

**JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY
BILL SUMMARY**

BILL NO. **H1581**

TITLE: An Act specifying an electronic system to ensure that sales of certain products containing pseudoephedrine (PSE) do not exceed limits established under federal law.

SPONSOR: Rep. Shirley B. Arriaga

COSPONSOR(S): None

HEARING DATE: July 29, 2025

PRIOR HISTORY: None

SENATE BILL: S1243 (Payano)

REPORTING DEADLINE: September 27, 2025 (subject extensions, in accordance with House Rule 27)

CURRENT LAW: Section 802 of Part A of Subchapter 1 of Chapter 13 of Title 21 of the United States Code lists the definitions for terms used in the subchapter on the control and enforcement of narcotic drugs. A “list 1 chemical” is a chemical regulated by the Attorney General due to its importance and use in the manufacturing of a controlled substance in violation of the subchapter and includes pseudoephedrine. A “scheduled listed chemical product” is a product that contains pseudoephedrine and may be marketed and distributed lawfully as a nonprescription drug by retail stores.

Section 830 of Part C of Subchapter 1 of Chapter 13 of Title 21 of the United States Code regulates listed chemicals and certain machines and requires regular reporting on transactions involving pseudoephedrine including the purchaser’s name and address and the quantity and form of the pseudoephedrine purchased. Sales of pseudoephedrine are limited to 3.6 grams per day for any purchaser. Mobile and mail-order vendors are restricted to 7.5 grams of pseudoephedrine per customer during a 30-day period.

Chapter 94C of the General Laws is the Commonwealth’s Controlled Substances Act. It does not include or refer to pseudoephedrine products. The Massachusetts Department of Health Regulations lists pseudoephedrine in its list of

interchangeable drugs contained in Appendix A of Chapter 720.000 of Title 105 of the Code of Massachusetts Regulations.

BILL SUMMARY:

Section 1 – Adds a new Section 50 to Chapter 94C of the General Laws which restricts the sale and purchase of more than 3.6 grams per day or 9 grams per 30-day period of pseudoephedrine products to or by the same person. Retailers must keep pseudoephedrine products behind the pharmacy counter and must receive identification before their purchase. The Department of Public Health or other appropriate state agency must administer a real-time stop sale system for all sales of pseudoephedrine products for use beginning January 1, 2026, by all retailers. The real-time stop sale system must be able to communicate in real time with similar systems in other states. The system must be able to generate a stop sale alert notification to retailers showing that the sale would result in a violation of the quantity limits set forth in this section. The sale may not be completed unless the retailer has reasonable fear of imminent bodily harm. Violations result in fines. The vendor of the real-time stop sale system must provide transaction records and real-time access to law enforcement agencies. The Section does not apply to prescription pseudoephedrine products.

**JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY
BILL SUMMARY**

BILL NO.	H1586
TITLE:	An Act relative to selling tattooing, branding, body piercing kit or device to an unlicensed body art practitioner or minor
SPONSOR:	Rep. Bruce Ayers
CO-SPONSOR(S):	None
HEARING DATE:	July 29, 2025
PRIOR HISTORY:	H1386 (2023-2024) H1458 (2021-2022) H1332 (2019-2020) H711 (2017-2018) H1163 (2015-2016) H3351 (2013-2014)
SENATE BILL:	None
REPORTING DEADLINE:	September 27, 2025 (subject extensions, in accordance with House Rule 27)
CURRENT LAW:	Chapter 111 of the General laws regulates public health. Section 34 of Chapter 265 prohibits anyone not registered as a qualified physician under section 2 of chapter 112 to tattoo another person. The punishment is a fine of not more than \$300 or imprisonment for not more than 1 year, or both.
BILL SUMMARY:	This legislation adds a section to Chapter 111 subjecting anyone who gives or sells a tattooing, branding, or body piercing kit or device to an unlicensed body art practitioner or minor to a fine of not more than \$500.

**JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY
BILL SUMMARY**

BILL NO.	H1592
TITLE:	An Act relative to the expansion of the Good Samaritan Law
SPONSOR:	Rep. Donald Berthiaume
COSPONSOR(S):	Rep. Kelly Pease
HEARING DATE:	July 29, 2025
PRIOR HISTORY:	H1396 (2023-2024) H1467 (2021-2022) H1348 (2019-2020) H3025 (2017-2018)
SENATE BILL:	None
REPORTING DEADLINE:	September 27, 2025 (subject extensions, in accordance with House Rule 27)
CURRENT LAW:	General Law c. 112 s. 12V exempts those acting in good faith who attempt to render emergency care, without compensation, from liability for acts or emissions, except for cases exhibiting gross negligence or willful and wanton misconduct.
BILL SUMMARY:	This bill would insert an undesignated section into the General Laws stating that any properly licensed person under the jurisdiction of a publicly recognized organization and/or any person acting in good faith in a privately registered and insured vehicle would be covered by the Good Samaritan law in transporting any needy person to a designated destination and returning, except for cases exhibiting gross negligence or willful and wanton misconduct. They must be doing so without compensation except for tolls and parking.

**JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY
BILL SUMMARY**

BILL NO.	H1612
TITLE:	An Act relative to independent prepaid legal services plans
SPONSOR:	Rep. Tackey Chan
COSPONSOR(S):	Rep. Carmine Lawrence Gentile Rep. Bradley H. Jones, Jr.
HEARING DATE:	July 29, 2025
PRIOR HISTORY:	None
SENATE BILL:	None
REPORTING DEADLINE:	September 27, 2025 (subject extensions, in accordance with House Rule 27)
CURRENT LAW:	Chapter 176H of the General Laws establishes legal services plans for the Commonwealth. Section 1 defines relevant terms for the chapter. Section 2 permits sponsors to establish and operate legal service plans so long as they are consistent with the rest of the chapter.
BILL SUMMARY:	<p>Section 1 – Adds a definition to Section 1 of Chapter 176H for “Independent prepaid legal services plan” as a non-indemnity plan where legal services are available to members from a contracted organization who in turn contracts with independent attorneys for their services.</p> <p>Section 2 – This adds a section to the end of Chapter 176H creating an exemption for independent prepaid legal services plans that applies to the requirements of Chapter 176H and to the classification as a insured legal services plan or a membership legal services plan.</p>

**JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY
BILL SUMMARY**

BILL NO.	H1627
TITLE:	An Act to strengthen the Commonwealth’s Anti-SLAPP law
SPONSOR:	Rep. Mark Cusack
CO-SPONSOR(S):	None
HEARING DATE:	July 29, 2025
PRIOR HISTORY:	H1431 (2023 - 2024) H1504 (2021 - 2022) H3263 (2019 – 2020) H2263 (2017 – 2018)
SENATE BILL:	S1250 (Rausch)
REPORTING DEADLINE:	September 27, 2025 (subject extensions, in accordance with House Rule 27)
CURRENT LAW:	General Laws c. 231 s. 59H, which governs strategic litigation against public participation (SLAPP), allows a defendant who believes he or she has been targeted because they exercised their constitutional rights to seek to dismiss the lawsuit. A special motion to dismiss may be filed within sixty days of the service of the complaint or, in the court's discretion, at any later time upon terms it deems proper. A party can exercise its right of petition if the speech is made in connection with or submitted to a legislative, executive or judicial body; or any other statement falling within Constitutional protections of the right to petition the government.
BILL SUMMARY:	<p>Cuts and replaces Section 59H of Chapter 231 expanding the scope of protections to include an individual’s exercise of their freedom of expression/speech or participation in any matter of public concern. If the motion to dismiss is granted, the court shall award the moving party all costs and reasonable attorney’s fees.</p> <p>“Any matter of public concern” includes any written or verbal statement that is recorded, displayed, or distributed in-person or via any form of media, concerning any topic or subject related to a good, product, or service in the marketplace or otherwise offered to the public.</p>

**JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY
BILL SUMMARY**

BILL NO. **H1628**

TITLE: An Act relative to penalties for unlicensed work

SPONSOR: Rep. Mark Cusack

COSPONSOR(S): None

HEARING DATE: July 29, 2025

PRIOR HISTORY: H1429 (2023 – 2024)
 H1505 (2021 - 2022)
 H3264 (2019 - 2020)
 H2264 (2017 - 2018)
 H1251 (2015 - 2016)
 H1279 (2013 - 2014)

SENATE BILL: None

**REPORTING
DEADLINE:** September 27, 2025 (subject extensions, in accordance with House Rule 27)

CURRENT LAW: Section 65 of Chapter 112 of the General Laws punishes whoever continues to practice a trade or profession after their certificate, registration, license or authority to do so has been suspended, revoked or cancelled with a fine of not more than \$2,500 or by imprisonment for not more than 6 months, or both. It further permits each board of registration to instead of the criminal penalty above collect a civil administrative penalty of not more than \$1,000 for the first violation and \$2,500 for a second or subsequent violation.

 Section 65A of Chapter 112 punishes a person who, without holding the required license, certificate, registration or authority, engages in the practice of a trade or profession for which a license, certificate, registration or authority is required by a civil administration penalty not to exceed \$1,000 for the first violation and not to exceed \$2,500 for a second or subsequent violation.

 Section 5 of Chapter 141 punishes any person, firm or corporation, or employee thereof from entering upon or engaging in the business and work of an electrician without complying with the requirements of the chapter with a fine of not less than \$1,000 and not more than \$1,500 for a first offense, a fine of not less than \$1,500 and not more

than \$2,000 for a second offense and for each subsequent offense a fine of not less than \$2,000 and not more than \$2,500 or by imprisonment for 6 months, or both.

Section 3L of Chapter 143 requires any person intending to install electrical wiring or fixtures to first give notice to the inspector of wires. Failure to give such notice is punished by a fine not to exceed \$500.

BILL SUMMARY:

Section 1 - increases the fine associated with the criminal penalty in Section 65 of Chapter 112 from \$2,500 to \$10,000.

Section 2 - increases the civil administrative penalty in Section 65 of Chapter 112 for a first violation from \$1,000 to \$5,000

Section 3 - increases the civil administrative penalty in Section 65 of Chapter 112 for a second and subsequent violation from \$2,500 to \$10,000.

Section 4 – increases the civil administrative penalty in Section 65A of Chapter 112 for a first violation from \$1,000 to \$5,000.

Section 5 - increases the civil administrative penalty in Section 65A of Chapter 112 for a second and subsequent violation from \$2,500 to \$10,000.

