



**Right to Counsel for Low-Income Tenants Facing Eviction
(HD.3385, HD.1618, & [SD.625](#))**

*An Act relative to ensure right to counsel in eviction proceedings
Sponsored by Rep. Chynah Tyler, Rep. Dave Rogers, &
Sen. Sal DiDomenico*

This legislation would provide low-income tenants facing eviction a right to an attorney. These bills will help prevent homelessness by avoiding evictions of some of the most vulnerable households.

In Massachusetts, nearly two-thirds of landlords are represented by attorneys in eviction cases. However, only 6–10 % of residents are represented. Access to justice through representation in eviction proceedings are particularly important as tenants in Housing Court are typically poor, often women, and disproportionately racial and ethnic minorities.

With a lawyer, tenants will better understand their rights, the consequences of the proceeding, and will be able to better work with the landlord to resolve their case. This legislation will also help eviction proceedings to move more efficiently through the court system.

Currently, New York City and San Francisco both recently passed similar laws providing a right to counsel in eviction cases. If passed, Massachusetts would be the first to offer this right statewide.



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