

**SENATE . . . . . No. 1322**

---

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

*James E. Timilty*

*To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:*

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the adoption of the accompanying bill:

An Act relative to automatic sprinkler systems.

PETITION OF:

NAME:

*James E. Timilty*

DISTRICT/ADDRESS:

*Bristol and Norfolk*

**SENATE . . . . . No. 1322**

---

By Mr. Timilty, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 1322) of James E. Timilty for legislation relative to automatic sprinkler systems. Public Safety and Homeland Security.

---

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

\_\_\_\_\_  
In the One Hundred and Eighty-Ninth General Court  
(2015-2016)  
\_\_\_\_\_

An Act relative to automatic sprinkler systems.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:*

1 SECTION 1. Chapter 143 of the General Laws is hereby amended by adding the  
2 following new section:-

3 Section 3A 1/2. Automatic sprinkler systems required for buildings and structures  
4 totaling more than 7,500 gross square feet

5 Every building or structure, including any additions or major alterations thereto, which  
6 totals, in the aggregate, more than 7,500 gross square feet in floor area shall be protected  
7 throughout with an adequate system of automatic sprinklers in accordance with the provisions of  
8 the state building code. No such sprinkler system shall be required unless sufficient water and  
9 water pressure exists. For purposes of this section, the gross square footage of a building or  
10 structure shall include the sum total of the combined floor areas for all floor levels, basements,  
11 sub-basements and additions, in the aggregate, measured from the outside walls, irrespective of  
12 the existence of interior fire resistive walls, floors and ceilings. This section shall not apply to  
13 buildings used for agricultural purposes as defined in section 1A of chapter 128.

14 In such buildings or structures, or in certain areas of such buildings or structures, where  
15 the discharge of water would be an actual danger in the event of fire, the inspector of buildings  
16 or building commissioner shall permit the installation of such other fire suppressant systems as  
17 are prescribed by the state building code in lieu of automatic sprinklers. Automatic suppressant  
18 or sprinkler systems shall not be required in rooms or areas of a telephone central office  
19 equipment building when such rooms or areas are protected with an automatic fire alarm system.  
20 Sprinkler systems shall not be required in open-air parking structures, defined as: buildings,  
21 structures, or portions thereof, used for parking motor vehicles and having not less than twenty-  
22 five per cent of the total wall area open to atmosphere at each level, utilizing at least two sides of  
23 the structure. This section shall not apply to buildings or additions used for residential purposes.

24 The inspector of buildings or building commissioner shall enforce the provisions of this  
25 section.

26 Whoever is aggrieved by the inspector of buildings or building commissioner's  
27 interpretation, order, requirement, direction or failure to act under the provisions of this section,  
28 may, within forty-five days after the service of notice thereof, appeal from such interpretation,  
29 order, requirement, direction or failure to act to the building code appeals board as provided in  
30 section one hundred of chapter one hundred and forty three. The board may grant a reasonable  
31 waiver from the provisions of this section, or may allow the installation of a reasonable  
32 alternative or modified system of automatic sprinklers upon reviewing the characteristics of  
33 buildings that have architectural or historical significance.

34 SECTION 2. Section 26G of Chapter 148 of the General Laws is hereby repealed.

35           SECTION 3. Section 201 of Chapter 6 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2012  
36 Official Edition, is hereby amended by striking out, in line 6, the words “and twenty-six G of  
37 chapter one hundred and forty-eight”.

38           SECTION 4. This act shall take effect on January 1, 2016.