Section 6 – increases the penalties in Section 5 of Chapter 141 to a fine not to exceed \$5,000 for a first offense and for any subsequent offense a fine not to exceed \$10,000 or imprisonment for six months, or both.

Section 7 – increases the penalty in Section 3L of Chapter 143 from \$500 to \$10,000.

**JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY
BILL SUMMARY**

BILL NO.	H1629
TITLE:	An Act relative to the indemnity of public employees.
SPONSOR:	Rep. Mark J. Cusack
COSPONSOR(S):	None
HEARING DATE:	July 29, 2025
PRIOR HISTORY:	None
SENATE BILL:	None
REPORTING DEADLINE:	September 27, 2025 (subject extensions, in accordance with House Rule 27)
CURRENT LAW:	<p>Section 2 of Chapter 258 of the General Laws limits the tort liability for public employers to a maximum of \$100,000 for the wrongful act or omission of a public employee while acting within the scope of their employment with an exception for claims for serious bodily injury against the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority.</p> <p>Section 9 of Chapter 258 permits public employers to indemnify their employees and requires the Commonwealth to indemnify constitutional officers up to \$1 million against actions for intentional torts and civil rights violations if the employee or officer was acting within the scope of their official duties or employment. An exception is made for gross negligence and willful or malicious conduct.</p>
BILL SUMMARY:	Section 1 – Changes the liability cap in Section 9 of Chapter 258 from \$1 million to \$5 million.

**JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY
BILL SUMMARY**

BILL NO.	H1632
TITLE:	An Act relative to legal advertisements in online-only newspapers
SPONSOR:	Rep. Leigh Davis
CO-SPONSOR(S):	None
HEARING DATE:	July 29, 2205
PRIOR HISTORY:	H1723 (2023-2024) H1836 (2021-2022)
SENATE BILL:	S1279 (Velis)
REPORTING DEADLINE:	September 27, 2025 (subject extensions, in accordance with House Rule 27)
CURRENT LAW:	Section 13 of Chapter 4 of the General Laws governs the publication of legal notices in newspapers and electronically. The relevant subsection (b) describes how a party (person, corporation, or state entity) must publish a required legal notice in a newspaper.
BILL SUMMARY:	Section 1 of this legislation clarifies that online-only newspapers need to publish legal notices to comply with G.L. c. 4 section 13. Section 2 safeguards errors by the website operator and interruptions from being classified as publication errors.

**JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY
BILL SUMMARY**

BILL NO.	H1637
TITLE:	An Act protecting first responders and enhancing access to behavioral health centers.
SPONSOR:	Rep. Michael S. Day
COSPONSOR(S):	None
HEARING DATE:	July 29, 2025
PRIOR HISTORY:	None
SENATE BILL:	None
REPORTING DEADLINE:	September 27, 2025 (subject extensions, in accordance with House Rule 27)
CURRENT LAW:	<p>Section 21 of Chapter 111C of the General laws shields from personal liability all emergency medical services (EMS) personnel who in the performance of their duties and in good faith, render emergency services or transport an injured or incapacitated person or police dog.</p> <p>Section 85AA of Chapter 231 shields from liability any search and rescue volunteer who renders assistance in an operation under the instruction of the department of state police unless their actions are willful, wanton or reckless.</p>
BILL SUMMARY:	Section 1 – Adds a new section to Chapter 231 shielding from all claims, liabilities or penalties any person or entity providing ambulance or emergency medical services, including law enforcement and emergency medical technicians, for transporting a person to a community behavioral health center.

**JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY
BILL SUMMARY**

BILL NO.	H1641	
TITLE:	An Act relative to civil rights	
SPONSOR:	Rep. Michael S. Day	
COSPONSOR(S):	Rep. Lindsay N. Sabadosa Rep. Natalie M. Higgins	Rep. Erika Uyterhoeven Senator Rebecca L. Rausch
HEARING DATE:	July 29, 2025	
PRIOR HISTORY:	H1440 (2023-2024) H1522 (2021-2022) H3277 (2019-2020)	
SENATE BILL:	None	
REPORTING DEADLINE:	September 27, 2025 (subject extensions, in accordance with House Rule 27)	
CURRENT LAW:	<p>Section 11H of Chapter 12 of the General Laws permits the Attorney General to bring a civil action for injunctive and other equitable relief whenever any person interferes by threats, intimidation or coercion or attempts to so interfere with the exercise or enjoyment by another other person’s rights secured by the Constitution or laws of the United States or of the Commonwealth to protect the peaceable exercise or enjoyment of the right. If the Attorney General prevails, they are entitled to compensatory damages, litigation costs and attorneys’ fees and may be entitled to, if the matter involves interference with a Constitutional right, civil penalties up to \$5,000 against each defendant. The Section further establishes a right to bias-free professional policing which is interfered with and potentially violated when a law enforcement officer acting under color of law acts in a way that results in their decertification by the Massachusetts Peace Officers Standards and Training Commission (MPTC). No law officer may be immune from civil liability for conduct under color of law that violated a person’s right to bias-free policing if the conduct resulted in their decertification by the MPTC.</p> <p>Section 11I of Chapter 12 permits a person to bring a civil action on their own behalf for injunction and other appropriate relief including compensatory damages for interference or attempted interference of their exercise or enjoyment of rights secured by the Constitution or</p>	

laws of the United States or of the Commonwealth. If the aggrieved person prevails in this action they are entitled to an award of litigation costs and reasonable attorneys' fees.

BILL SUMMARY:

Section 1 – Inserts language into Section 11H of Chapter 12 stating that an action brought against a law enforcement officer for conduct under color of law does not require proof that the interference or attempted interference was by threats, intimidation or coercion.

Section 2 – Cleans up repetitive and unnecessary language in Section 11H of Chapter 12.

Section 3 – Adds to Section 11H of Chapter 12 a requirement that the Court, when granting a claim of immunity from civil liability in this Section or Section 11I, will also make a written determination that the conduct alleged, if proven at trial, interfered with the exercise or enjoyment of another person's rights secured by the Constitution or laws of the United States or of the Commonwealth.

Section 4 – Inserts language into Section 11I of Chapter 12 stating that an action brought against a law enforcement officer for conduct under color of law does not require proof that the interference or attempted interference was by threats, intimidation or coercion.

**JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY
BILL SUMMARY**

BILL NO.	H1653
TITLE:	An Act protecting employee free speech
SPONSOR:	Rep. Marjorie Decker
COSPONSOR(S):	Rep. Steven Ultrino Rep. David Henry Argosky LeBeouf Rep. Margaret Scarsdale
HEARING DATE:	July 29, 2025
PRIOR HISTORY:	H1543 (2023-2024, Hawkins)
SENATE BILL:	S1078 (Edwards)
REPORTING DEADLINE:	September 27, 2025 (subject extensions, in accordance with House Rule 27)
CURRENT LAW:	<p>Section 4 of Chapter 151B of the General Laws prohibits any employer from making any employment decision based on a person’s protected class or discriminating against them based on this class. This includes refusal to hire, discharge from employment or discrimination in compensation, terms, conditions or privileges of employment. It is further unlawful for an employer to impose any condition of employment which requires an individual to violate or forego the practice of their creed or religion. An employer is also prohibited from discharging or discriminating against any person because of their opposition to any practice forbidden under the Chapter.</p>
BILL SUMMARY:	<p>Section 1- Amends Section 1 of Chapter 149 by adding definitions for “Political matters” and “Religious matters”.</p> <p>Section 2- Amends Chapter 149 by inserting a new section, Section 20F. It prohibits any employer, including those in the public sector, from subjecting or threatening any employee to discipline or discharge on account of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• their exercise of rights guaranteed by the first amendment to the United States Constitution, provided such activity does not substantially or materially interfere with the employee's bona fide job performance or the working relationship between the employee and the employer; or

- their refusal to (a) attend an employer-sponsored meeting the primary purpose of which is to communicate the employer's opinion on religious or political matters, or (b) listen to speech or view communications, including electronic communications, the primary purpose of which is to communicate the employer's opinion on religious or political matters.

It also includes exceptions to allow (1) any information the employers need to communicate for legal reasons, (2) information necessary for such employees to perform their job duties, (3) information institutions of higher education of any agent thereof needs to communicate for coursework, symposiums or programs, (4) information in casual conversations that are not mandatory or required or (5) information limited to the employer's managerial and supervisory employees. There are also exceptions for religious corporations, schools and entities that are exempt from the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

**JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY
BILL SUMMARY**

BILL NO. **H1694**

TITLE: An Act providing civil legal remedies for victims of economic abuse

SPONSOR: Rep. Brandy Fluker-Reid

COSPONSORS: Rep. Samantha Montañó Rep. Colleen Garry
Rep. Lindsay Sabadosa Rep. David LeBoeuf
Rep. Michael Connolly Sen. Jason Lewis
Rep. Natalie Higgins Rep. Vanna Howards
Rep. Mindy Domb Rep. Danillo Sena
Rep. Leigh Davis Rep. Tara Hong

HEARING DATE: July 29, 2025

PRIOR HISTORY: None

SENATE BILL: S1147 (R. Kennedy)

REPORTING DEADLINE: September 27, 2025 (subject extensions, in accordance with House Rule 27)

CURRENT LAW: Section 37E of Chapter 266 of the General Laws outlaws identify fraud by prohibiting any person from posing as another person or obtaining the personal identifying information with intent to defraud and without express authorization uses the person’s personal identifying information to obtain or attempt to obtain anything of value or harass another person punishable by up to 2.5 years in a house of correction or a fine of not more than \$5,000, or both. A person guilty of violating the Section may also be ordered to make restitution for any financial loss sustained by the victim including costs incurred to satisfy the person’s debts.

BILL SUMMARY: Section 1 – Creates a new Chapter 258G titled “Remedies for Victims of Economic Abuse.”

- Adds definitions for use in the Chapter including for “debt incurred through economic abuse” which is a debt incurred because of identity theft, fraud, duress, intimidation, threat, force, coercion, manipulation, undue influence, misinformation or the non-consensual use of the debtor’s

personal identifying information by an abusive family member or caretaker.

