

Massachusetts House of Representatives Bill Summary

Bill #:	H.5593
Title:	An Act amending the town manager act for the town of Danvers
Sponsor:	Rep. Sally Kerans and Sen. Joan Lovely
Committee:	Municipalities and Regional Government
Hearing Date:	9/21/26 to 9/28/26 written testimony only
Current Law:	Chapter 222 of the Acts of 1997 established the current form of government for the town of Danvers, which consists of an elected representative town meeting, town manager and 5-member select board.
Summary:	This bill amends the existing town manager act. Changes include: • Removes the requirement that the town manager must reside in Danvers. The town manager would still need to be a resident of Massachusetts. • Updates the appointment process and how the town manager reports directly to the Select Board. Town manager to serve 5-year term and may be reappointed to successive terms. • Investigatory Spending Caps: Revisions introduce an indexed spending cap on how the town manager can utilize funds for outside investigations and surveys. The cap is set at an amount equal to 0.02 percent of the budget. • Makes the act gender neutral and makes various grammatical corrections. • Repeals the 1997 special act since this act will supersede it. • Clarifies language relating to the town officials who shall be elected at the annual town election, including members of the housing authority. Clarifies the process for filling vacancies on the board of trustees for the Peabody Institute Library, as well as the circumstances that create a vacancy, such as moving out of town. • States that the school committee shall consist of 5 members elected for staggered 3-year terms, and that another reason for a vacancy occurring may be disqualification or otherwise. • Authorizes the select board to appoint and remove the town accountant, zoning board of appeals, election officers and registrars of voters, except the town clerk, and town manager. This provision allows the select board to delegate such appointment authority to the town manager. • Select board members serve as ex-officio at-large town meeting members. • Provides for periodic review of the special act at least once every 20 years, or sooner if a majority of town meeting votes to review the act. • The act would take effect upon its passage.
Notes:	Articles 19 through 53 of the home rule petition were approved at the February 9, 2026 Special Town Meeting by majority voice vote.