

**JOINT COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SERVICE  
2025-2026 (194<sup>th</sup>) BILL SUMMARY**

**Bill Number:** H.2915  
**Title:** *An Act relative to updating judicial retirement benefits*  
**Sponsor(s):** Rep. Paul McMurtry (*Dedham*)  
**Hearing Date:** April 14, 2025  
**Reporting Deadline:** June 13, 2025

**Prior History:**  
2023-24 (H.2598): Reported favorably; Referred to HWM

**Similar Matters:** H.45 (State Treasurer – Identical); S1872 (Kennedy – Identical)

**CURRENT LAW:**

*M.G.L. c. 32 § 65C – Surviving Spouses of Judges:* Judges who retire or resign and are entitled to receive a pension or retirement allowance under certain provisions may instead receive a pension or allowance for life at a lesser annual rate so that his surviving spouse, who is his spouse at the time of retirement or resignation, may receive a pension for life upon the death of the judge that is two-thirds of the amount the judge was receiving. If a judge dies before they are at or over 65yrs or 70yrs and before they have retired or resigned, the spouse will receive the pension or retirement for life based on certain calculations. The surviving spouse and deceased judge must have been living together at the time of the judge’s death unless the appropriate retiring authority concludes there was a reasonable justification for living apart. The surviving spouse’s payments will terminate if they remarry. If a judge dies before retiring or resigning and the surviving spouse is not entitled to or there is no surviving spouse, the pension or allowance will go to his estate.

*M.G.L. c. 32 § 65D paragraph (h) – Retirement or Resignation of Judges Appointed on or after Jan. 12, 1975:* Payments to the judges that retire or resign under section 65D of chapter 32 and payments to their surviving spouses under the provisions of section 65C of chapter 32 will be made from the judges’ retirement fund. If the payments are in excess of the deposit in the judges’ retirement fund, they will be paid from the same source as the salaries of like judicial officers of the court are paid.

**SUMMARY:**

This bill strikes the current language of section 65C of chapter 32 and replaces it in entirety. The term “beneficiary” is used in place of “spouse” so that a beneficiary may be someone other than a spouse. The bill states that a beneficiary may only be the spouse, former spouse who has not remarried, child, father, mother, sister, or brother of the member. It would be established that if a member has a beneficiary, and that beneficiary was to die before the member, the member’s

retirement shall be paid in full thereafter and they may not choose another option. If a judge, who would be entitled upon resigning to a pension for life, dies before resigning, the provisions of Paragraph (d) of Subsection 2 of Section 12 of Chapter 32 (Option D: member survivor allowance) will apply.

This bill amends section 65D of chapter 32 to include in paragraph (h) of section 65D of chapter 32, payments of such retirement allowances and pensions will be made as provided in sections twelve and thirteen (superannuation retirements).