- Requires creditors to, within 10 days of receiving a debtor's statement of debt incurred through economic abuse, notify any consumer reporting agency which they furnished adverse information about the debtor that the debtor disputes the adverse information. If the written statement does not include all necessary information or the statement is made orally and does not include adequate documentation, the creditor must notify the debtor of the additional information needed within 5 days. All debtor information provided shall remain private without the debtor's express written authorization.
- If the debtor also provided adequate documentation to the creditor then the creditor must: (i) cease all attempts to collect the debt & notify the debtor in writing of this action; (ii) refrain from filing a lawsuit to collect the debt; (iii) cease garnishing funds from the debtor for the debt while the debtor challenges the underlying judgement; (iv) dismiss the collection action against the debtor if filed; (v) return all payments made by the debtor on the debt; and (vi) contact any consumer reporting agency which was given information about the debtor and the debt and request they delete the information. The creditor may seek a court order declaring that the debt was not incurred through economic abuse postponing the above actions to resolution of the challenge. If the creditor receives the statement with adequate documentation from the debtor, they may not sell or transfer the debt. If the creditor is collecting for another entity, they must notify the owner of the requirements under this section.
- The debtor is not liable for a debt incurred through economic abuse and may raise this as a defense in any forum or as a motion to challenge a judgment based on the debt. The debtor establishes a prima facie case that the debt is incurred through economic abuse by providing a statement of debt incurred through economic abuse and adequate documentation. Court may take appropriate steps necessary to prevent abuse of the debtor. If creditor fails to comply with this Chapter the creditor is liable to the debtor for actual damages, court costs and attorney's fees and punitive damages if the court determines the creditor engaged in willful noncompliance. No agreement may waive this right to cause of action.
- Provides a model form for creditors to provide to debtors.

Section 2 - The Act will take effect January 1, 2026

**JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY
BILL SUMMARY**

BILL NO. H1705

TITLE: An Act relative to patient care access

SPONSOR: Rep. William C. Galvin

CO-SPONSOR: None

HEARING DATE: July 29, 2025

PRIOR HISTORY: H1501 (2023-2024) H791 (2017-2018)
H.1578 (2021-2022) H1309 (2015-2016)
H1412 (2019–2020)

SENATE BILL: None

REPORTING DEADLINE: September 27, 2025 (subject extensions, in accordance with House Rule 27)

CURRENT LAW: Section 1 of Chapter 111 of the General Laws defines “medical peer review committee” as a committee of a state or local professional society of health care providers whose function is to evaluate or improve the quality of health care rendered by providers of health care services, including: (i) determining whether health care services and their cost were performed in compliance with applicable standards of care; (ii) determining whether the cost of the health care services was reasonable; (iii) determining whether the health care provider’s actions call into question their fitness to provide health care services; or (iv) evaluating and assisting healthcare providers impaired or allegedly impaired by reason of alcohol, drugs, physical disability, mental instability or otherwise. Health care providers included in this definition are doctors of chiropractic, hospital medical staff, licensed hospice, nursing home or health maintenance organizations and physicians.

Section 204 of Chapter 111 makes the proceedings, reports and records of a medical peer review committee confidential, exempt from disclosure of public records and not subject to subpoena or discovery or introduced into evidence in any judicial or administrative proceeding unless held by boards of registration of medical professions or the department of public health.

Section 5 of Chapter 112 requires the board of registered physicians under the department of public health to investigate all complaints

relating to the proper practice of medicine and report to proper prosecuting officers. The board may, after a hearing, revoke or suspend the certificate of registration or issue a reprimand, impose a fine, require community service or course of education if a majority of the board is satisfied that there is proof that the physician: (i) perpetrated fraud on their certificate; (ii) is guilty of an offense relating to the practice of medicine; (iii) is guilty of conduct that places their competence to practice medicine into question; (iv) is guilty of practicing medicine while impaired by alcohol, drugs, physical disability or mental instability; (v) is guilty of being habitually drunk or addicted to, dependent on, or a habitual user of drugs; (vi) is guilty of knowingly permitting or aiding an unlicensed person to perform medical services; (vii) has been convicted of a criminal offense which calls into question their ability to practice medicine; or (viii) is guilty of violating any rule or regulation of the board.

Chapter 175 of the General Laws covers the regulation of insurance providers within the commonwealth.

Section 6B of Chapter 231 requires a court in any tort action after a verdict or judgment for pecuniary damages for personal injury or consequential damages to add interest at the rate of 12%.

Section 60G of Chapter 231 requires the court in a malpractice action after a jury judgement for damages to hear evidence of damages incurred prior to judgment which the defendant claims were paid by another source for potential reduction of award of damages.

Section 60K of Chapter 231 requires the court in malpractice actions to, after a judgment for pecuniary damages for personal injuries to the plaintiff or consequential damages, add interest on the amount of damages at a rate equal to the weekly average 1-year constant maturity Treasury yield plus 2 percent.

BILL SUMMARY:

Section 1 – Updates the definition of “medical peer review committee” in Section 1 of Chapter 111 to remove the list of included health care providers.

Section 2 – Adds language to Section 204 of Chapter 111 stating that the section applies to any committee formed by an individual health care provider, physician group practice, licensed health care facility or any combination thereof to perform the duties or functions of a medical peer review committee.

Section 3 – Adds language to Section 5 of Chapter 112 that expands the scope of conduct that constitutes the practice of

medicine that may place a physician's competence into question to include offering expert testimony in any action or unauthorized rendering of professional services against a licensed physician.

Section 4 – Adds a new section to Chapter 175 requiring every insurer or risk management organization which provides insurance to a licensed physician to make an annual report to the Betsy Lehman Center for Patient Safety and Medical Error Reduction. The report will include the top categories of losses, claims or actions, identify the top specialties as to cost and frequency of cases in the prior year and completed cases and settlements anonymized for provider and patient privacy. The Center will use this information to develop evidence-based practices to reduce medical errors and enhance patient safety and increase awareness of error prevention strategies.

Section 5 – Strikes language in Section 60G of Chapter 231 that limits the scope of a defendant's motion for a reduction of award of damages to those incurred prior to the judgment and adds language relating to anticipated compensation to the plaintiff.

Section 6 – Adds language to Section 60K of Chapter 231 requiring all expert witnesses in malpractice actions be board certified in the same specialty as the defendant.

Section 7 – Adds a new section to Chapter 231 permitting the court to enter a judgment for future damages paid by periodic payments. These payments will continue after the death of the plaintiff and be paid to persons to whom the plaintiff owed a duty of support.

Section 8 – Adds a new section to Chapter 231 sets the interest rate for malpractice actions against healthcare providers to a rate equal to the weekly average 1-year constant maturity Treasury yield, as published by the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System instead of the rate specified in section 6B.

**JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY
BILL SUMMARY**

BILL NO.	H1706	
TITLE:	An Act to encourage quality reviews and reduce costs in health care	
SPONSOR:	Rep. William C. Galvin	
CO-SPONSOR:	None	
HEARING DATE:	July 29, 2205	
PRIOR HISTORY:	H1502 (2023-2024) H1577 (2021-2022)	H1151 (2019-2020) H605 (2017-2018)
SENATE BILL:	None	
REPORTING DEADLINE:	September 27, 2025 (subject extensions, in accordance with House Rule 27)	
CURRENT LAW:	<p>Section 9 of Chapter 93A governs civil actions and remedies in business practices and consumer protections. It sets the amount of actual damages multiplied by the court is the amount of the judgment on all claims arising out of the same.</p> <p>Section 204 of Chapter 111 makes the proceedings, reports and records of a medical peer review committee confidential, exempt from disclosure of public records and not subject to subpoena or discovery or introduced into evidence in any judicial or administrative proceeding unless held by boards of registration of medical professions or the department of public health.</p> <p>Section 60K of Chapter 231 requires the court in malpractice actions to, after a judgment for pecuniary damages for personal injuries to the plaintiff or consequential damages, add interest on the amount of damages at a rate equal to the weekly average 1-year constant maturity Treasury yield plus 2 percent.</p>	
BILL SUMMARY:	Section 1 - Adds language to Section 204 of Chapter 111 stating that the section applies to any committee formed by an individual health care provider, physician group practice, licensed health care facility or any combination thereof to perform the duties or functions of a medical peer review committee.	

Section 2 – Replaces Section 60K of Chapter 231 with language clarifying that the interest rate is not set by Section 6B of the chapter. It sets the maximum rate of interest at that set forth in Section 6B.

Section 3 – Adds a section to Chapter 231 that prohibits a plaintiff in a malpractice case from recovering for loss of an opportunity to survive or an opportunity to achieve a better result unless the opportunity was greater than 50%. The plaintiff carries the burden of proving this standard is met.

Section 4 – Amends language in Section 9 of Chapter 93A so the amount of actual damages multiplied by the court is the judgment interest applied to the judgment by the courts.

**JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY
BILL SUMMARY**

BILL NO.	H1724
TITLE:	An Act relative to modernize public liability.
SPONSOR:	Rep. Carmine L. Gentile
COSPONSOR(S):	Rep. Mary S. Keefe
HEARING DATE:	July 29, 2025
PRIOR HISTORY:	None
SENATE BILL:	None
REPORTING DEADLINE:	September 27, 2025 (subject extensions, in accordance with House Rule 27)
CURRENT LAW:	<p>Section 18 of Chapter 81 of the General Laws makes the Commonwealth liable for injuries to travelers on state highways caused by defects in the constructed traveled roadway excepting injuries due to lack of railings or occurring on sidewalks or during construction or repair. A cap on recovery is set at \$4,000 or one fifth of one person of the town's value where the injury occurred.</p> <p>Section 15 of Chapter 84 permits damage recovery up to \$5,000 for injuries due to lack of railings or occurring on sidewalks or during construction or repair if reasonable care and diligence could have prevented the injury. An exception is made for loads over 6 tons.</p> <p>Sections 1 to 14 of Chapter 258 covers claims and indemnity procedure for the Commonwealth, its municipalities, counties and districts and the officers and employees thereof.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Section 1 sets out definitions for the Chapter.• Section 2 limits the tort liability for public employers to a maximum of \$100,000 for the wrongful act or omission of a public employee while acting within the scope of their employment with an exception for claims for serious bodily injury against the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority.• Section 3 gives the superior court jurisdiction over all civil actions brought against public employers unless the action is against a housing authority.• Section 4 sets a preliminary procedure requirement for all claims against public employers requiring presentation within 2 years

to the executive officer of the public employer for possible denial or settlement and a 3-year time limitation for all civil actions under the chapter. An exception is made to these time limitations for claims relates to the sexual abuse of a minor.

