

HOUSE No. 4872

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts



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GOVERNOR

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KARYN POLITO
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

August 6, 2018

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives,

I am returning to you unsigned House Bill No. 4823, “An Act Relative to the Aid to Families with Dependent Children Program.”

This bill would eliminate the “family cap” within the Transitional Aid to Families with Dependent Children (“TAFDC”) program. It would effectively re-enact legislation that appeared as a number of outside sections to the Fiscal Year 2019 budget and that I returned for amendment. I did sign other sections of the budget that introduced a simplified and more generous method of adjusting benefits for TAFDC recipients whose incomes increase as they return to work.

As I explained in returning the earlier legislation, eliminating the “family cap” without making other accompanying changes to the TAFDC program could have the unwanted effect of reducing incentives for TAFDC recipients to get back to work. In returning the earlier legislation, I also expressed concern about continuing inequities in the determination of benefits under the program. I therefore proposed an amendment that would eliminate the “family cap” and also require that adult Supplemental Security Income (SSI) be counted in the eligibility calculation for TAFDC. This correction would align income determinations under TAFDC with income determinations under the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. In doing so, it would treat SSI the same as other sources of benefit income – like veteran’s or retirement, survivors, and disability insurance (RSDI) benefits – that are already counted in determining

eligibility and benefit level under TAFDC. I believe an elimination of the “family cap” must be done in conjunction with further reforms to the TAFDC program such as the one I proposed.

For these reasons, I am returning House Bill No. 4823 unsigned.

I approve the remainder of this Act.

respectfully submitted

Charles D. Baker,
Governor