

**JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY
BILL SUMMARY**

BILL NO. H1627

TITLE: An Act to strengthen the Commonwealth’s Anti-SLAPP law

SPONSOR: Rep. Mark Cusack

CO-SPONSOR(S): None

HEARING DATE: July 29, 2025

PRIOR HISTORY: H1431 (2023 - 2024)
H1504 (2021 - 2022)
H3263 (2019 – 2020)
H2263 (2017 – 2018)

SENATE BILL: S1250 (Rausch)

REPORTING DEADLINE: September 27, 2025 (subject extensions, in accordance with House Rule 27)

CURRENT LAW: General Laws c. 231 s. 59H, which governs strategic litigation against public participation (SLAPP), allows a defendant who believes he or she has been targeted because they exercised their constitutional rights to seek to dismiss the lawsuit. A special motion to dismiss may be filed within sixty days of the service of the complaint or, in the court's discretion, at any later time upon terms it deems proper. A party can exercise its right of petition if the speech is made in connection with or submitted to a legislative, executive or judicial body; or any other statement falling within Constitutional protections of the right to petition the government.

BILL SUMMARY: Cuts and replaces Section 59H of Chapter 231 expanding the scope of protections to include an individual’s exercise of their freedom of expression/speech or participation in any matter of public concern. If the motion to dismiss is granted, the court shall award the moving party all costs and reasonable attorney’s fees.

“Any matter of public concern” includes any written or verbal statement that is recorded, displayed, or distributed in-person or via any form of media, concerning any topic or subject related to a good, product, or service in the marketplace or otherwise offered to the public.