HOUSE DOCKET, NO. 1933 FILED ON: 2/15/2021

HOUSE . . . . . No. 285

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Patricia A. Duffy and Natalie M. Higgins

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 to help developers revitalize underutilized buildings.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
Patricia A. Duffy	*5th Hampden*	*2/15/2021*
Natalie M. Higgins	*4th Worcester*	*2/19/2021*
Marcos A. Devers	*16th Essex*	*2/16/2021*
Tami L. Gouveia	*14th Middlesex*	*2/22/2021*
Jacob R. Oliveira	*7th Hampden*	*2/24/2021*
James K. Hawkins	*2nd Bristol*	*2/26/2021*
James B. Eldridge	*Middlesex and Worcester*	*3/8/2021*
Carol A. Doherty	*3rd Bristol*	*4/12/2021*

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By Representatives Duffy of Holyoke and Higgins of Leominster, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 285) of Patricia A. Duffy, Natalie M. Higgins and others relative to building upgrades and improvements in underutilized buildings located in economically distressed areas. Community Development and Small Businesses.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the One Hundred and Ninety-Second General Court
(2021-2022)

An Act to help developers revitalize underutilized buildings.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

Chapter 23G of the Massachusetts General laws, is hereby amended by adding at the end thereof the following section:

SECTION 47. (a) There shall be established within the agency a underutilized building repair fund. The purpose of the fund shall be to facilitate building upgrades and improvements in underutilized buildings located in economically distressed areas, as defined in section 2 of G.L. c. 21E, through grants to nonprofit and for-profit entities and shall be administered in a manner that takes into account the needs of owners of commercial or industrial buildings in all regions of the commonwealth. The agency shall implement the fund and may propose guidelines to establish a program in accordance herewith. The fund shall be eligible to receive funds as appropriated by the general court, the board, federal grants and programs, and transfers, grants and donations from state agencies, foundations and private parties, to be held in a separate account or accounts segregated from other funds. The agency shall, through grants or loans,

administer the fund for the purpose of facilitating renovations of underutilized commercial or industrial buildings located in economically distressed areas of the Commonwealth where the agency has determined that tenant rent rates or credit worthiness do not support commercial debt. Grants or loans under this program shall be made to eligible nonprofit and for-profit entities for the following improvements, including but not be limited to: (i) elevator installation, repair or improvement; (ii) handicapped access installation, repair or improvement; (iii) sprinkler system installation, repair, or improvement; (iv) tenant fit-out or improvements; and (v) any other building code requirement or building improvement. No grant shall be awarded unless and until the applicant for such grant contributes an amount equal to 25 per cent of the grant for which such applicant has applied.

(b) To be eligible for financial assistance from the fund, in addition to the requirements in subsection (a), the applicant shall submit to the agency, for the agency's approval, a completed application providing all information required herein, including information on how the proposed underutilized building repair project will result in economic impact in terms of building occupancy, the number of jobs to be created or will contribute to the economic or physical revitalization of the economically distressed area in which the underutilized building is located.