

Offered by City Councilor Julia Mejia



CITY OF BOSTON IN CITY COUNCIL

IN THE YEAR TWO THOUSAND TWENTY-SIX

ORDER FOR A HEARING TO EXAMINE INCOME-ADJUSTED PARKING FINES AND INTEREST-FREE PAYMENT PLANS

- WHEREAS,** The City of Boston currently issues parking citations using flat-rate fines that apply uniformly regardless of a resident's income or financial circumstances. This approach can result in substantially different financial impacts for residents who commit the same violation; *and*
- WHEREAS,** For residents with limited financial resources, including elders on fixed incomes, parking fines may pose challenges when balanced against essential household expenses such as housing, food, and transportation. These concerns raise questions about proportionality and fairness within the City's parking enforcement system; *and*
- WHEREAS,** Unpaid parking citations can quickly compound through late fees, penalties, and enforcement actions, creating cycles of municipal debt that are difficult to resolve and disproportionately burden residents with the least ability to pay; *and*
- WHEREAS,** Workers whose jobs require travel across multiple neighborhoods including home health care aides, special education specialists, and other service providers often rely on personal vehicles to perform their duties and may face increased exposure to parking citations that can affect their ability to maintain consistent employment when fines escalate; *and*
- WHEREAS,** Municipalities including San Francisco and Seattle have examined or implemented income-based fine structures or flexible, interest-free payment options for certain municipal fines and citations. These approaches have been considered as tools to improve compliance and reduce the accumulation of unpaid fines while maintaining enforcement objectives; ***NOW THEREFORE BE IT***

ORDERED: That the appropriate committees of the Boston City Council hold a hearing to examine the feasibility, equity considerations, and administrative requirements of implementing income-adjusted parking ticket fines in the City of Boston, including the development of interest-free payment plans for parking citations, eligibility criteria, enforcement implications, administrative capacity, potential impacts on municipal revenue, and testimony from relevant City departments and other appropriate stakeholders.

Filed in Council: January 28, 2026