

**Massachusetts House of Representatives  
Bill Summary**

**Bill #:** H.5136

**Title:** An Act increasing the maximum amount of penalties which may be imposed for violations of ordinances in the city of Newton

**Sponsor:** Rep. Greg Schwartz and Sen. Cynthia Stone Creem

**Committee:** Joint Committee on Municipalities and Regional Government

**Hearing Date:** March 3, 2026

**Current Law:** Article III, Section 17-21 of the City of Newton Ordinances sets the maximum fine for violation of a city ordinance, unless another provision is expressly made, at not more than \$300 for each offense. Each day the violation continues constitutes a separate offense.

MGL Chapter 40, Section 21 (purpose of town by-laws) authorizes towns (includes cities) to impose penalties for violations of by-laws and ordinances, not to exceed \$300 per offense.

**Summary:** Section 1 of the bill would authorize the city of Newton to impose penalties for violations of ordinances enacted by the city that are not inconsistent with state laws, in an amount not to exceed \$2,000.

This section also ties future increases in the maximum penalty to the inflation rate as determined by changes in the Consumer Price Index. The amount would be rounded to the nearest \$100 starting on January 1, 2026 and then on January 1 every 5 years thereafter.

Section 2 provides for the act to take effect upon its passage.

**Notes:** Approved as docket #301-25 by the Newton City Council on November 3, 2025 by a vote of 21 in favor, 0 opposed with 3 absent.