

Massachusetts Democrat Governor Backtracks on Liberal Policy After Migrant Crime Spikes in Her State

By James Conrad

Massachusetts taxpayers have shouldered an increasingly heavy burden as the state's emergency shelter system expanded to accommodate a surge of migrants. Indeed, with 128 hotels and motels now serving as temporary housing across the Bay State, communities are witnessing unprecedented strain on local resources.

The system's price tag has already reached staggering heights. A recent state commission report revealed Massachusetts is on track to spend up to one billion dollars on its emergency shelter system in the 2025 fiscal year alone.

However, it's not just about the money anymore. A series of disturbing incidents have forced even the most ardent sanctuary supporters to face an uncomfortable reality. So much for "sanctuary makes us safer."

The Breaking Point

Now, Democratic Gov. Maura Healey is demanding that nearly all family members living in state emergency shelters prove they are legally present in the United States. This is a stunning reversal that has shocked progressive allies.

If this sounds familiar to conservatives who've been warning about this for years, you're not alone. The governor's dramatic policy shift follows a horrifying pattern of criminal activity that began unfolding in early 2024. In March, a Haitian man who entered through a Biden administration program was arrested for allegedly raping a disabled minor at a shelter motel. Nine months later, in December, authorities discovered an AR-15 rifle and hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of illicit drugs in another shelter resident's room.

Internal documentation obtained by the Boston Herald revealed an even darker truth: Massachusetts' state-funded migrant-family shelters have been plagued by incidents of child rape, drugs, physical assaults, and other crimes since at least 2022.

“It’s outrageous that this individual took advantage of our shelter system to engage in criminal activity,” Healey declared. She said this after ordering an immediate inspection of every shelter facility in the state.

The financial toll on Massachusetts residents continues to mount. Beyond the verified billion-dollar projected cost for fiscal year 2025, communities are grappling with strained local services and overwhelmed public resources.

In June of 2024, Healey took the unprecedented step of deploying state officials to border communities with an urgent message. The message was: don’t come to Massachusetts – the shelters are full.

This represents a stark departure from the state’s previous welcoming stance. Massachusetts has long been identified as a sanctuary haven for illegal migrants. Indeed, Boston and several other localities have limited cooperation between local law enforcement and federal immigration authorities.

Democratic Leadership Crisis

Remember when questioning sanctuary policies was called xenophobic? Now, while Governor Healey attempts to address the crisis, Boston Mayor Michelle Wu remains notably silent. Wu, who stated in 2023 that sanctuary policies “make everyone safer,” has failed to respond to repeated requests for comment about criminal activities in local shelters.

The governor’s new proposals, currently pending legislative approval, would require shelter applicants to verify their identity and residency before being

housed. Additionally, applicants must prove they are in the country lawfully unless they have a child who is a citizen or lawful resident.

“The people of Massachusetts should not continue to have to deal with the impacts of federal inaction,” Healey stated. This was a clear attempt to shift blame toward Washington while quietly dismantling her own sanctuary policies.

Conservative critics point out that the crisis was predictable.

“It’s a shame that the Healey-Driscoll Administration took this long to come to terms with the gravity of the situation,” said Amy Carnevale, chair of the MassGOP.

As Massachusetts grapples with this crisis, other sanctuary jurisdictions across the country face similar reckonings. The pattern is clear: policies that prioritize political ideology over public safety and fiscal responsibility ultimately prove unsustainable.

Recent ICE data from the fourth quarter of 2024 shows a 47% increase in arrests of illegal immigrants for sex crimes in the Boston area and throughout Massachusetts. This only highlights the growing public safety concerns that prompted this policy shift.

For Massachusetts residents watching their tax dollars fund an increasingly dangerous system, the governor’s reversal may be too little, too late. The question now isn’t whether sanctuary policies have failed. Instead, it’s how much more it will cost. This is the case in both dollars and public safety – before other Democratic leaders follow Healey’s lead in abandoning them.

(Underlining added!)