- Section 5 gives the executive officer of any public employer the power to settle claims for damages under the Chapter.
- Section 6 requires the public attorney to defend against all civil actions brought against public employers or employees of the Commonwealth pursuant to the Chapter.
- Section 7 requires approval by a judge for all awards or settlements over \$20,000. Once accepted in writing by the claimant these awards and settlements are final and constitute a release of any other claim unless procedure by fraud.
- Section 8 permits the procurement of insurance by a public employer to pay damages incurred under the Chapter.
- Section 9 permits public employers to indemnify their employees and requires the Commonwealth to indemnify constitutional officers up to \$1 million against actions for intentional torts and civil rights violations if the employee or officer was acting within the scope of their official duties or employment. An exception is made for gross negligence and willful or malicious conduct.
- Section 9A requires the Commonwealth to provide legal representation upon the request of a police officer for claims resulting from an alleged intentional tort or civil rights violation and indemnify the officer up to \$1 million if the action occurred within the scope of the officer's official duties. An exception is made for willful, wanton or malicious acts.
- Section 10 lists situations where a public employer is immune from liability. These include: (i) discretionary functions or duties; (ii) intentional torts; (iii) tax collection or assessments; (iv) actions on permits or licenses; (v) inspections unless personal assurances resulted in the injury; (vi) failure to establish emergency services or provide adequate police or fire protection unless personal assurances resulted in the injury; (vii) changes to the carceral status of any person in public custody unless gross negligence is shown; and (viii) failure to prevent or diminish harmful conditions caused by another unless personal assurances resulted in the injury, employee acts increased the injury, the claim is for negligent maintenance of public property or by a patient for negligent care.
- Section 11 an action found by the court to have been frivolous or in bad faith will bar any other or further action brought on the same claim or subject matter.

- Section 12 permits enforcement by the Superior Court for claims against the Commonwealth that are not expressly provided for in the Chapter or other law.
- Section 13 requires any city or town that accepted Section 100I of Chapter 41 before its repeal in 1978 or that accepts this section to indemnify its municipal officers for claims based on actions within the scope of their duties up to \$10 million unless the action was an intentional violation of the civil rights of any person. It then sets out the procedure and verbiage for accepting the section.
- Section 14 requires public employers to comply with Chapter 175 and any regulations promulgated thereunder as if it were an insurance company acting under the Chapter for the purposes of satisfying liens for past due child support, securing repaying of public assistance benefits and past taxes.

BILL SUMMARY:

Section 1 – Repeals Section 18 of Chapter 81.

Section 2 – Repeals Section 15 of Chapter 84.

Section 3 – Updates Sections 1 to 14 of Chapter 258:

- Adds to Section 1 a definition for “serious property damage or financial harm” and updates the definition for “serious bodily injury” to “serious personal injury” which now includes debilitating emotional or psychological harm or medical costs or lost wages over \$2,500 or death.
- Creates a new Section 2 requiring government employers indemnify their employees unless the employee acts were knowing, corrupt or with wanton disregard for the lives and safety of others. These acts are indemnifiable at the employer’s discretion.
- Maintains the language of the old Section 2 in a new Section 3 but updates the language to remove the liability cap of \$100,000 and to prohibit personal liability for a public employee unless the harm was caused intentionally or by knowing, wanton and willful disregard of the lives, safety and property of any person.
- Maintains the language of the old Section 3 in a new Section 4 but updates the language to also give the District Court jurisdiction over all claims valued at less than \$100,000 and gives the option of small claims court for claims under \$7,000.
- Cuts Section 4.
- Creates a new Section 5 removing any presentment requirement prior to filing suit but maintaining the 3-year statute of limitations for all claims except those relating to sexual abuse of a minor. It further sets time limits for presentment and mediation of these claims and a mechanism for a prosecutor to delay the

claim for up to 1 year if it may impair a pending investigation or prosecution or reveal confidential information or informants.

- Maintains the language of the old Section 5 in a new Section 6 but requires a designee of the executive officer with authority to settle the claim attend all mediation events and permits a claimant to petition to set aside a judgment claiming fraud on the part of the public employer or employee. The court may approve the petition if given clear and convincing evidence that the misconduct occurred and that it materially impaired the claimant's ability to prove the case.
- Maintains the language of the old Section 6 in a new Section 7 but requires the public employer to pay for independent counsel if the public employee has a conflict of interest.
- Maintains the language of the old Section 7 in a new Section 8 but incorporates the new requirements and restrictions of the Act for final judgment. Further permits a claimant to apply to the Court to enforce payment and empowers the Court to levy or seize the funds needed to satisfy the judgment.
- Cuts Section 8.
- Creates a new Section 9 making the Attorney General responsible for procuring insurance for all public employers, including the option of managing and operating a self-insurance program, and proportionally allocating its cost across all public employers.
- Maintains the language of the old Section 9 in a new Section 10 but increases the indemnity cap to \$10 million.
- Maintains the language of the old Section 9A in a new Section 11.
- Maintains the language of the old Section 10 in a new Section 12 but removes from public employer immunity discretionary functions or duties and intentional torts unless the intentional tort involved licenses or permits. Adds public employer immunity for claims based on judicial actions unless for negligent operation of motor vehicles and claims based on prosecutorial action unless for intentionally withholding exculpatory evidence or negligent operation of motor vehicles.
- Maintains the language of the old Section 11 in a new Section 13 but awards a claimant legal fees and costs if the court finds for the claimant and also finds that the public employer acted frivolously or in bad faith.
- Maintains the language of the old Section 12 in a new Section 14 but adds the District Court and that the claim could be against any public employer.
- Maintains the language of the old Section 13 in a new Section 15 but increases the liability cap to \$10 million.

- Maintains the language of the old Section 14 in a new Section 16.

**JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY
BILL SUMMARY**

BILL NO.	H1742
TITLE:	An Act to clarify the charitable purposes of certain organizations
SPONSOR:	Rep. Christopher Hendricks
COSPONSOR(S):	None
HEARING DATE:	July 29, 2025
PRIOR HISTORY:	H1544 (2023-2024) H1639 (2021-2022) H3331 (2019-2020)
SENATE BILL:	None
REPORTING DEADLINE:	September 27, 2025 (subject extensions, in accordance with House Rule 27)
CURRENT LAW:	Section 85K of Chapter 231 limits the tort liability of certain charitable organizations and the directors, officers or trustees of educational institutions. It limits the liability of charitable corporations, trusts and organizations to \$20,000 for any cause of action stemming from an act committed in the course of an activity done to directly accomplish the charitable purpose of the corporation, trust or association. Liability for medical malpractice claims against nonprofit organizations providing health care is limited to \$1000,000. This cap on charitable liability does not apply if the action was committed in the course of activities primarily commercial in character despite them being done to obtain revenue to be used for charitable purposes. The section further limits the liability of volunteer directors, officers and trustees of non-profit educational institutions acting in good faith and within the scope of official functions and duties to damages or injuries unless caused by willful or wanton misconduct. None of the liability limits in this section apply to any motor vehicle case.
BILL SUMMARY:	Amends c. 231 s. 85K so a corporation, trust, or association must either derive more than 50% of its income from charitable gifts to be able to claim the above tort liability limits. It also removes the increased limit of \$100,000 for medical malpractice claims against healthcare nonprofit organization.

**JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY
BILL SUMMARY**

BILL NO.	H1764
TITLE:	An Act relative to establishing an animal abuse registry.
SPONSOR:	Rep. Steven Howitt
COSPONSOR(S):	None
HEARING DATE:	July 29, 2025
PRIOR HISTORY:	None
SENATE BILL:	None
REPORTING DEADLINE:	September 27, 2025 (subject extensions, in accordance with House Rule 27)
CURRENT LAW:	Sections 77 to 81 of Chapter 272 of the General Laws criminalizes a variety of crimes against animals. These prohibitions include cruelty to animals, exhibiting wild animals, sexual contact with animals and selling animals for experimentation.
BILL SUMMARY:	Section 1 – This creates a Animal Abuse Registry. Anyone who is convicted of one of the above crimes shall be listed on a private Department of Criminal Justice Information Services registry only viewable by animal shelters, pet stores, and breeders. Those entities are required to check the list before permitting the sale or adoption and failure to check is punishable by a \$1,000 fine for a first offense and a \$5,000 fine and/or up to five years in a house of corrections. The information required includes the name, address, a photograph, and a date and description of the crime that applies to the registry. It requires the individual to register their information ten days after a conviction or ten days after their release from imprisonment or within ten days of moving to Massachusetts from another state where they have an animal abuse crime conviction. Failure to register is punishable by a \$1,000 fine or ten days in prison for the first offense and a second or subsequent offense is punishable by five years in state prison. Individuals on the registry are permitted to appeal their placement on the registry and if there is no risk of re-offense or danger to the public then they can be removed from the list with no further obligation to register.

**JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY
BILL SUMMARY**

BILL NO. H1788

TITLE: An Act increasing the liability for permitting an intoxicated arrestee to operate a motor vehicle

SPONSOR: Rep. Bradley Jones

COSPONSOR(S): Rep. Paul Frost
Rep. Todd Smola
Rep. Kimberly N. Ferguson

HEARING DATE: July 29, 2025

PRIOR HISTORY: H1583 (2023-2024) H857 (2017-2018)
H1681 (2021-2022) H1397 (2015-2016)
H3336 (2019-2020)

SENATE BILL: None

REPORTING DEADLINE: September 27, 2025 (subject extensions, in accordance with House Rule 27)

CURRENT LAW: Section 24 of Chapter 90 of the General Law prohibits failing to stop after knowingly colliding or otherwise causing injury to another vehicle or property punishable by 2 weeks to 2 years in a house of correction or a \$20 to \$200 fine, or both. If the collision caused injury to any person not resulting in death the punishment is 6 months to 2 years in a house of correction or a \$500 to \$1,000 fine. If the injuries result in the death of person punishment becomes 2.5 years to 10 years in state prison and a \$1,000 to \$5000 fine or 1 year to 2.5 years in a house of correction and a \$1,000 to \$5,000 fine.

Section 24L of Chapter 90 punishes the operation of a motor vehicle recklessly or negligently while under the influence of liquor or narcotics causing serious bodily injury with 2.5 to 10 years in state prison and a fine of up to \$5,000 or 6 months to 2.5 years in a house of correction and a fine of up to \$5,000.

