

**SENATE . . . . . No. 946**

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**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

PRESENTED BY:

***Karen E. Spilka***

*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 the geographical jurisdiction of the Housing Court Department.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	
<i>Karen E. Spilka</i>	<i>Second Middlesex and Norfolk</i>	
<i>Michael J. Barrett</i>	<i>Third Middlesex</i>	<i>1/25/2017</i>
<i>Kenneth J. Donnelly</i>	<i>Fourth Middlesex</i>	<i>1/25/2017</i>
<i>Jack Lewis</i>	<i>7th Middlesex</i>	<i>1/27/2017</i>
<i>Jay R. Kaufman</i>	<i>15th Middlesex</i>	<i>1/27/2017</i>
<i>Marjorie C. Decker</i>	<i>25th Middlesex</i>	<i>1/30/2017</i>
<i>Denise Provost</i>	<i>27th Middlesex</i>	<i>1/31/2017</i>
<i>John F. Keenan</i>	<i>Norfolk and Plymouth</i>	<i>1/31/2017</i>
<i>James B. Eldridge</i>	<i>Middlesex and Worcester</i>	<i>2/1/2017</i>
<i>Bradley H. Jones, Jr.</i>	<i>20th Middlesex</i>	<i>2/1/2017</i>
<i>Kate Hogan</i>	<i>3rd Middlesex</i>	<i>2/1/2017</i>
<i>Mary S. Keefe</i>	<i>15th Worcester</i>	<i>2/2/2017</i>
<i>Paul R. Heroux</i>	<i>2nd Bristol</i>	<i>2/2/2017</i>
<i>Viriato M. deMacedo</i>	<i>Plymouth and Barnstable</i>	<i>2/2/2017</i>
<i>Sal N. DiDomenico</i>	<i>Middlesex and Suffolk</i>	<i>2/3/2017</i>
<i>Elizabeth A. Malia</i>	<i>11th Suffolk</i>	<i>2/3/2017</i>
<i>Patricia D. Jehlen</i>	<i>Second Middlesex</i>	<i>2/3/2017</i>
<i>Daniel J. Ryan</i>	<i>2nd Suffolk</i>	<i>2/3/2017</i>

<i>Mike Connolly</i>	<i>26th Middlesex</i>	<i>2/3/2017</i>
<i>Carlos Gonzalez</i>	<i>10th Hampden</i>	<i>2/3/2017</i>
<i>Alice Hanlon Peisch</i>	<i>14th Norfolk</i>	<i>2/3/2017</i>
<i>Thomas M. Stanley</i>	<i>9th Middlesex</i>	<i>2/3/2017</i>
<i>James Arciero</i>	<i>2nd Middlesex</i>	<i>2/6/2017</i>

**SENATE . . . . . No. 946**

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By Ms. Spilka, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 946) of Karen E. Spilka, Michael J. Barrett, Kenneth J. Donnelly, Jack Lewis and other members of the General Court for legislation relative to the geographical jurisdiction of the Housing Court Department. The Judiciary.

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[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION  
SEE SENATE, NO. 901 OF 2015-2016.]

**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**In the One Hundred and Ninetieth General Court  
(2017-2018)**  
\_\_\_\_\_

An Act relative to the geographical jurisdiction of the Housing Court Department.

*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. Section 1 of chapter 185C of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2014  
2   Official Edition, is hereby amended by striking out the first sentence and inserting in place  
3   thereof the following sentence:- The housing court department, established in section 1 of  
4   chapter 211B, shall be composed of: (i) a western division consisting of the municipalities in  
5   Berkshire, Franklin, Hampden and Hampshire counties; (ii) a central division consisting of the  
6   municipalities in Worcester county and the municipalities of Ashland, Framingham, Holliston,  
7   Hopkinton, Hudson, Marlborough, Natick, Sudbury, Wayland and Sherborn; (iii) a northeastern  
8   division consisting of the municipalities in Essex county and the municipalities of Acton, Ashby,  
9   Ayer, Bedford, Billerica, Boxborough, Burlington, Carlisle, Chelmsford, Concord, Dracut,  
10   Dunstable, Everett, Groton, Lexington, Lincoln, Littleton, Lowell, Malden, Maynard, Melrose,

