

HOUSE No. 2791

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Carl M. Sciortino, Jr.

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the adoption of the accompanying bill:

An Act relative to the efficiency of subsidized housing procedures.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>Carl M. Sciortino, Jr.</i>	<i>34th Middlesex</i>	<i>1/21/2011</i>
<i>Cory Atkins</i>	<i>14th Middlesex</i>	<i>2/3/2011</i>
<i>Benjamin Swan</i>	<i>11th Hampden</i>	<i>2/4/2011</i>

HOUSE No. 2791

By Mr. Sciortino of Medford, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 2791) of Carl M. Sciortino, Jr., Cory Atkins and Benjamin Swan relative to the use of electronic funds transfers and third party designees for tenants of publicly subsidized housing. Housing.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year Two Thousand Eleven

An Act relative to the efficiency of subsidized housing procedures.

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. Chapter 121B of the General Laws is hereby amended by inserting after
2 section 32F the following new section:-

3 Section 32G. (a) Housing authorities and public housing agencies or their subcontractors
4 who are administering federal or state public housing or rental assistance programs, and owners
5 or managers of affordable housing developments shall offer electronic fund transfer
6 arrangements to tenants and participants in such programs as a means of ensuring direct and
7 timely payment of rent and satisfaction of debts. Such arrangements shall be available to tenants
8 and participants at no cost and on a voluntary basis. Similar arrangements shall also be offered
9 to otherwise qualified applicants who owe debts to housing authorities or public housing
10 agencies or affordable housing developments that otherwise would be a barrier to acceptance
11 into such public housing, rental assistance, or affordable housing programs provided that the
12 applicants enters into a repayment arrangement which is reasonable in light of the income and
13 circumstances of the applicant. Late payment penalties under section 32 of chapter 121B of the

General Laws and costs under section 11 of chapter 186 of the General Laws, if applicable, shall be waived by the Commonwealth for any tenants or participants participating in such arrangements.

(b) Housing authorities and public housing agencies who administer state or federal public housing or rental assistance programs and owners or managers of affordable housing developments shall permit tenants or participants in such programs to designate, at the inception of their tenancy or subsidy, or at any point thereafter, a third party who shall receive a copy of any notice provided to the tenant or participant by the housing authority, housing subsidy provider, or owner of an affordable housing development, including any notice reflecting an intention to terminate the tenant's tenancy or participation in a subsidy program. Such third parties may include a friend, family member, a caseworker, or such other person at the tenant may designate. Such designation may include authorization for release of information. Both the designation for third party notice and any authorization for release of information may be revoked by the tenant or participant at any time. In any case in which such designation and release of information is in effect, and an adverse action with respect to the tenancy or participation is under consideration, the parties shall, upon the request of the tenant or the third party, confer regarding any steps that might be taken to preserve the tenancy or subsidy.