

HOUSE No. 4253

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts



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To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives,

Pursuant to Article LVI, as amended by Article XC, Section 3 of the Amendments to the Constitution, I am returning to you for amendment House Bill No. 4069, “An Act Establishing Additional Powers for Municipal Light Boards.”

This bill would clarify that a municipal light board operating pursuant to General Laws Chapter 164 may contract with the city or town in which it operates to provide billing, administrative, and other support services to a municipal water utility owned and operated by the city or town. I agree that encouraging municipal light boards to provide support services to municipal water authority can achieve valuable efficiencies in the delivery of municipal services. I am concerned, however, that the bill creates ambiguity concerning the proper allocation and accounting of municipal water utility revenues in such an arrangement, particularly with respect to fee for service arrangements that may pre-date this proposed legislation.

Accordingly, I recommend amending the bill by striking out the second sentence of the proposed new section 55A. The modified bill would therefore read as follows:

Chapter 164 of the General Laws is hereby amended by inserting after section 55 the following section:-

Section 55A. A municipal light board may enter into an agreement with the city or town where it operates to provide billing, administrative, operational or other support services to assist the city or town with the operation of a municipal water utility owned and operated by the city or

town upon such terms and conditions as agreed to by the city or town and the municipal light board.

Respectfully submitted

Charles D. Baker,
Governor