

# HOUSE . . . . . No. 4605

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## The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, April 4, 2022.

The committee on Labor and Workforce Development to whom was referred the petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 1174) of Brendan P. Crighton for legislation to protect the right to time off for voting, and the petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 2011) of John J. Lawn, Jr., Richard M. Haggerty and Tram T. Nguyen relative to requiring employers to allow sufficient time for employees to exercise their right to vote in elections, reports recommending that the accompanying bill (House, No. 4605) ought to pass.

For the committee,

JOSH S. CUTLER.

**HOUSE . . . . . No. 4605**

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**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

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

An Act protecting the right to time off for voting.

*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 178 of Chapter 149 of the General Laws, as so appearing, is  
2 amended by striking said section and inserting in place thereof the following: -

3           Section 178. Every employer shall allow sufficient time for a person under his or her  
4 employ to exercise their right to vote in a state or municipal election in the Commonwealth. If a  
5 voter does not have sufficient time outside of working hours to vote during an election or  
6 designated early voting period, the voter may, without loss of pay, take off enough working time  
7 that, when added to the voting time available outside of working hours, will enable the voter to  
8 vote, provided the employee gives the employer at least 3 days notice.

9           The time off for voting shall be only at the beginning or end of the regular working shift,  
10 whichever allows the most free time for voting and the least time off from the regular working  
11 shift, unless otherwise mutually agreed.

12           SECTION 2. Said Chapter 149 is further amended by adding the following new sections:

13           Section 178(a). Every employer subject to this section shall post in a conspicuous place,  
14 or via electronic communication, a notice prepared and disseminated by the Secretary of the  
15 Commonwealth, containing such relevant information as the Secretary deems necessary to  
16 explain the section.

17           Section 178(b). Any employer who refuses to comply with the provisions of section one  
18 hundred seventy-eight regarding time off to vote shall be punished by providing an aggrieved  
19 voter under his or her employ a full day's pay.

20           Enforcement of this section will be under the purview and supervision of the Fair Labor  
21 Division of the Attorney General's Office.