

IMAGE HD

Giving Communities an “HD IMAGE” of Local Housing Need



H.1543 (Rep. Lipper-Garabedian) — **S.970** (Sen. DiDomenico)
An Act Improving Municipal Access to General Existing Housing Data

The Challenge

Massachusetts has no accessible tool to report precise data on municipalities’ affordable housing stock, hindering municipal efforts to address the Commonwealth’s housing crisis. The Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities’ uses the Subsidized Housing Inventory (SHI) to track low and moderate-income housing stock. However, the (SHI) overcounts affordable units and fails to reflect whether units are affordable to people earning a broad range of incomes. Few communities have the capacity to run analyses to determine how much deed-restricted affordable housing exists across the low- to moderate-income housing spectrum. Most rely on the SHI even though it is an imprecise measure of affordability, making it difficult to understand the true local need for affordable housing.

The Impact

Access to detailed data on existing affordable housing stock will build a better understanding of local affordability challenges. This data will empower municipalities to more strategically pursue development that can expand affordable housing to meet local needs, proactively preserve existing affordable housing with termlimited deed restrictions, and implement policies and programs to increase housing affordability.

The Solution

This bill provides municipalities and regional government entities with accurate data on their community’s affordable housing stock that planners need to plan for and promote affordable housing development. The database established by this bill will include:

For New Developments:

1. Total Unit count and Affordable unit count (at 30, 50 and 80% of area median income)
2. Term and end dates of affordability restrictions
3. Per unit bedroom and bathroom count
4. Per unit livable square footage
5. Location

For Existing Development:

1. Total units and total units with long-term affordability restrictions
2. Terms and end dates of long-term affordability restrictions
3. Location

