

HOUSE No. 5683



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September 30, 2026

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 of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, I am returning to you for amendment H.4716, entitled “An Act Amending the Charter of the City of Pittsfield.”

This Home Rule bill would amend sections of the Charter of the City of Pittsfield to increase the terms of office for elected city councilors and school committee members from two to four years. I understand that the City’s intention in extending the terms was to have these officials serve terms co-terminus with the mayor. This Home Rule legislation requires the Charter amendment to be submitted to the voters at the next city election, which is scheduled for 2027. If approved by the voters, the term changes would go into effect for the 2029 election cycle, but the next mayoral election will not take place until 2031. As such, the bill will not meet the City’s goal of having these elected officials serve four-year terms synced with the mayor. I support the Home Rule legislation to update the Charter as approved by the City of Pittsfield to meet the intention of the City, and I request your prompt consideration of this bill.

For the reasons stated above, I recommend that the bill be amended to specify that the first election of city councilors and school committee members for four-year terms will take place at the same time as the next mayoral election during the November 2031 city election.

Respectfully submitted,

Maura T. Healey,
Governor