11 North Reading, Pepperell, Reading, Shirley, Stoneham, Stow, Tewksbury, Townsend,  
12 Tyngsborough, Wakefield, Waltham, Watertown, Westford, Weston, Wilmington, Winchester  
13 and Woburn and the jurisdiction known as Devens established in chapter 498 of the acts of 1993;  
14 (iv) a southeastern division consisting of the municipalities in Barnstable, Bristol and Nantucket  
15 counties and the county of Dukes County and the municipalities of Carver, Duxbury, Halifax,  
16 Hanover, Hanson, Hingham, Hull, Kingston, Lakeville, Marion, Marshfield, Mattapoisett,  
17 Middleborough, Norwell, Pembroke, Plymouth, Plympton, Rochester, Rockland, Scituate and  
18 Wareham; (v) a metro south division consisting of the municipalities in Norfolk county, except  
19 Brookline, and the municipalities of Abington, Bridgewater, Brockton, East Bridgewater, West  
20 Bridgewater and Whitman; and (vi) an eastern division consisting of the municipalities in  
21 Suffolk county and the municipalities of Arlington, Belmont, Brookline, Cambridge, Medford,  
22 Newton and Somerville.

23 SECTION 2. Said chapter 185C is hereby further amended by striking out section 4, as so  
24 appearing, and inserting in the place thereof the following section:-

25 Section 4. The western division of the housing court department shall hold its sittings in  
26 the city of Springfield in Hampden county and at least 1 sitting each week in courthouse facilities  
27 in Berkshire, Franklin and Hampshire counties. The court, with the consent of the chief justice of  
28 the trial court, shall also sit in any other courthouse facilities as the chief justice of the housing  
29 court may consider expedient or convenient.

30 The eastern division of the housing court department shall hold at least 1 sitting each  
31 week in Suffolk county and at least 1 sitting each week in Middlesex county. The court, with the

32 consent of the chief justice of the trial court, shall also sit in any other courthouse facilities as the  
33 chief justice of the housing court department may consider expedient or convenient.

34 The central division of the housing court department shall hold at least 1 sitting each  
35 week in the city of Worcester, at least 1 sitting each week in Middlesex county, at least 1 sitting  
36 each week in northern Worcester county and at least 1 sitting each week in southern Worcester  
37 county. The court, with the consent of the chief justice of the trial court, shall also sit in any other  
38 courthouse facilities as the chief justice of the housing court department may consider expedient  
39 or convenient.

40 The northeastern division of the housing court department shall hold at least 2 sittings  
41 each week in Essex county and at least 2 sittings each week in Middlesex county. The court, with  
42 the consent of the chief justice of the trial court, shall also sit in any other courthouse facilities as  
43 the chief justice of the housing court department may consider expedient or convenient.

44 The southeastern division of the housing court department shall hold at least 3 sittings  
45 each week in Bristol county, at least 1 sitting each week in Plymouth county and at least 1 sitting  
46 each week in Barnstable county. The court, with the consent of the chief justice of the trial court,  
47 shall also sit in any other courthouse facilities as the chief justice of the housing court department  
48 may consider expedient or convenient.

49 The metro south division of the housing court department shall hold at least 1 sitting each  
50 week in Norfolk county and at least 1 sitting each week in Plymouth county. The court, with the  
51 consent of the chief justice of the trial court, shall also sit in any other courthouse facilities as the  
52 chief justice of the housing court department may consider expedient or convenient.

53 SECTION 3. Section 8 of said chapter 185C, as so appearing, is hereby amended by  
54 striking out the first sentence and inserting in place thereof the following sentence:- There shall  
55 be 2 justices appointed for the western division, 2 justices appointed for the eastern division, 2  
56 justices appointed for the central division, 2 justices appointed for the northeastern division, 2  
57 justices appointed for the southeastern division, 2 justices appointed for the metro south division  
58 and 3 circuit justices who shall sit in any of the divisions as determined by the chief justice of the  
59 housing court department may consider expedient or convenient.

60 SECTION 4. Section 1 of chapter 211B of the General Laws, as so appearing, is hereby  
61 amended by striking out, in line 7, the figure “378” and inserting in place thereof the following  
62 figure:- 383.

63 SECTION 5. Section 2 of said chapter 211B, as so appearing, is hereby amended by  
64 striking out, in line 2, the figure “10” and inserting in place thereof the following figure:- 15.

65 SECTION 6. The provisions of this act shall take effect on July 1, 2018.