BILL SUMMARY: Amends Chapter 90 by inserting a new section, Section 24Y. It requires that anyone found violating Section 24 or 24L of Chapter 90 must have their car impounded for at least 12 hours following the violation. It also requires law enforcement to provide a written explanation to the designated person picking up the arrestee

detailing the civil and criminal liability for permitting or facilitating the arrestee's operation of a motor vehicle while still under the influence. That person must consent in writing to having received the statement, and the Attorney General is responsible for creating the form.

**JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY
BILL SUMMARY**

BILL NO.	H 1810	
TITLE:	An Act protecting honest employers by creating construction private attorney general actions.	
SPONSOR:	Rep. Patrick Joseph Kearney	
COSPONSOR(S):	Rep. William F. MacGregor Rep. Thomas W. Moakley Rep. Christopher Hendricks Rep. Tara T. Hong	Rep. Sean Reid Rep. James C. Arena-DeRosa Rep. Adam J. Scanlon
HEARING DATE:	July 29, 2025	
PRIOR HISTORY:	None	
SENATE BILL:	S1229 (O'Connor)	
REPORTING DEADLINE:	September 27, 2025 (subject extensions, in accordance with House Rule 27)	
CURRENT LAW:	<p>Section 148 of Chapter 149 of the General Laws requires employers pay their employees' earned wages weekly or bi-weekly. Wages include any holiday or vacation payments due an employee under an oral or written agreement. It imposes strict liability on employers and threatens both fines and imprisonment for violations.</p> <p>Section 150 of Chapter 149 provides parallel enforcement mechanisms for the wage requirements of the Chapter. It gives an employee the right to institute and prosecute a civil action for damages incurred, including treble damages for any loss of wages and other benefits and an award of the costs of litigation and reasonable attorneys' fees. It further gives the Attorney General the right to enforce the Wage Act on behalf of the Commonwealth.</p>	
BILL SUMMARY:	<p>Section 1 – Adds a new Section in Chapter 149 that creates a private action against construction industry employers. This is assertable by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• any Construction Industry Employer• Any trustee acting on behalf of an organization or trust established for the purposes of the Labor Management Cooperation Act of 1978, 29 U.S.C. section 175a, where	

contributions are made by at least five Construction Industry Employers

- any labor organization which has as members, or is authorized to represent, employees and which exists in whole or part for the purposes of negotiating with Construction Industry Employers,
- any organization that represents five or more member firms that are Construction Industry Employers that employed labor on public works project
- or any affected employee.

This action permits these parties to recover damages and penalties from employers who show that an employer has caused wage non-payments. The asserting party must provide a copy of the complaint to the Attorney General's Office (AGO). That office is awarded a 20% tax on the total amount of damages and penalties to a wage enforcement fund which the AGO uses to enforce wage laws, educate the public about wage laws and pay affected employees showing urgent need to obtain unpaid wages to pay housing, heat, or food costs. The Attorney General may as a matter of right intervene as a plaintiff at any time, including post-trial, in these actions. If they choose to do so, the AGO will represent the Commonwealth as a plaintiff, with the original party able to remain party to action if they wish.

**JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY
BILL SUMMARY**

BILL NO.	H1836
TITLE:	An Act to require liability insurance for gun ownership.
SPONSOR:	Rep. David Paul Linsky
COSPONSOR(S):	None
HEARING DATE:	July 29, 2025
PRIOR HISTORY:	None
SENATE BILL:	None
REPORTING DEADLINE:	September 27, 2025 (subject extensions, in accordance with House Rule 27)
CURRENT LAW:	Section 131 of Chapter 140, as amended by Ch. 135 of the Acts of 2024, sets the conditions and restrictions for issuing and possessing a license to carry firearms. This includes a basic firearms safety certificate and notification requirements.
BILL SUMMARY:	Section 1 – Adds a new Section to Chapter 140 punishing the possession or ownership of any firearm, rifle or shotgun without a proper liability policy or bond by a fine of between \$500-5,000 or imprisonment for up to 1 year in a house of corrections, or both.

**JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY
BILL SUMMARY**

BILL NO.	H1850
TITLE:	An Act to address arbitration and litigation relief.
SPONSOR:	Rep. Jay D. Livingstone
COSPONSOR(S):	None
HEARING DATE:	July 29, 2025
PRIOR HISTORY:	None
SENATE BILL:	None
REPORTING DEADLINE:	September 27, 2025 (subject extensions, in accordance with House Rule 27)
CURRENT LAW:	<p>Section 20 of Chapter 223 of the General Laws guarantees that process in the Supreme Judicial and Superior Courts are signed, permits them to be issued by the clerk and guarantees their execution and obedience throughout the commonwealth.</p> <p>Section 32 of Chapter 260 provides that if an action is dismissed for insufficient service of process due to an accident or death, neglect by an officer and or death then the mover may commence a new action for the same cause within one year after the dismissal or other determination of the original action.</p>
BILL SUMMARY:	<p>Section 1 – Adds to Section 20 of Chapter 223, the ability for anyone over 18 and not a party to litigation to serve a summons or complaint for all civil actions pending in District Court, Boston Municipal Court, or Superior Court.</p> <p>Section 2 – Adds dismissal because of arbitration to the list of exceptions in Section 32 of Chapter 60.</p>

**JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY
BILL SUMMARY**

BILL NO.	H1861
TITLE:	An Act providing transparency in third party litigation financing.
SPONSOR:	Rep. Adrian C. Madaro
COSPONSOR(S):	None
HEARING DATE:	July 29, 2025
PRIOR HISTORY:	None
SENATE BILL:	None
REPORTING DEADLINE:	September 27, 2025 (subject extensions, in accordance with House Rule 27)
CURRENT LAW:	Chapter 167 of the General Laws establishes the rules and regulations for the supervision of banks in the Commonwealth including actions required by banks and actions they are prevented from taking. Chapters 167A through Chapter 167J all establish rules and procedures for actions banks commonly take such as electronic fund transfers, the locations of banks, deposits, accounts, trusts and mutual funds.
BILL SUMMARY:	<p>Section 1 – Adds a new section to Chapter 167, Chapter 167J.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Section 1 of this new section defines the terms relevant to the proposed section.• Section 2 requires consumer litigation funding contracts to be (i) written in a clear and coherent manner (ii) completely filled in when presented to the consumer for signature (iii) a right of rescission if they return the full amount of the disbursed funds within 10 days of signage (iv) the signor must initial every page (v) a statement that there are no fees or charges to be paid by the consumer other than what is disclosed on the disclosure form (vi) a disclosure providing the cumulative amount due from the consumer for all transactions (vii) the maximum amount the consumer may be obligated to pay and (viii) description of how charges are incurred or accrued. The contract must also contain an acknowledgement by the attorney that they (i) have reviewed the mandatory disclosures (ii) are being paid on a contingency basis (iii) will ensure all proceeds of the legal claim will be disbursed via either the trust account

of the attorney or a settlement fund (iv) are obligated to disburse funds from the legal claim (v) have not received a referral fee or other consideration from the consumer litigation funding company in connection with the consumer litigation funding (vi) have provided no tax, public or private benefit planning, or financial advice regarding this transaction.

- Section 3 prohibits consumer litigation funding companies from (i) paying or offering to pay commissions, referral fees, or other forms of consideration for referrals (ii) accepting any commissions, referral fees, rebates or other forms of consideration (iii) intentionally advertising materially false or misleading information (iv) referring a customer or potential customer to a specific attorney, law firm, healthcare provider, chiropractor or physical therapist or any of their employees (v) knowingly providing funding to a consumer who has previously assigned or sold a portion of the consumer's right to proceeds from his or her legal claim without first making payment to or purchasing a prior unsatisfied consumer litigation funding company's entire funded amount (vi) having any influence, receiving any right to, or making, any decisions with respect to the conduct of the underlying legal claim (vii) attempting to obtain a waiver of any remedy or right by the consumer (viii) knowingly paying or offering to pay for court costs, filing fees or attorney's fees.
- Section 4 establishes that the amount to be paid to the consumer litigation funding company must be predetermined based upon intervals of time from the funding date through the resolution date and not a percentage of the results of litigation.
- Section 5 requires notice to other parties and disclosures to be written in all contracts consistent with the proposed section.
- Section 6 cause consumer litigation funding companies who fail to meet the standards waive rights to collect and imposes a fine.
- Section 7 allows for the fund to receive a contingent right to receive an amount of the potential proceeds of a legal claim is assignable by a consumer to a consumer litigation funding company.
- Section 8 prevents discovery of communications when negotiating one of these contracts by a person against whom the legal claim is asserted or filed.
- Section 9 requires these funds to register with the Division of Banks and adhere to their regulations.
- Sections 11-14 establish the disclosure and evidentiary standards for these agreements and the communications between clients and funds.

- Section 15 allows for severability if a section is deemed unconstitutional.
- Section 16 grants the division of banks authority to promulgate regulations to enforce the new section.

Section 2 - Provides that the Act will take effect 90 days after the adoption into law but will not nullify existing agreements.

**JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY
BILL SUMMARY**

BILL NO. H1863

TITLE: An Act relative to structured settlement payment protections.

SPONSOR: Rep. John J. Mahoney

COSPONSOR(S): None

HEARING DATE: July 29, 2025

PRIOR HISTORY: None

SENATE BILL: None

REPORTING DEADLINE: September 27, 2025 (subject extensions, in accordance with House Rule 27)

CURRENT LAW: Chapter 231C of the General Laws creates the rules for structured settlement contracts.

Section 1 of that chapter establishes the relevant definitions for the rest of the chapter. This includes defining “independent professional advice” as advice of an attorney, certified public accountant, actuary, or other licensed professional advisor who is engaged by a payee to render advice concerning the legal, tax and financial implications of a transfer of structured settlement payment rights, who is not in any manner affiliated with or compensated by the transferee of the transfer and whose compensation for providing the advice is not affected by whether or not a transfer occurs.

Section 2 requires direct or indirect transfer of structured settlement payment rights to be authorized in advance in a final order of a court. To authorize the court must find that the transfer complies with the requirements of this chapter and will not contravene other applicable law, the transferee has provided to the payee a disclosure statement, the payee has established that the transfer is in the best interests of the payee and the payee's dependents, the payee has received, or waived the right to receive independent professional advice, the transferee has given written notice of the transferee's name, address, and taxpayer identification number to the annuity issuer and the structured settlement obligor and has filed a copy of the notice with the court or responsible administrative authority, the transfer agreement provides any disputes between the parties shall be

governed, interpreted, construed, and enforced in accordance with the laws of the commonwealth and has made a determination that the net amount payable to the payee is fair, just and reasonable under the circumstances.

