

Massachusetts House of Representatives Draft Bill Summary

Bill #: H.4146

Title: An Act establishing a charter for the city of Medford

Sponsor: Rep. Paul Donato

Committee: Municipalities and Regional Government

Hearing Date:

Current Law: The current city charter was adopted through enactment of Chapter 605 of the Acts of 1986. The city of Medford operates under a Plan A form of government (see *Plan A, Charter, M.G.L.A. c. 43, §§ 46—55.*) It has been amended several times.

Summary: The new charter establishes a strong mayor-council system, where the mayor has significant executive powers, including appointing officials, while the city council has legislative responsibilities.

City Council:

The City Council will be expanded to 11 members, with 8 elected from wards and 3 at-large members.

School Committee:

A separate 7-member school committee will be established, with 2 at-large members and 1 member from each of four districts composed of combined wards.

Mayor's Term:

The mayor will serve a 4-year term, with a limit of four consecutive terms.

Citizen Participation and Transparency:

Direct Influence: The charter includes mechanisms for citizens to directly influence local government, such as initiative, referendum, and recall procedures.

Transparency: The charter emphasizes government transparency, with provisions for online posting of minutes, clear rules for meetings, and requirements for public engagement.

Ethics: The charter establishes clear guidelines for ethics and public engagement.

Timeline:

Voter Referendum:

The new charter is scheduled to be put to a voter referendum in November 2025.

Implementation:

If approved, the new government structure would be fully implemented in November 2027, with the first election under the new charter taking place in November 2027.

Notes: Language approved by the Medford City Council on April 15, 2025 with 6 yes votes and 1 no votes.

The sponsor has indicated that the city may have technical changes that require amendments to the legislation.