

**SENATE . . . . . No. 2524**

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**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

PRESENTED BY:

***Patricia D. Jehlen***

*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 providing for a gender-neutral charter in the City of Somerville.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	
<i>Patricia D. Jehlen</i>	<i>Second Middlesex</i>	
<i>Mike Connolly</i>	<i>26th Middlesex</i>	<i>9/2/2021</i>
<i>Erika Uytterhoeven</i>	<i>27th Middlesex</i>	<i>9/2/2021</i>
<i>Christine P. Barber</i>	<i>34th Middlesex</i>	<i>9/8/2021</i>

**SENATE . . . . . No. 2524**

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By Ms. Jehlen, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 2524) of Patricia D. Jehlen (with approval of the mayor and city council) for legislation to provide for a gender-neutral charter in the City of Somerville. Municipalities and Regional Government. [Local approval received]

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**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

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

An Act providing for a gender-neutral charter in the City of Somerville.

*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 3 of title 1 of the charter of the city of Somerville, which is on file  
2 in the office of the archivist of the commonwealth, as provided in section 12 of chapter 43B of  
3 the General Laws, is hereby amended by striking out the word “male”, each time it appears.

4 SECTION 2. The second paragraph of section 7 of title 2 of said charter is hereby  
5 amended by striking out the word “chairperson”, each time it appears, and inserting in place  
6 thereof, in each instance, the following word:- chair.

7 SECTION 3. Section 13 of title 3 of said charter is hereby amended by striking out the  
8 word “his” and inserting in place thereof the following words:- the mayor’s.

9 SECTION 4. Said section 13 of said title 3 of said charter is hereby further amended by  
10 striking out the word “board”, each time it appears, and inserting in place thereof, in each  
11 instance, the following word:- council.

12 SECTION 5. Section 16 of said title 3 of said charter is hereby amended by striking out  
13 the words “If he approves thereof, he shall signify his approval by signing the same; but if not he  
14 shall return the same with his objections to the city council” and inserting in place thereof the  
15 following words:- If the mayor approves thereof, mayor shall signify approval by signing the  
16 same; but if not the mayor shall return the same with all objections to the city council.

17 SECTION 6. Said section 16 of said title 3 of said charter is hereby further amended by  
18 striking out the words “He may except from his approval of any ordinance, order, resolution or  
19 vote which he has the power to veto” and inserting in place thereof the following words:- The  
20 mayor may except from the approval of any ordinance, order, resolution or vote which the mayor  
21 has the power to veto.

22 SECTION 7. Clause (b) of section 17 of said title 3 of said charter is hereby amended by  
23 striking out the word “aldermen” and inserting in place thereof the following words:- City  
24 Council.

25 SECTION 8. Title 4 of said charter is hereby amended by striking out section 20 and  
26 inserting in place thereof the following section:-

27 The executive powers of the city shall be vested solely in the mayor and may be  
28 exercised either personally or through the several officers and boards in their respective  
29 departments under the mayor’s general supervision and control. In the case of a vacancy in any  
30 office to which appointment is made by the mayor, the mayor may personally perform the duties  
31 thereof but shall not be entitled to receive any salary or pay attached thereto. The mayor shall  
32 hold office for the 2 municipal years beginning with the first Monday in January following the  
33 mayor’s election, unless sooner removed, and until a successor is elected and qualified; provided,

34 however, that if elected to fill an existing vacancy, the newly elected mayor shall hold office  
35 only for the remainder of the unexpired term.

36 SECTION 9. Section 23 of said title 4 of said charter is hereby amended by striking out  
37 the first sentence and inserting in place thereof the following sentence:- The mayor may, in  
38 writing, suspend any executive officer and shall immediately report that action and the reason  
39 therefor to the city council.

40 SECTION 10. Section 24 of said title 4 of said charter is hereby amended by striking out  
41 the word "his" and inserting in place thereof the following words:- the mayor's.

42 SECTION 11. Said section 24 of said title 4 of said charter is hereby further amended by  
43 striking out the word "He", the first time it appears, and inserting in place thereof the following  
44 words:- The mayor.

45 SECTION 12. Said section 24 of said title 4 of said charter is hereby further amended by  
46 striking out the word "he", the second time it appears, and inserting in place thereof the  
47 following words:- the mayor.

48 SECTION 13. Section 25 of said title 4 of said charter is hereby amended by striking out  
49 the words "The mayor shall cause the laws, ordinances and orders for the government of the city  
50 to be enforced, and shall cause a record of all his official acts to be kept, and for that purpose and  
51 to aid him in his official duties he may appoint a secretary and define his duties" and inserting in  
52 place thereof the following words:- The mayor shall cause the laws, ordinances and orders for  
53 the government of the city to be enforced and shall cause a record of all the mayor's official acts  
54 to be kept and, for that purpose and to aid in accomplishing the official duties, the mayor may  
55 appoint a secretary and define the secretary's duties.