Section 4 provides that if a transferee violates the discount/finance charge stipulation, neither the transferee nor any assignee shall be entitled to collect from the transferred payment rights, or from the payee, any amount in excess of the net advance amount and the payee shall have a right to recover from the transferee refunds of excess payments, penalty by determined by the court and reasonable attorney's fees. If the transferee violates disclosure requirements the payee has a right to recover from the transferee penalty by determined by the court and reasonable attorney's fees.

BILL SUMMARY:

Section 1 – Replaces the definition of “Independent professional advice” in Section 1 of Chapter 231C with, advice of an attorney, certified public accountant, actuary, or other licensed professional advisor.

Section 2 – Adds the following definitions to Section 1 of Chapter 231C. “Minor” an individual who is under 18 years of age, “Periodic payments” recurring payments and scheduled future lump-sum payments, “Protected person” someone with a mental or cognitive impairment that significantly affects decision-making abilities whose estate in the commonwealth or in any other jurisdiction is currently administered by a guardian or conservator and who has been determined by the court to lack capacity and "Structured settlement purchase company" an entity that acts as a transferee in the state and who is registered with the attorney general.

Section 3 – Adds the following changes to Section 2 of Chapter 231C. The payee has the right to seek independent professional advice regarding the transfer and the right to seek out additional transfer options. It also specifies the conditions in which the proposed transfer can be deemed in the best interest of the payee: the reasonable preference for the payee is to transfer, the periodic payments are intended to cover future income, loss of income, or medical expenses, and whether the payee has means of financial support aside from the structured settlement, whether the payee can meet the financial needs of the payee's dependents if the transfer is allowed to proceed, whether the payee completed previous transactions involving the payee's structured settlement payment rights and actual use of the proceeds, the impact of the proposed transfer on current or future eligibility of the payee or the payee's

dependents for public benefits and any other factors or facts the court or administrative authority determines are relevant.

Section 4 – Adds the following facets to Section 4 of Chapter 231C. Payees cannot incur penalties based on failure to satisfy the conditions of this chapter. Compliance with the requirements set forth in this chapter are solely the responsibility of the transferee in any transfer of a structured settlement payment rights. A payee may file a motion in the district court in which the structured settlement transfer proceeding is pending or occurred alleging a violation of this chapter. If a court finds that a structured settlement purchase company or transferee is in violation of this chapter, the court may revoke or suspend the registration of the structured settlement purchase company, enjoin the structured settlement purchase company or transferee from filing new structured settlement transfer proceedings and/or order any other equitable relief.

Section 5 – Adds three sections to the end of Chapter 231C.

- New Section 6 creates a registration requirement system where entities or individuals register with the Attorney General's office to become a structured settlement purchase company and renew it annually. The application must be accompanied with a sworn statement that they will comply with Chapter 231C.
- New Section 7 restricts transferees, structured settlement purchase companies, or an employee or other representative thereof from pursuing or completing a transfer in violation of the chapter, refusing or failing to comply with a court approved transfer, acquiring structured settlement payment rights from a payee without complying with the chapter, coercing, bribing, or intimidating a payee, attempting to defraud a payee, contacting a payee seeking to induce a cancellation of a transfer, failing to dismiss a pending structured settlement transfer at the request of a payee, communicating with a payee after being instructed to cease communications, at an inconvenient time, or repeatedly to annoy or bother soliciting a payee with a check or payment, providing an agreement or document that gives the transferee the first choice or option to purchase any remaining structured settlement payment rights belonging to the payee or instruct a payee to hire or directly refer a payee or a prospective payee to seek independent professional advice from a specific person concerning the legal, tax and financial implications of a transfer.
- New Section 8 instructs the court to appoint an attorney when a proposed transfer of a minor's structured settlement

payments requires an attorney to advise on whether the proposed transfer is of direct benefit to the minor or if the payee may suffer from a mental or cognitive impairment or may be considered a protected person. Additionally, the transferee shall file a motion for the appointment of an attorney prior to the hearing if the transferee is aware that the underlying structured settlement arose from a case in which a finding was made in a court record of a mental or cognitive impairment or is aware of any other case in which a finding was made in a court record of mental or cognitive impairment. Transfers cannot be effective unless the proceeds of the proposed transfer would be applied solely for support, care, education, health, and welfare of the minor payee and any excess proceeds would be preserved for the future support, care, education, health, and welfare of the minor payee.

Section 6 – Acts as a bar from construing Chapter 231C as authorizing a transfer of structured settlement payment rights in contravention of any applicable law.

Section 7 – Makes the changes take effect January 1, 2027.

**JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY
BILL SUMMARY**

BILL NO.	H1868
TITLE:	An Act requiring only a justice to remove a trial default of a defendant who fails to appear at trial.
SPONSOR:	Rep. Christopher M. Markey
COSPONSOR(S):	None
HEARING DATE:	July 29, 2025
PRIOR HISTORY:	H1668 (2023-2024) H1773 (2021-2022)
SENATE BILL:	None
REPORTING DEADLINE:	September 27, 2025 (subject extensions, in accordance with House Rule 27)
CURRENT LAW:	<p>Section 29 of Chapter 276 of the General Laws instructs the courts, or any other authority authorized to release people pending court proceedings to check with the warrant management system before releasing, discharging or permitting bail for any existing warrants in the Commonwealth. If there is a preexisting warrant the releasing authority must consider this and adhere to the procedures in Sections 57, 58 and 58A. If the person who has a warrant against them is facing a charge that is either a felony or misdemeanor with more than 100 days imprisonment as a potential penalty, then they must be brought before the issuing authority. Otherwise they may be released on bail or recognizance.</p> <p>Section 57 of Chapter 276 grants the courts authority to release a person on bail pending further proceedings and establishes the conditions a person may be released on bail.</p> <p>Section 58 of Chapter 276 grants the courts authority to release a person on personal recognizance pending further proceedings and establishes the conditions a person may be released on personal recognizance pending trial.</p> <p>Section 58A of Chapter 276 of the General Laws permits the Commonwealth to move for an order of pretrial detention or release based on dangerousness felonies that involve the use or threat of</p>

physical force, personal protection order violations and serious motor vehicle and firearm offenses.

BILL SUMMARY:

Section 1 – Amends Section 29 of Chapter 276 by adding a stipulation permitting only a justice of the court that issued the warrant for failure to appear to grant bail for that person. Additionally, that person could be responsible for paying the cost of arresting and transporting them to court.

**JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY
BILL SUMMARY**

BILL NO.	H1905
TITLE:	An Act relative to civil liability for protecting one's home
SPONSOR:	Rep. David K. Muradian Jr.
COSPONSOR(S):	None
HEARING DATE:	July 29, 2025
PRIOR HISTORY:	H1692 (2023-2024) H909 (2017-2018) H1810 (2021-2022) H1500 (2015-2016) H1528 (2019-2020) H1403 (2013-2014 Jones)
SENATE BILL:	None
REPORTING DEADLINE:	September 27, 2025 (subject extensions, in accordance with House Rule 27)
CURRENT LAW:	Section 8A of Chapter 278 of the General Laws provides as a defense to criminal charges for someone who kills or injures another who is unlawfully in their dwelling if they acted in the reasonable belief that the person was about to inflict great bodily injury or death upon them or someone else in the dwelling.
BILL SUMMARY:	Section 1 - Amends Section 8A of Chapter 278 to add a sentence stating that a person found not guilty under this section cannot be found civilly liable for the injury or death of the person unlawfully in their dwelling either.

**JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY
BILL SUMMARY**

BILL NO.	H1908
TITLE:	An Act to prohibit the sale of "energy drinks" to persons under the age of 18
SPONSOR:	Rep. James Murphy
COSPONSOR(S):	None
HEARING DATE:	June 29, 2025
PRIOR HISTORY:	H1697 (2023-2024)
SENATE BILL:	None
REPORTING DEADLINE:	September 27, 2025 (subject extensions, in accordance with House Rule 27)
CURRENT LAW:	<p>Chapter 94 of the General Laws governs the inspection and sale of food, drugs and various articles. Sections 10A through 10D set standards and permits for the manufacture, storage and transportation of non-alcoholic beverages.</p> <p>Chapter 138 of the General Laws restricts the manufacture and sale of alcoholic beverages.</p> <p>Section 3 of Chapter 270 prohibits the distribution of any bottle or package containing a liquid, pill or other article composed of a drug, poison or other ingredient or substance which may be in any way injurious or harmful for a person to ingest punishable by a fine of \$50 to \$100.</p>
BILL SUMMARY:	Inserts a new section into Chapter 270 that penalizes the distribution, delivery and sale of beverages including but not limited to (i) any packaged “energy drinks” or other beverage that contains more than 71 milligrams per 12 ounces of caffeine, taurine and glucuronolactone or (ii) a packaged soft drink classified as a dietary supplement not regulated by the Food and Drug Administration and that contains more than 80 milligrams of caffeine per 8 ounces and generally includes a combination of methylxanthines, B vitamins and herbal ingredients which are advertised as being specifically designed to provide or increase energy to any persons under the age of 18. A first offense would be a \$50 fine, a second offense would be a \$100 fine and a third offense would carry a \$250 fine.

**JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY
BILL SUMMARY**

BILL NO.	H1914	
TITLE:	An Act relative to a temporary possession ban of animals for animal abusers	
SPONSOR:	Rep. Tram Nguyen	
COSPONSOR(S):	Rep. Vanna Howard Rep. Homar Gómez Rep. Danillo A. Sena Rep. Steven J. Ouellette Rep. James Arciero Rep. James C. Arena-DeRosa Rep. Brian M. Ashe Rep. John Barrett, III Rep. Natalie M. Blais Rep. Manny Cruz Rep. Marjorie C. Decker Rep. Michelle M. DuBois Rep. William C. Galvin Rep. Colleen M. Garry Rep. Carmine L. Gentile	Rep. James K. Hawkins Rep. Natalie M. Higgins Rep. Tara T. Hong Rep. Patrick J. Kearney Rep. David LeBoeuf Rep. Jack Patrick Lewis Rep. Samantha Montaña Rep. Michael O. Moore Rep. Adrienne Pusateri Ramos Rep. Amy Sangiolo Rep. Adam J. Scanlon Rep. Margaret R. Scarsdale Rep. Thomas M. Stanley Rep. Bruce E. Tarr Rep. Tommy Vitolo
HEARING DATE:	July 29, 2025	
PRIOR HISTORY:	H1703 (2023-2024) H1824 (2021-2022)	
SENATE BILL:	S1207 (Moore)	
REPORTING DEADLINE:	September 27, 2025 (subject extensions, in accordance with House Rule 27)	
CURRENT LAW:	Section 35WW of Chapter 10 of the General Laws establishes the Homeless Animal Prevention and Care Fund. It is funded by revenues received by the commonwealth pursuant to the voluntary check-off donation indicated on the department of revenue's annual income tax return and from public and private sources as gifts, grants and donations to further reduce the population of homeless animals.	

