

**Committee on Public Health
Bill Summary**

Bill No. H2547/S1521
Title: *An Act ensuring municipal control in public health systems*
Sponsor: Representative Kenneth P. Sweezey/Senator Peter J. Durant
Committee: Public Health
Hearing Date: June 25, 2025
Similar Matters: S1521
Prior History: New File
Reporting Deadline: August 24, 2025

Current Law:

- **M.G.L. Chapter 238 § 244 of the Acts of 2024** pertains to the public health excellence program outlined in M.G.L. Chapter 111 § 27D. This Chapter contains definitions related to the public health excellence program, the program’s purpose, duties, and grant program.

Summary:

SECTION 1 amends M.G.L. Chapter 238 § 244 of the Acts of 2024 by inserting a new sentence at the end of subsection (c) directing DPH to hold public hearings before adopting any foundational public health service standards. Any municipality seeking to adopt foundational public health service standards or enter into an Inter-Municipal Agreement must first obtain prior approval of the city council or town meeting by a two-thirds vote.

SECTION 2 amends M.G.L. Chapter 238 § 244 of the Acts of 2024 by permitting boards of health to voluntarily implement and comply with foundational public health service standards.

SECTION 3 amends M.G.L. Chapter 238 § 244 of the Acts of 2024 by removing DPH’s mandate to provide funds to boards of health to implement and comply with foundational public health service standards and instead requiring DPH to use such funds to assist boards in adopting practices to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the delivery of public health services.

SECTION 4 amends M.G.L. Chapter 238 § 244 of the Acts of 2024 by limiting the uses of funding provided by DPH under Section 3 of this bill. Specifically, this section removes “annual noncompetitive funding to ensure that all residents of the commonwealth are provided with foundational public health services” as a permissible use of said funding.

SECTION 5 amends M.G.L. Chapter 238 § 244 of the Acts of 2024 by removing DPH’s ability to restrict funding to a board of health upon a determination by the commissioner of public

health or the commissioner of environmental protection that said board has failed to protect public health.

SECTION 6 amends M.G.L. Chapter 238 § 244 of the Acts of 2024 by clarifying that nothing in § 244 can limit the ability of a local board of health to act in its best judgment and in the best interest of its residents to address an outbreak of a disease or health care situation. This section also clarifies that nothing in § 244 can be used to infringe on a person's constitutional rights or to coerce a person into relinquishing those rights, including the right to accept/decline any medical procedure or treatment, testing or collection of specimens, or the sharing of personal data or medical information.