

**Bill Number:** H.73

**Title:** *An Act relative to filing slander against anonymous parties on the internet*

**Lead Sponsor:** Representative Tackey Chan

**Hearing Date:** April 9, 2025

**Report Date:** June 8, 2025

**Current Law:**

- **M.G.L. Chapter 231** lays out the requirements for pleading and practice in civil cases.
- **M.G.L. Chapter 231 § 91** sets certain requirements for introducing statements outside of the pleadings and details what effect an unproven defense of truth shall have in actions for libel or slander.

**Executive Summary:** Amends Ch. 231 § 91 to compel third-party holders of personal information of anonymous parties (such as the administrators of a forum or website) to give that information to a person who is seeking to bring a civil action for slander or libel against that anonymous party. Anonymous parties could be people using online aliases or screennames, and this would ask forum administrators to cooperate in these instances. In cases of noncompliance by the third party, creates an avenue for a district court to order the third party to release to the plaintiff that information.

**Legislative History:** Filed as H.1238 (2015-16) Referred to Judiciary; sent to study  
H.2254 (2017-18) Referred to Judiciary; sent to study  
H.1375 (2019-20) Referred to Judiciary; sent to study  
H.104 (2021-22) Referred to AITIC; sent to study  
H. 61 (2023-24) Referred to AITIC; sent to study