Section 37 of Chapter 129 permits the commissioner of agriculture to levy fines for incursions against animals under Chapter 129 up to \$500 per animal harmed with a maximum to \$10,000 per action.

Section 77 of Chapter 272 of the General Laws defines and criminalizes cruelty to animals and the over fifty ways in which cruelty can be established. This carries a punishment of a \$5,000 fine or two and a half years imprisonment in a house of correction for the first offense. Subsequent offenses are punished by up to a \$10,000 fine and/or ten years imprisonment.

Section 77C of Chapter 272 of the General Laws criminalizes sexual contact with animals or promoting it in any way. A conviction is punished with 7 years in a state prison, two and a half years in a jail or house of correction and/or a fine of up to \$5,000.

BILL SUMMARY:

Section 1 – Adds the ability for the fund in Section 35WW to for animal control officers to be trained when recognizing illegal caging and chaining of animals.

Section 2 – Adds the funds collected from fines from Section 37 to the sources of funds for the Homeless Animal Prevention and Care Fund in Section 35WW.

Section 3 – Directs funds from fines collected under Section 37 to be deposited into the Homeless Animal Prevention and Care Fund from Section 35WW.

Section 4 – Strips people convicted under Section 77C from owning animals consistent with the section added by Section 5 of this bill.

Section 5 – Adds Section 77 1/2 to Chapter 272. Permits the court to prevent people convicted of animal abuse under Section 272 from owning animals for any length of time the court deems appropriate for the protection of animals. The court must notify the relevant authorities of the duration and conditions of the prohibition within 30 days. A person prohibited from owning or accessing animals may petition the court to reduce the duration or conditions of the prohibition once per year. Anyone who violates the court order shall forfeit custody of any animal owned, possessed, or kept by the offender to the custody of an entity incorporated under the laws of the commonwealth for the prevention of cruelty to animals or for the care and protection of homeless or suffering animals.

**JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY
BILL SUMMARY**

BILL NO.	H1916
TITLE:	An Act to further protect employees through a private right of action.
SPONSOR:	Rep. Tram T. Nguyen
COSPONSOR(S):	None
HEARING DATE:	July 29, 2025
PRIOR HISTORY:	H1709 (2023-2024) H1823 (2021-2022)
SENATE BILL:	None
REPORTING DEADLINE:	September 27, 2025 (subject extensions, in accordance with House Rule 27)
CURRENT LAW:	<p>Section 148 of Chapter 149 of the General Laws requires employers pay their employees' earned wages weekly or bi-weekly. Wages include any holiday or vacation payments due an employee under an oral or written agreement. It imposes strict liability on employers and threatens both fines and imprisonment for violations. Some employers such as hospitals, schools and railroads among others are granted exceptions permitting differing payment structures.</p> <p>Section 150 of Chapter 149 provides parallel enforcement mechanisms for the wage requirements of the Chapter. It gives an employee the right to institute and prosecute a civil action for damages incurred, including treble damages for any loss of wages and other benefits and an award of the costs of litigation and reasonable attorneys' fees. It further gives the Attorney General the right to enforce the Wage Act on behalf of the Commonwealth. The only valid defenses for a violation of Section 148 are wage attachment by assignment or trustee, the employee not being present at work or having paid the earned wages fully.</p>
BILL SUMMARY:	<p>Section 1 – Adds a new Section in Chapter 149 that creates a private action against employers. This is assertable by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• a non-profit organization that advocates for employee rights and protections,

- a labor organization which has as members, or is authorized to represent, employees and which exists in whole or part for the purposes of negotiating with employers or
- an affected employee.

This action permits these parties to recover damages and penalties from employers who show that an employer has caused wage non-payments as well as injunctive and declaratory relief. The asserting party must provide a copy of the complaint to the Attorney General's Office (AGO). That office is awarded a 20% tax on the total amount of damages and penalties to a wage enforcement fund which the AGO uses to pay affected employees showing urgent need to obtain unpaid wages to pay housing, heat, or food costs. The Attorney General may as a matter of right intervene as a plaintiff at any time, including post-trial, in these actions. If they choose to do so, the AGO will represent the Commonwealth as a plaintiff, with the original party able to remain party to action if they wish.

**JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY
BILL SUMMARY**

BILL NO.	H1934	
TITLE:	An Act preventing animal cruelty.	
SPONSOR:	Rep. Edward R. Philips	
COSPONSOR(S):	Sen. Jacob R. Oliveira Rep. Samantha Montañó Rep. Christine P. Barber Rep. Marjorie C. Decker Rep. Angelo J. Puppolo, Jr. Rep. Lindsay N. Sabadosa Rep. Brian W. Murray Rep. Sen. Michael D. Brady Rep. Mike Connolly Rep. James K. Hawkins Rep. Tara T. Hong Rep. Manny Cruz Rep. Brian M. Ashe Rep. Vanna Howard Rep. James Arciero Rep. Patrick Joseph Kearney Rep. David LeBoeuf Rep. William C. Galvin Sen. Bruce E. Tarr Rep. Joseph W. McGonagle, Jr. Rep. James Arena-DeRosa Rep. Adam J. Scanlon Rep. Adrienne Ramos Sen. John C. Velis Rep. Adrian C. Madaro Rep. Natalie M. Higgins Rep. Paul J. Donato	
HEARING DATE:	July 29, 2025	
PRIOR HISTORY:	None	
SENATE BILL:	None	
REPORTING DEADLINE:	September 27, 2025 (subject extensions, in accordance with House Rule 27)	
CURRENT LAW:	Sections 137 to 176 of Chapter 140 of the General Laws set out the standards and requirements for owning and caring for an animal. They include the scope of duties of municipal animal control officers and their power to remove animals due to abuse or neglect.	
BILL SUMMARY:	Section 1 – Adds Section 151C to Chapter 140. This authorizes law enforcement and animal control officers to protect any neglected animal by: (1) removing and taking custody of an animal, (2) filing a petition with the district court to ensure care for the animal and/or (3) filing a petition with the district court to seize the animal. When a petition is filed the clerk magistrate must schedule a hearing within 10 days. The removing authority is responsible for giving notice of the seizure and for taking care of the animal. If the court determines	

that the animal has been neglected, the court can order either changed custody of the animal or euthanasia depending on the best interest of the animal. The court may also order the owner to forfeit any other animals and pay for the care of those animals. If there is no neglect found, then the animal is returned to the owner.

**JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY
BILL SUMMARY**

BILL NO.	H1938	
TITLE:	An Act enhancing the issuance of citations for cruel conditions for animals.	
SPONSOR:	Rep. Angelo J. Puppolo, Jr.	
COSPONSOR(S):	Rep. Lindsay N. Sabadosa Rep. Samantha Montañño Rep. James K. Hawkins Rep. Manny Cruz Rep. Marjorie C. Decker Rep. Christine P. Barber Rep. David LeBoeuf Rep. James C. Arena-DeRosa Rep. Adrian C. Madaro Rep. Paul J. Donato Sen. Jacob R. Oliveira Sen. Michael D. Brady	Rep. Brian W. Murray Rep. Mike Connolly Rep. Tara T. Hong Rep. Brian M. Ashe Rep. Vanna Howard Rep. Patrick Joseph Kearney Rep. William C. Galvin Rep. Adam J. Scanlon Rep. Natalie M. Higgins Sen. Bruce E. Tarr Sen. James B. Eldridge
HEARING DATE:	July 29, 2025	
PRIOR HISTORY:	None	
SENATE BILL:	S1190 (Montigny)	
REPORTING DEADLINE:	September 27, 2025 (subject extensions, in accordance with House Rule 27)	
CURRENT LAW:	Section 174E of Chapter 140 of the General Laws criminalizes chaining or tethering a dog for longer than 5 hours in a 24-hour period and outside from 10:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. Confining a dog outside is permissible if done in keeping with several conditions including supplying water and shelter, not doing so during a weather advisory, and avoiding any cruel conditions. Violating the statute is punishable by an escalating fine for each offense: \$50 for first, \$200 for a second, and \$500 for every time after that.	
BILL SUMMARY:	Sections 1 and 2 – Replace “Dog” in Section 174E with “Animal”	

Section 3 – Instructs the commissioner of the department of agricultural resources to promulgate regulations to implement and enforce Section 174E.

**JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY
BILL SUMMARY**

BILL NO.	H1948	
TITLE:	An Act to protect nonhuman primate infants in research institutions and product testing facilities.	
SPONSOR:	Rep. Sean Reid	
COSPONSOR(S):	Rep. Daniel Cahill Rep. James C. Arena-DeRosa Rep. Rep. Jennifer B. Armini Rep. Lindsay N. Sabadosa Rep. Michelle L. Badger Rep. Margaret R. Scarsdale Rep. Estela A. Reyes	Rep. Colleen M. Garry Rep. Natalie M. Higgins Rep. Sean Reid Rep. Sean Garballey Rep. Samantha Montaña Rep. Patrick Joseph Kearney Sen. Michael D. Brady
HEARING DATE:	July 29, 2025	
PRIOR HISTORY:	None	
SENATE BILL:	S1167 (Lovely)	
REPORTING DEADLINE:	September 27, 2025 (subject extensions, in accordance with House Rule 27)	
CURRENT LAW:	<p>Section 80C of Chapter 272 of the General Laws prohibits taking a dog, cat, or bird with the intent to sell for the purpose of or for the purpose of experimentation or mutilation of the animal. This is punishable by a fine of between \$150 and the maximum larceny fine related to the animal's monetary value.</p> <p>Section 80G of Chapter 272 of the General Laws prohibits schools from experimenting on live vertebrates and requires class pets to be housed and cared for in a humane manner. Violating this statute is punishable by a fine of up to \$150.</p>	
BILL SUMMARY:	Section 1 – Adds a Section to Chapter 272 that establishes new standards of care for non-human primate (NHP) infants. Research institutions using infant NHPs are required to house them with their biological mothers unless for medical welfare of the mother or child. This requirement lasts one year into the infant's life. It instructs the commissioner of the Massachusetts Department of Public Health to promulgate regulations to implement and enforce the section.	

