

## **Massachusetts House of Representatives Bill Summary**

**Bill #:** H.2244

**Title:** An Act relative to making the charter of the city of Chicopee gender neutral

**Sponsor:** Rep. Shirley Arriaga

**Committee:** Municipalities and Regional Government

**Hearing Date:** 5/13/25

**Current Law:** The Chicopee city charter was accepted by the voters at the November 6, 1897 state election as Chapter 239, Acts of 1897 and includes the following general provisions:

- Article 1. Municipal government
- Article 2. Elections and meetings
- Article 3. Legislative department
- Article 4. Executive department
- Article 5. School department
- Article 6. Administrative offices
- Article 7. Powers and duties of officers
- Article 8. General provisions

Chapter 512, Acts of 2008, provided that the term "Board of Aldermen" be changed to "City Council" throughout this Charter. In addition, the term "Board" when referring to the Board of Alderman was changed to "Council," and the term "Alderman" was changed to "Councilor" or "City Councilor."

**Summary:** Section 1 deletes the current charter and replaces it with a new version featuring gender neutral language.

Section 2 repeals any inconsistent provisions of the charter and sets forth the revised charter language including the gender neutral provisions. There are no other substantive changes.

Throughout the charter, terms such as "he", "him", and "his" are replaced with gender neutral language such as "they" or the title of the officer or position being referenced.

**Notes:** The special legislation was approved by the Chicopee City Council by unanimous roll call vote on September 17, 2024 and approved by Mayor John Vieau on September 20, 2024.