

HOUSE No.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Tackey Chan

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 codify pet-friendly elderly housing policies and ensure pet parity across housing authorities.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>Tackey Chan</i>	<i>2nd Norfolk</i>	<i>1/13/2025</i>

HOUSE No.

[Pin Slip]

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

**In the One Hundred and Ninety-Fourth General Court
(2025-2026)**

An Act to codify pet-friendly elderly housing policies and ensure pet parity across housing authorities.

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. Chapter 23B of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2022 Official
2 Edition, is hereby amended by inserting after section 5B the following new section:-

3 Section 5C. The executive office of housing and livable communities is hereby
4 authorized, empowered and directed to continue to conduct and maintain a program of pet
5 ownership for residents of state-aided public housing for the elderly, and to institute and
6 maintain a program of pet ownership for residents of state-aided public housing.

7 For the purposes of this section a pet shall mean any domesticated animal that is
8 commonly kept in a household. A state-aided public housing facility shall not prohibit the
9 keeping of dogs based on the dog’s breed, size, weight or appearance; require pet declawing;
10 require a pet deposit greater than 160 dollars or one month of rent, whichever is less; or evict a
11 tenant based solely on the presence of a pet.

12 Nothing in this section shall require a dog who has been declared dangerous by a
13 municipality under section 157 of Chapter 140 to reside in state-aided housing.

14 The department shall update regulations relating to pet ownership in state-aided housing.

15 Any housing authority that violates this section shall be subject to the penalty established
16 in Section 5C of Chapter 23B.

17 SECTION 2. There shall be an advisory group that consists of the following members:
18 the secretary of the executive office of housing and livable communities or a designee; a
19 representative of a local housing authority; two representative of a local tenant organization in
20 state-aided public housing; a representative of the Massachusetts commission against
21 discrimination; a representative of a tenants' rights organization; an animal control officer; a
22 representative of the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals; and a
23 representative of the Animal Rescue League of Boston. The members of the advisory group shall
24 appoint a chair.

25 The advisory group shall assist with:

26 (i) updating regulations relating to pet ownership;

27 (ii) the development of pet policies suitable for various types of housing catering to
28 various residents, including an apartment complex, single-family and multi-family home, and
29 congregate living;

30 (iii) the creation of guidance for the establishment and operation of a pet committee and a
31 pet grievance panel at housing authorities;

32 (iv) the determination of any data that should be collected by the executive office of
33 housing and livable communities from housing authorities and participating residents;

34 (iv) the aggregation of existing pet adoption, ownership, and care resources for housing
35 authorities and participating residents; and

36 (v) the proposal of any legislative recommendations related to pets in state-aided public
37 housing, to be submitted to the clerks of the senate and the house of representatives and the
38 chairs of the joint committee on housing.