

# Massachusetts House of Representatives

## Bill Summary

- Bill #:** H.4252
- Title:** An Act updating the linkage exaction program in the city of Medford
- Sponsors:** Rep. Paul Donato, Rep. Christine Barber, Rep. Sean Garballey
- Committee:** Municipalities and Regional Government
- Hearing Date:** July 29, 2025
- Prior History:** Refile of H.5141 (2023-24; reported favorably)
- Current Law:** Chapter 488 of the Acts of 1989 established a linkage exaction program in the city of Medford. It authorized the city, by ordinance, to require payment of a linkage fee as a condition of approval of a development that impacts the city's infrastructure and services. The fee is used to defray the costs of capital improvements made necessary by the development, which could include school facilities, public facilities, roads, sewers, water supply lines, affordable housing, childcare facilities, job training facilities, public safety service and facilities, and parks, playgrounds and recreational facilities.
- Subsection B (5) of section 2 of the 1989 special act provides for the level of any exaction to be reviewed at least every 3 years and reset based upon the recommendation of the office of community development and the mayor.
- Fees are calculated according to a schedule that includes a fee per residential unit, fee per hotel room, and a fee per 1,000 square feet of gross floor area for office, commercial and industrial space.
- Summary:** The bill amends Subsection B of section 2 by replacing clause (5) with new language that would do the following:
- Provide for the level of any exaction to be reviewed every 10 years; and
  - In between such reviews, allow for periodic interim updates to any exaction to be adjusted, over time, based upon changes in the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers compiled by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.
- Notes:** Approved as item # 24-047 at the September 10, 2024 regular city council meeting by a vote of 6 in favor and 1 opposed. Approved by Mayor.
- According to city council minutes, the current linkage fee schedule has not been updated since 1990 and has thus been devalued due to inflation. Records also claim that performing studies to calculate these exactions is expensive, therefore a revised schedule that includes automatic adjustments between reviews would be more efficient and cost-effective.