



City of Malden Massachusetts

215 Pleasant St, 4th Floor
Malden, Massachusetts 02148



MEMORANDUM

To: The Honorable Senator Rebecca L. Rausch, Chair
The Honorable Representative Jack Patrick Lewis Chair, and
Fellow Members of the Joint Committee on Municipalities and Regional Government

From: Stephen Winslow, Ward 6 City Councillor, Chair of the City Charter Review Committee

Re: H.4233 Written Testimony in Favor

Date: July 22, 2025

I am writing to express my support for a set of amendments to delete outdated sections of Malden's 1881 City Charter in order to more readily update and re-organize the responsibilities of key departments, commissions and staff and in doing so allow our City to better provide services to residents and other members of the general public. Enactment of H.4233 will delete outdated sections of the current Charter that describe those responsibilities so as to shift description of those responsibilities to newly ordained City Ordinance sections that have or will take effect upon approval of the Home Rule Petition by the General Court and the Governor.

Need for the Home Petition to Amend the Malden City Charter

The Council and the Mayor formed a Joint Charter Review Committee that met on and off beginning in 2017 to consider various options to re-organize the structure of Malden Government. The Committee's first task was to actually create an intelligible version of the Charter that could be shared with the Council and the public. Malden's Charter contains many provisions that date back from the time Malden transitioned from a town to a city form of government in 1881. The 1881 Charter consolidated the authority of the town into the hands of a Mayor, City Council and key departments and commissions. Later amendments added to, or sometimes deleted the basic roles and responsibilities, creating a voluminous binder of changes that took a diligent effort led by long-time City Clerk Karen Anderson to successfully untangle. That effort allowed the Council to approve the posting of readable version of the City Charter on-line in 2018.

The 2018 version of the Charter made apparent that many sections no longer accurately reflected current roles and responsibilities while others could use updating to better adapt to future needs. After several efforts to write an entirely new charter, Mayor Christenson in the Fall of 2024 proposed that the Charter Review Committee focus on the sections most urgently in need of updating. The Mayor and Council approved updates to those key sections in April 2025 and subsequently submitted a Home Rule Petition request to Representative Ultrino. The language of the Home Rule Petition has since been paired down to the language necessary to delete the sections of Malden's 1881.

The following is a brief summary of the title of each section of the 1881 Charter that the Home Rule petition will eliminate if enacted along with the reference to the already adopted provisions of Malden City Ordinances that will take effect upon passage¹

¹ Note: the original Home Rule Petition package contains an April 29, 2025 memo that more fully describes the rational for the deletions

1. **Delete Charter Section 16 regarding Fire Commissioner and Fire Department and Adopt Section 2.12.115 of the Malden City Ordinances**
2. **Delete Charter Sections 20 and 21 regarding the Superintendent of Public Works, City Engineer and Public Works Commission and Section 23C regarding the Stadium and Athletic Field Commission and Adopt Section 2.12.100 creating a Department of Public Works, Section 2.12.108 creating a Department of Water Utilities, Section 2.12.110 creating an Engineering Department, Section 2.16.120 creating a Public Works Commission, and Section 2.16.140 creating a Parks and Recreation Commission**
3. **Delete Charter Section 23A regarding Police Commissioner and Police Department and Adopt Section 2.12.165 of the Malden City Ordinances**
4. **Delete Charter Section 23D regarding Traffic Commission and Adopt Section 2.16.150 of the Malden City Ordinances creating a Transportation Commission**
5. **Delete Charter Section 23F regarding Plumbing Inspector, Section 23G Code Enforcement Inspector and Section 32 regarding Board of Health, Strike Sections 2.12.060 and Section 2.12.080 of the Malden City Ordinances and Replace with Section 2.12.080 regarding a Department of Inspectional Services, Strike Section 2.12.105 Department of Public Health and Human Services in its entirety and Replace with Section 2.12.105 Department of Health and Human Services, Strike and Replace Section 2.12.130 Senior Center Program Coordinator, Strike and Replace Section 2.12.130 Teen Program Coordinator, Strike and Replace Section 2.16.020 Board of Health, Strike and Replace Language of Sections 9.16.010, 9.16.020, 9.16.030, 9.16.040 and 9.16.050.**

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely yours

Stephen P. Winslow
Malden City Councillor Ward 6
Chair, City of Malden Charter Review Committee

Cc: Senator Lewis
Representatives Ultrino, Donato and Lipper-Garabedian