

Massachusetts House of Representatives
Bill Summary

Bill #: H.1535

Title: An Act requiring triennial reports on the impacts of multi-family zoning in MBTA Communities

Sponsor: Rep. Bradley Jones

Committee: Municipalities and Regional Government

Hearing Date: July 29, 2025

Prior History: Discharged from the Committee on Housing July 21.

Current Law: MGL Chapter 40A Section 3A established multi-family zoning as of right in MBTA communities. Cities and towns that are served by the MBTA must have at least one zoning district in which multi-family housing is permitted by right, so long as the housing has no age restrictions and is suitable for families with children. Such districts must have a minimum gross density of 15 units per acre (subject to further environmental laws regarding septic systems and protecting coastal and other waterways) and be located not more than 0.5 miles from a commuter rail station, subway station, ferry terminal or bus station, if applicable.

Communities that fail to comply with this section risk losing state funding from the Housing Choice Initiative, the Local Capital Projects Fund, and the MassWorks infrastructure program.

Summary: This bill would amend MBTA-C regulations to require the executive office of housing and livable communities, in consultation with the executive office of economic development, the Mass. Bay Transportation Authority, and the Mass. Department of Transportation, to submit a report on or before December 31st every three years to the Legislature regarding the status of the implementation of the MBTA Communities Act established in 2021.

The report would evaluate the implementation and outcomes of Section 3A, including but not limited to:

1. The number and types of housing units produced;
2. The impacts of such housing production on local infrastructure;
3. Effects on public schools; and
4. Recommendations for legislative or regulatory changes to improve the effectiveness and sustainability of multi-family zoning requirements.