56 SECTION 14. Section 28 of title 5 of said charter is hereby amended by striking out the  
57 word “chairman” and inserting in place thereof the following word:- chair.

58 SECTION 15. Said section 28 of said title 5 of said charter is hereby further amended by  
59 striking out the word “committeeman”, each time it appears, and inserting in place thereof, in  
60 each instance, the following words:- committee member.

61 SECTION 16. Section 29 of said title 5 of said charter is hereby amended by striking out  
62 the word “chairman”, each time it appears, and inserting in place thereof, in each instance, the  
63 following word:- chair.

64 SECTION 17. Section 31 of title 6 of said charter is hereby amended by striking out the  
65 word “He”, the first and second time it appears, and inserting in place thereof, in each instance,  
66 the following words:- The city clerk.

67 SECTION 18. Said section 31 of said title 6 of said charter is hereby further amended by  
68 striking out the word “he”, the third time it appears.

69 SECTION 19. Said section 31 of said title 6 of said charter is hereby further amended by  
70 striking out the word “his”, each time it appears, and inserting in place thereof, in each instance,  
71 the following words:- the city clerk’s.

72 SECTION 20. Section 32 of said title 6 of said charter is hereby amended by striking out  
73 the word “He”, the first time it appears, and inserting in place thereof the following words:- The  
74 city treasurer and collector of taxes.

75 SECTION 21. Said section 32 of said title 6 of said charter is hereby further amended by  
76 striking out the words “prescribe; he shall” and inserting in place thereof the following words:-  
77 prescribe and shall.

78 SECTION 22. Subsection (a) of section 36 of said title 6 of said charter is hereby  
79 amended by striking out second paragraph and inserting in place thereof the following  
80 paragraph:-

81 The chair of the board of assessors shall serve full-time and shall be nominated as chair  
82 by the mayor at the time of their appointment. The chair of the board shall also serve as the  
83 department head in the administration of the department.

84 SECTION 23. The second paragraph of subsection (b) of said section 36 of said title 6 of  
85 said charter is hereby amended by striking out the word “chairman” and inserting in place  
86 thereof the following word:- chair.

87 SECTION 24. Subsection (g) of said section 36 of said title 6 of said charter is hereby  
88 amended by striking out the word “chairman” and inserting in place thereof the following word:-  
89 chair.

90 SECTION 25. Said subsection (g) of said section 36 of said title 6 of said charter is  
91 hereby further amended by striking out the word “his” and inserting in place thereof the  
92 following word:- their.

93 SECTION 26. Clause (1) of the last paragraph of said section 36 of said title 6 of said  
94 charter is hereby amended by striking out the word “chairman” and inserting in place thereof the  
95 following word:- chair.

96 SECTION 27. Section 40A of said title 6 of said charter is hereby amended by striking  
97 out the word “he”, each time it appears.

98 SECTION 28. Section 40B of said title 6 of said charter is hereby amended by striking  
99 out the word “his” and inserting in place thereof the following words:- the mayor’s.

100 SECTION 29. Section 42 of said title 6 of said charter is hereby amended by striking out  
101 the word “him” and inserting in place thereof the following words:- said commissioner.

102 SECTION 30. Section 46 of title 7 of said charter is hereby amended by striking out the  
103 word “his” and inserting in place thereof the following words:- the mayor’s.

104 SECTION 31. Section 47 of said title 7 of said charter is hereby amended by striking out  
105 the word “chairman” and inserting in place thereof the following word:- chair.

106 SECTION 32. Said section 47 of said title 7 of said charter is hereby further amended by  
107 striking out the word “his” and inserting in place thereof the following word:- their.

108 SECTION 33. Section 50 of said title 7 of said charter is hereby amended by striking out  
109 the word “his”, each time it appears, and inserting in place thereof, in each instance, the  
110 following word:- their.

111 SECTION 34. Said section 50 of said title 7 of said charter is hereby further amended by  
112 striking out the word “him” and inserting in place thereof the following word:- the person.

113 SECTION 35. Section 54 of said title 7 of said charter is hereby amended by striking out  
114 the word “male”.

115 SECTION 36. Section 1 of article II of the charter appendix of the city of Somerville,  
116 which is on file in the office of the archivist of the commonwealth, as provided in section 12 of  
117 chapter 43B of the General Laws, is hereby amended by striking out the word “his” and inserting  
118 in place thereof the following words:- that member’s.

