

SENATE No. 1183

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

James B. Eldridge

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 effective enforcement of municipal ordinances and bylaws.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	
<i>James B. Eldridge</i>	<i>Middlesex and Worcester</i>	
<i>Denise Provost</i>	<i>27th Middlesex</i>	<i>1/31/2019</i>

SENATE No. 1183

By Mr. Eldridge, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 1183) of James B. Eldridge and Denise Provost for legislation relative to the effective enforcement of municipal ordinances and bylaws. Municipalities and Regional Government.

[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION
SEE SENATE, NO. 1130 OF 2017-2018.]

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

**In the One Hundred and Ninety-First General Court
(2019-2020)**

An Act relative to the effective enforcement of municipal ordinances and bylaws.

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. Section 21D of chapter 40 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 20164
2 Official Edition, is hereby amended by adding the following paragraph:-

3 Notwithstanding this section or any other general or special law to the contrary, in any
4 suit in equity brought in the superior court, district court or the land court by a city or town, or a
5 municipal agency, officer, board or commission having enforcement powers on behalf of the city
6 or town, to enforce an ordinance or by-law, or a rule, regulation or order described in this
7 section, the court, upon a finding that the violation occurred, may assess a civil penalty in
8 accordance with this section and section 21, and reasonable attorneys’ fees and costs. Civil
9 penalties assessed under this paragraph shall be in addition to any equitable relief ordered by the
10 court and shall be paid to the city or town for use as the city or town may determine. In assessing

11 a penalty under this paragraph, the court shall consider: (1) whether the violation was willful or
12 negligent; (2) the harm to the public health, safety or environment resulting from the violation;
13 (3) the economic benefit gained by the defendant as a result of the violation; (4) the cost to the
14 city or town resulting from the violation; (5) the history of noncompliance by the defendant; and
15 (6) whether the defendant made good faith efforts to cure or cease the violation of the ordinance
16 or by-law after the first notice by the city or town of such violation.