

SENATE No. 2542

Senate, February 18, 2020 -- Message from His Excellency the Governor (pursuant to Article LVI, as amended by Article XC, Section 3 of the Amendments to the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts) returning with recommendation of amendment the engrossed Bill relative to special police officers in the town of West Bridgewater (see Senate, No. 2361, amended).

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts



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February 13, 2020

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 Senate Bill No. 2361, “An Act Authorizing the Appointment of Special Police Officers in the Town of West Bridgewater.”

This bill was adopted in response to a home rule petition by the Town of West Bridgewater and would permit the Town Select Board, following a recommendation by the Chief of Police, to appoint special police officers to perform police details.

I support the use of special police officers to supplement the capacity of municipal police departments to execute police detail assignments, and I recognize that section 96B of chapter 41 of the General Laws contemplates the use of “reserve” or “intermittent police officer[s]” for such assignments. I am concerned, however, that special police officers appointed under the language of this bill would not be required to complete a course of standard police training, contrary to the mandate of section 96B of chapter 41 and contrary to the standard requirement in special legislation like this specifically authorizing municipalities to make such appointments.

Accordingly, I recommend amending the bill by striking out the third sentence of Section 4 of the bill and inserting in place thereof the following sentence:-

A special police officer appointed pursuant to this act shall be considered a reserve or intermittent police officer and subject to the third paragraph of section 96B of chapter 41 of the General Laws and shall not be considered a full-time police officer.

Respectfully submitted,

Charles D. Baker,
Governor