Section 2 – Instructs the commissioner of the Massachusetts Department of Public Health to promulgate regulations to implement and enforce the section 90 days after the passage of the act.

**JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY
BILL SUMMARY**

BILL NO.	H1949
TITLE:	An Act relative to protecting cats and dogs from slaughter
SPONSOR:	Rep. David Robertson
CO-SPONSOR(S):	None
HEARING DATE:	July 29, 2025
PRIOR HISTORY:	H1730 (2023-2024) H1845 (2021-2022)
SENATE BILL:	None
REPORTING DEADLINE:	September 27, 2025 (subject extensions, in accordance with House Rule 27)
CURRENT LAW:	<p>Section 78 of Chapter 272 of the General Laws prohibits the sale of horses who cannot work without violating Section 77 unless they are for human keeping or sacrifice. This is punishable by a fine of between \$5 and \$150 or imprisonment of up to six months and loss of auctioneering license if applicable.</p> <p>Section 80C of Chapter 272 of the General Laws prohibits taking a dog, cat, or bird with the intent to sell for the purpose of or for the purpose of experimentation or mutilation of the animal. This is punishable by a fine of between \$150 and the maximum larceny fine related to the animal’s monetary value.</p>
BILL SUMMARY:	Adds a new section to Chapter 272. Defines “Cat”, “Consumption”, “Dog”, and “Slaughter”. Prohibits a person from possessing, importing, selling, buying, giving away, trafficking or accepting a dog or cat for the purpose of slaughter. Establishes a penalty of up to 7 years in state prison or up to 2.5 years in an HOC or a \$5,000 fine for the first offense and a penalty of up to 10 years in state prison and/or a fine of \$10,000 for the second and subsequent offenses. It excludes those acting in lawful practices.

**JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY
BILL SUMMARY**

BILL NO.	H1967
TITLE:	An Act relative to tort actions for latent diseases
SPONSOR:	Rep. Jeffrey N. Roy
COSPONSOR(S):	None
HEARING DATE:	July 29, 2025
PRIOR HISTORY:	H1746 (2023-2024) H1863 (2021-2022) H4884 (2019-2020)
SENATE BILL:	None
REPORTING DEADLINE:	September 27, 2025 (subject extensions, in accordance with House Rule 27)
CURRENT LAW:	Section 2B of Chapter 260 of the General Laws governs tort actions arising from improvements to real property. Such actions are subject to a 3-year of limitations and a 6-year statute of repose. That means that tort actions arising from improvements to real property must be brought within 3 years from when the cause of actions accrues, but, in any event, not more than 6 years after the improvement has been completed.
BILL SUMMARY:	Section 1 - exempts actions concerning latent diseases from toxic material exposure from the statute of limitations in this section. Section 2 - makes the exemption applicable to all causes of action related to these latent diseases.

**JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY
BILL SUMMARY**

BILL NO.	H1973
TITLE:	An Act protecting personal security.
SPONSOR:	Rep. Lindsay N. Sabadosa
COSPONSOR(S):	Rep. Jack Patrick Lewis Rep. Samantha Montaña Rep. Erika Uyterhoeven Rep. Steven Owens Rep. David P. Linsky Rep. Marjorie C. Decker Rep. Danillo A. Sena Rep. Natalie M. Higgins Rep. Christine P. Barber
HEARING DATE:	July 29, 2025
PRIOR HISTORY:	None
SENATE BILL:	S1045 (Comerford)
REPORTING DEADLINE:	September 27, 2025 (subject extensions, in accordance with House Rule 27)
CURRENT LAW:	Section 13 of Chapter 210 of the General Laws establishes the procedures for changing one's name. Currently if someone on probation wishes to change their name a public notice and hearing must be available. The court also requires filing of birth records and any prior name changes.
BILL SUMMARY:	Section 1 – Strikes Section 13 and makes the following changes. It removes the requirement for public notice of the petition for those on probation. It also provides for the sealing of records for these movements from the public if there is a danger to the person changing their name from the publication of those

**JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY
BILL SUMMARY**

BILL NO.	H1982
TITLE:	An Act relative to the protection of small businesses and workers.
SPONSOR:	Rep. Lindsay N. Sabadosa
COSPONSOR(S):	None
HEARING DATE:	July 29, 2025
PRIOR HISTORY:	None
SENATE BILL:	S1038 (Brownsberger)
REPORTING DEADLINE:	September 27, 2025 (subject extensions, in accordance with House Rule 27)
CURRENT LAW:	<p>Chapter 93 of the General Laws sets up the legal standards and prohibited practices for trade and enterprises in the Commonwealth. Section 2 lists the definitions for terms used within the Chapter. Section 4 prohibits any contract or conspiracy in restraint of trade or commerce. Section 5 prohibits monopolies of any part of trade or commerce in the Commonwealth. Section 10 prohibits the knowing violation of Section 4 or Section 5 with the intent to injure any person punishable by up to a \$100,000 fine if by a corporation or up to 1 year of incarceration or a fine of up to \$25,000, or both, if by a person. The Attorney General may bring actions for these violations. Section 12 permits a person aggrieved by a violation of the Chapter to sue for damages and costs including reasonable attorneys fees and permits a Court upon a finding of malicious intent to injure to award up to three times the amount of actual damages.</p>
BILL SUMMARY:	<p>Sections 1 to 3 – Update Section 2 of Chapter 93 to add definitions for “monopoly power”, “monopsony” and “monopsony power” strike the definition of “New England” and strike language exempting from the definition of “trade and commerce” the conveyance, transfer or use of real property.</p> <p>Section 4 – Updates Section 4 of Chapter 93 to add that a contract or arrangement is against public policy and unlawful if involves a monopoly or monopsony or restrains or may restrain competition or the free exercise of any business activity or service.</p> <p>Section 5 – Updates Section 5 of Chapter 93 to add language prohibiting persons with dominant positions in business to abuse their position. It lists a variety of scenarios which may be used to establish a person’s dominant position and what is categorized as abusing a dominant position and provides the affirmative defense of</p>

establishing pro-competitive benefits of the challenged conduct. It lists a number of restraints that are presumed illegal if engaged by a firm in a dominant position.

Section 6 – Updates Section 10 of Chapter 93 by explicitly stating that a knowing violation of Section 4 or 5 with intent to injure a person is a felony.

Section 7 – Adds a new Section 13A to Chapter 93 permitting the recovery of reasonable fees and costs by the Attorney General or private litigants if they prevail in an action under the Act.

**JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY
BILL SUMMARY**

BILL NO.	H4046
TITLE:	An Act relative to establishing a commission to study alimony
SPONSOR:	Rep. Adrienne P. Ramos
COSPONSOR(S):	None
HEARING DATE:	July 29, 2025
PRIOR HISTORY:	None
SENATE BILL:	None
REPORTING DEADLINE:	September 27, 2025 (subject extensions, in accordance with House Rule 27)
CURRENT LAW:	Section 34 of Chapter 208 of the General Laws permits a court with personal jurisdiction over both parties to make a judgment for either party to pay alimony during or at any time after a divorce. The court may, in lieu of alimony, assign to either party all or any part of the estate of the other including benefits and all rights and funds accrued during the marriage. In fixing the nature and value of this property the court shall consider the length of the marriage, the conduct of parties during the marriage, the age, health, station, occupation, amount and sources of income, vocational skills, employability, estate, liabilities and needs of each of the parties, the opportunity of each for future acquisition of capital assets and income, and the amount and duration of alimony. The court may also consider the present and future needs of the dependent children and the contributions of each party to the state or as a homemaker to the family unit.
BILL SUMMARY:	Establishes a special commission to study and make recommendations on Massachusetts alimony system. The commission shall have the following 9 members: the chairs of the Joint Committee on the Judiciary, who shall serve as co-chairs; 1 member appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives; 1 member appointed by the Minority Leader of the House of Representatives; 1 member appointed by the President of the Senate; 1 member appointed by the Minority Leader of the Senate; 1 member appointed by the Chief Justice of the Probate and Family Court; 1 member appointed by the Massachusetts Bar Association,

who shall have expertise in family law and alimony; and 1 member appointed by the Massachusetts Legal Assistance Corporation, who shall have expertise in family law and alimony. The Commission shall study statewide trends on alimony over time along with comparisons to other states, review the formula to calculate alimony, analysis on economic implications, the interplay of alimony and child support, etc. The Commission shall submit a report on their findings to the Joint Committee on the Judiciary and Clerks of the House of Representatives and Senate not later than December 31, 2026.

**JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY
BILL SUMMARY**

BILL NO.	H4164
TITLE:	An Act relative to Anti-SLAPP law reforms.
SPONSOR:	Rep. Consalvo
COSPONSOR(S):	None
HEARING DATE:	July 29, 2025
PRIOR HISTORY:	None
SENATE BILL:	None
REPORTING DEADLINE:	September 27, 2025 (subject extensions, in accordance with House Rule 27)
CURRENT LAW:	Section 59H of Chapter 231 of the General Laws establishes the rules for strategic litigation against public participation (SLAPP) and allows a defendant who believes he or she has been targeted because they exercised their constitutional rights to seek to dismiss the lawsuit. A special motion to dismiss may be filed within sixty days of the service of the complaint or, in the court's discretion, at any later time upon terms it deems proper. A party can exercise its right of petition if the speech is made in connection with or submitted to a legislative, executive or judicial body; or any other statement falling within Constitutional protections of the right to petition the government.
BILL SUMMARY:	<p>Section 1 – Adds a provision to Section 59H preventing any costs of fees awarded by the court from resulting in a lien against the nonmoving party’s primary residence or primary business, if the business has 500 or fewer employees.</p> <p>Section 2 – Adds a provision to permit courts to order mediation without attorney fees accruing prior to the court ruling on a 59H motion.</p>