



Tenant Board Members on Housing Authority Boards in Towns (HD.3781 & [SD.1987](#))

*An Act relative to local housing authority board member elections
Sponsored by Rep. Kevin Honan & Sen. Joseph Boncore*

This legislation ensures tenant participation in the governance of their homes and helps local housing authorities (LHAs) in towns to operate more effectively by creating a process to appoint a resident to the tenant-designated seat on housing authority boards.

In 2014, public housing reform legislation made changes to housing authority governance by designating a seat housing boards in towns for a tenant. This matched a similar requirement for housing authorities in cities that already had a tenant-designated seat for their boards.

Unfortunately, since the public housing reform legislation was signed into law, efforts to create a process to elect a tenant board member in towns have proved unworkable. This has resulted in tenant seats on housing authority boards in towns going unfilled and confusion among tenants, housing authorities, and town clerks.

According to this legislation, the tenant member for the housing authority board will be appointed by the town from a list of tenant names submitted by the housing authority residents. This process mirrors how tenants are currently appointed to housing authority boards in cities.

This legislation also creates a process for reducing the number of town-wide elected housing authority board members in towns from four to three, which the reform legislation from 2014 did not address. Under these bills, the board seat that has expired or the next seat to expire or become vacant shall be filled by the appointed tenant member.

This legislation was developed together with the Department of Housing and Community Development, MassNAHRO, Massachusetts Union of Public Housing Tenants, the Massachusetts Law Reform Institute, and CHAPA.



For more information:

Eric Shupin
Director of Public Policy

eshupin@chapa.org

(617) 842-9712

www.chapa.org