119 SECTION 37. Section 4 of article IV of said charter appendix is hereby amended by  
120 striking out the word “chairman”, each time it appears, and inserting in place thereof, in each  
121 instance, the following word:- chair.

122 SECTION 38. Section 7 of said article IV of said charter appendix is hereby amended by  
123 striking out the words “shall be entered his residence on the preceding first day of January or on  
124 any subsequent day when he became a resident of said city” and inserting in place thereof the  
125 following words:- shall be entered their residence on the preceding first day of January or on any  
126 subsequent day when the voter became a resident of said city.

127 SECTION 39. Said section 7 of said article IV of said charter appendix is hereby further  
128 amended by striking out the words “the place at which he was listed by said board” and inserting  
129 in place thereof the following words:- the place at which each person was listed by said board.

130 SECTION 40. Said section 7 of said article IV of said charter appendix is hereby further  
131 amended by striking out the words “and shall have appeared and satisfied them of his right to  
132 have his name so entered” and inserting in place thereof the following words:- and shall have  
133 appeared and satisfied them of the person’s right to have their name so entered.

134 SECTION 41. Section 7 of article IV of said charter appendix is hereby further amended  
135 by striking out the words “They shall forthwith enter in the annual register” and inserting in



136 place thereof the following words:- The board of election commissioners shall forthwith enter in  
137 the annual register.

138 SECTION 42. Said section 7 of said article IV of said charter appendix is hereby further  
139 amended by striking out the words “his name has not been so entered” and inserting in place  
140 thereof the following words:- their name has not been so entered.

141 SECTION 43. Section 3 of article VI of said charter appendix is hereby amended by  
142 striking out the word “his”, each time it appears and inserting in place thereof, in each instance  
143 the following word:- their.

144 SECTION 44. Said section 3 of said article VI of said charter appendix is hereby further  
145 amended by striking out the word “he”, the first time it appears, and inserting in place thereof the  
146 following words:- such person.

147 SECTION 45. Said section 3 of said article VI of said charter appendix is hereby further  
148 amended by striking out the words “he is”, the second and third time they appear, and inserting  
149 in place thereof, in each instance, the following words:- they are.

150 SECTION 46. Section 5 of said article VI of said charter appendix is hereby amended by  
151 striking out the words “(name of candidate) as a”.

152 SECTION 47. Said section 5 of said article VI of said charter appendix is hereby further  
153 amended by striking out the word “him” and inserting in place thereof the following:- said  
154 candidate.

155 SECTION 48. Section 8 of said article VI of said charter appendix is hereby amended by  
156 striking out the word “chairman” and inserting in place thereof the following word:- chair.

157 SECTION 49. Said section 8 of said article VI of said charter appendix is hereby further  
158 amended by striking out the words “he desires” and inserting in place thereof the following  
159 words:- they desire.

160 SECTION 50. Section 9 of said article VI of said charter appendix is hereby amended by  
161 striking out the word “he” and inserting in place thereof the following words:- any candidate.

162 SECTION 51. Said section 9 of said article VI of said charter appendix is hereby further  
163 amended by striking out the word “his” and inserting in place thereof the following words:- any  
164 candidate’s.

165 SECTION 52. Section 11 of said article VI of said charter appendix is hereby amended  
166 by striking out the word “his” and inserting in place thereof the following words:- the board’s.

167 SECTION 53. Section 13 of said article VI of said charter appendix is hereby amended  
168 by striking out the word “his” and inserting in place thereof the following word:- their.

169 SECTION 54. Section 1 of article VII of said charter appendix is hereby amended by  
170 striking out the word “his”, each time it appears, and inserting in place thereof, in each instance,  
171 the following word:- their.

172 SECTION 55. Said section 1 of said article VII of said charter appendix is hereby further  
173 amended by striking out the word “chairman” and inserting in place thereof the following word:-  
174 chair.

175 SECTION 56. Section 2 of said article VII of said charter appendix is hereby amended by  
176 striking out the word “chairman” and inserting in place thereof the following word:- chair.

177 SECTION 57. Section 3 of said article VII of said charter appendix is hereby amended by  
178 striking out the word “chairman” and inserting in place thereof the following word:- chair.

179 SECTION 58. Section 6 of said article VII of said charter appendix is hereby amended by  
180 striking out the word “his”, each time it appears, and inserting in place thereof, in each instance,  
181 the following word:- their.

182 SECTION 59. Said section 6 of said article VII of said charter appendix is hereby further  
183 amended by striking out the word “him” and inserting in place thereof the following word:-  
184 them.

185 SECTION 60. Said section 6 of said article VII of said charter appendix is hereby further  
186 amended by striking out the word “chairman” and inserting in place thereof the following word:-  
187 chair.