

# CITY OF BOSTON



IN THE YEAR TWO THOUSAND TWENTY-THREE

## PETITION FOR A SPECIAL LAW RE: AN ACT RELATIVE TO DISTRICT CITY COUNCIL ELECTIONS IN THE CITY OF BOSTON

**WHEREAS:** The Charter of the City of Boston Section Twenty-One calls for biennial Municipal Elections in every odd numbered year on the first Tuesday in November; *and*

**WHEREAS:** Following the 2020 U.S. Census the precincts in the City of Boston were redrawn to more equally distributed to balance the voters of the City of Boston, *and*

**WHEREAS:** On November 2, 2022 the Boston City Council voted to adopt a map of the redrawn City Council districts under docket 1275 and was signed by the Mayor of the City of Boston; *and*

**WHEREAS:** On November 2, 2022 plaintiffs filed suit in the Suffolk Superior Court, the case was removed to U.S. District court for the District of Massachusetts on December 5th 2022, and a Preliminary Injunction hearing was held from March 28, 2023 to April 5, 2023; *and*

**WHEREAS:** On May 8th 2023, Judge Saris of the Massachusetts Federal District Court issued a written order which enjoined the City's use of the November 2, 2022 map and directed that "the City Council is best positioned to redraw the lines in light of traditional districting principles and the Constitution"

**WHEREAS:** For the Boston City Council to comply with this directive and expeditiously approve a new map to be used for the Fall 2023 municipal elections, an extension of the deadlines dictated by the Charter of the City of Boston is necessary for making application, distribution, filing, and certification of nomination papers and for objections to nominations of candidates or withdrawals or permissible substitutions of candidates; *and*

**WHEREAS:** All prospective and potential candidates for District City Councilor in the City of Boston deserve assurances that they will be provided adequate time to secure the signatures necessary to comply with this directive; NOW THEREFORE BE IT

**ORDERED:** That a petition to the General Court, accompanied by a bill for a special law relating to the City of Boston to be filed with an attested copy of this Order be, and hereby is, approved under Clause One 1 of Section Eight 8 of Article II, as amended, of the Articles of Amendment to the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, provided that the Legislature may reasonably vary the form and substance of the requested legislation within the scope of the general public objectives of this petition.

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AN ACT RELATIVE TO DISTRICT CITY COUNCIL ELECTIONS IN THE CITY OF  
BOSTON**

***SECTION 1.***

Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, in the year two thousand and twenty-three, for the office of District City Councilor in the City of Boston, the last hour and day for making application and distribution of nomination papers at the Boston Election Department shall be 5PM on June 13, 2023; at the last hour and day for filing said nomination papers shall be 5PM on June 23, 2023; the last hour and day for the Commissioner to complete certification of signatures shall be 5PM on July 7, 2023; the last hour and day for filing withdrawals or objections to nominations of candidates or permissible substitutions shall be 5PM on July 18, 2023.

***SECTION 2.***

The date of the regular preliminary municipal election in the City of Boston shall remain September 12, 2023, and the date of the regular municipal final election in the City of Boston shall remain November 7, 2023.

***SECTION 3.***

For the office of City Councilor At-Large in the City of Boston, all deadlines for making application and distribution and filing and certification of nominations papers and for objections to nominations of candidates or withdrawals or permissible substitutions of candidates shall remain as dictated by the Charter of the City of Boston and shall not be altered by this legislation.

#### ***SECTION 4.***

Any valid signatures for nomination papers and submitted to the Boston Elections Department for review by candidates for District City Councilor prior to any subsequent approval of new Boston City Council districts for the year of two thousand and twenty-three shall be deemed valid for purposes of certification of candidacy under the new district lines, insofar as the signature is of a person who is a registered voter within either the new district or the district in which the candidate was initially running pursuant to the the now-enjoined November 2, 2022 map, and provided that the candidate in question shall have been an inhabitant of a place within the new district for at least one year immediately preceding the date of the municipal election.

#### ***SECTION 5.***

If this act does not take effect until after the dates of any action taken in accordance with the preceding sections 1 and 4, the actions of the City of Boston Mayor, City Council and Elections Department to alter requirements or dates related to the 2023 biennial municipal election shall be ratified, validated, and confirmed as if this act had been in place prior thereto.

#### ***SECTION 6.***

Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, the Boston Elections Commission shall have the authority to add or change any dates relating to the preliminary Municipal Election to be held in the City of Boston on September 12th, 2023 as they deem necessary for the orderly administration of the election only after approval of the Secretary of the Commonwealth. Such changes must be proposed and published at least 72 weekday hours before any scheduled meeting at which a vote will be taken and sent to any affected person, by posting on the Boston Elections Commission website and by whatever other means they deem appropriate. Any approved changes shall be sent to any affected person, posted on the Boston Election Department website and distributed by whatever other means the Commission deems appropriate.

#### ***SECTION 7.***

Effective Date. The provisions of this act shall take effect upon passage.

Filed in Council: May 17, 2023