed \$1,500 for the same eligible family member. If two or more
39 family caregivers claim tax credits for the same eligible family member, the total of which
40 exceeds \$1,500, the total amount of the credit allowed shall be allocated in amounts
41 proportionate to each eligible taxpayer's share of the total amount of the eligible expenditures for
42 the eligible family member.

43 (5) A taxpayer may not claim a tax credit under this section for expenses incurred in
44 carrying out general household maintenance activities, including painting, plumbing, electrical
45 repairs or exterior maintenance, and such expenses must be directly related to assisting the
46 family caregiver in providing care to an eligible family member.

47 (6) The commissioner of the department of revenue shall promulgate rules and
48 regulations relative to the administration and enforcement of this subsection.

49 (7) The commissioner shall annually, not later than September 1, file a report with the
50 house and senate committees on ways and means, the chairs of the joint committee on revenue
51 and the chairs of the joint committee on elder affairs identifying, by community, the total amount
52 of tax credits claimed and the total number of tax filers who received the tax credit for the
53 preceding fiscal year.

54 (8) On or before May 31 of the year before the evaluation year, there shall be established
55 a committee entitled the Caregiver Tax Credit Evaluation Committee to conduct a review of the
56 tax credit.

57 The committee shall be comprised of 7 members: 2 of whom shall be appointed by the
58 secretary of the executive office of health and human services; 2 of whom shall be appointed by
59 the secretary of the executive office of elder affairs; 1 of whom shall be appointed by the
60 secretary of the executive office for administration and finance; 1 of whom shall be appointed by
61 the president of the senate; and 1 of whom shall be appointed by the speaker of the house of
62 representatives.

63 The committee shall: (1) examine the purpose for which the tax credit was established;
64 (2) determine whether the original intent of the tax credit is still appropriate; (3) examine
65 whether the tax credit is meeting its objectives; (4) examine whether the purposes of the tax
66 credit could be more efficiently and effectively carried out through alternative methods; and (5)
67 calculate the costs of providing the tax credit, including the administrative cost and lost revenues
68 to the commonwealth.

69 The committee shall file a report of its findings with the senate and house clerks and with
70 the governor, which shall include a recommendation as to whether the tax credit should be
71 continued, with or without changes, or be terminated. The report shall be accompanied by any
72 legislation that is needed to accomplish the recommendations of the report. The report shall be
73 filed no later than December 31 of the evaluation year.

74 SECTION 2. This act shall apply to taxable years beginning on or after January 1 next
75 following the date of enactment.