

OFFERED BY COUNCILOR MINIARD CULPEPPER



CITY OF BOSTON

IN THE YEAR TWO THOUSAND TWENTY SIX

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF S.2959, “AN ACT REGARDING FAIR HOUSING PRACTICES IN THE COMMONWEALTH”

WHEREAS, Fair, equal, and nondiscriminatory access to housing is a fundamental civil rights issue, and housing discrimination on the basis of race, source of income, voucher status, disability, and other protected characteristics undermines equal opportunity, reinforces residential segregation, and limits access to safe, stable, and affordable housing; *and*

WHEREAS, The Suffolk University Law School Housing Discrimination Testing Program, the Boston Foundation, and Analysis Group report, Qualified Renters Need Not Apply: Race and Voucher Discrimination in the Metro Boston Rental Housing Market, found substantial evidence of discrimination against Black renters and renters using housing vouchers, including evidence of voucher-based discrimination in 86% of tests and race-based discrimination in 71% of tests, demonstrating the continued need for stronger fair housing education, accountability, and enforcement; *and*

WHEREAS, S.2959, “An Act regarding fair housing practices in the Commonwealth,” would strengthen fair housing education requirements for real estate professionals by requiring applicants for real estate salesperson licenses to complete not less than four hours of instruction on fair housing law and requiring licensed brokers and salespersons to complete not less than two hours of fair housing instruction during their continuing education requirements; *and*

WHEREAS, S.2959 would strengthen accountability for housing discrimination by requiring the Board of Registration of Real Estate Brokers and Salespersons to annually publish information regarding complaints filed against license holders, disciplinary actions related to discriminatory practices, and the names of license holders whose licenses have been suspended or revoked as a result of discriminatory practices, increasing transparency regarding the enforcement of fair housing protections in the Commonwealth; *and*

WHEREAS, S.2959 would further strengthen fair housing enforcement by expanding the agencies whose findings may be referred to the Board for disciplinary action and requiring license suspensions when a court, in a matter brought by the Office of

the Attorney General, makes a final finding that a licensed broker or salesperson committed an unlawful practice in violation of Chapter 151B in connection with their occupation, including enhanced consequences for repeat violations; *and*

WHEREAS, The Boston City Council recently examined housing voucher discrimination and fair housing civil rights enforcement in Boston, including the prevalence of discrimination based on race, source of income, and voucher status and the need to strengthen fair housing education, enforcement, accountability, and coordination among state and local civil rights agencies, and S.2959 would advance many of these same objectives by strengthening education and accountability requirements for real estate professionals throughout the Commonwealth; ***NOW, THEREFORE BE IT***

RESOLVED: hereby expresses its strong support for S.2959, “An Act regarding fair housing practices in the Commonwealth,” and urges the Massachusetts General Court to pass this legislation to strengthen fair housing education, transparency, accountability, and enforcement; deter discriminatory practices in the real estate industry; protect renters and prospective tenants from unlawful housing discrimination; and advance equal access to housing throughout the City of Boston and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Filed on: August 5, 2026