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State Rep. Tom Stanley sees relief for renters in program

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The Master of Education at Curry College

By Richard Conn/Daily News Staff
Daily News Tribune

Posted Mar 13, 2009 @ 12:02 AM

WALTHAM — A local legislator is hoping to establish a state-funded rental assistance program that would help people increase their incomes.

State Rep. Thomas Stanley, D-Waltham, filed a bill earlier this year which would offer to subsidize the rent of low-income individuals or families, offer education and job training to help increase their income and set them up with an escrow account to build assets.

CLICK HERE Those eligible for the program must have a gross annual income not exceeding 30 percent of the area median

income. In Waltham, according to a 2008 state report, a single person in the 30 percent category would make a maximum of \$18,050 a year.

Also people eligible would need to have a work history and either be working or seeking employment. Each participant would pay 30 percent of their income toward rent.

"As their income increases, their portion of the rent increases," Stanley said.

The increased rent amount is set aside in an escrow account, so as the person's income increases, so does their savings.

The program would last five years for each participant.

"At the end of the five-year program, they don't need state subsidies," Stanley said.

Stanley said he has been working with the Metropolitan Boston Housing Partnership on the legislation. Stanley said the benefit "a lot of people getting state subsidies are discouraged from getting a job because they will lose the benefits that they have."

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