

HOUSE No. 511

By Mr. Sawyer of Ware (by request), petition of the State Executive Committee of the Socialist Party for legislation to amend the law providing adequate assistance for certain citizens of advanced age. Pensions.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year One Thousand Nine Hundred and Thirty-One.

An Act to amend the General Laws relative to Adequate Assistance to Certain Aged Citizens.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Chapter one hundred and eighteen A
2 of the General Laws, inserted by section one of
3 chapter four hundred and two of the acts of nineteen
4 hundred and thirty, is hereby amended by striking
5 out section one and inserting in place thereof the
6 following:—

7 *Section 1.* Adequate assistance to deserving citi-
8 zens in need of relief and support sixty years of age
9 or over who shall have resided in the commonwealth
10 not less than twenty years immediately preceding
11 arrival at such age, subject to such reasonable excep-
12 tions as to continuity of residence as the department
13 of public welfare, in this chapter called the depart-
14 ment, may determine by rules hereinafter authorized,
15 shall be granted under the supervision of the depart-
16 ment. Such assistance shall, wherever practicable,

17 be given to the aged person in his own home or in
18 lodging or in a boarding home, and it shall be suf-
19 ficient to provide an income of a minimum of seven
20 dollars a week, and more in cases of special need such
21 as sickness. No person receiving assistance hereunder
22 shall be deemed to be a pauper by reason thereof.

1 SECTION 2. Said chapter one hundred and eighteen
2 A is hereby further amended by striking out section
3 two and inserting in place thereof the following:—
4 *Section 2.* Each board of public welfare shall, for
5 the purpose of granting adequate assistance and
6 service to such aged persons, establish a division
7 thereof to be designated as the Bureau of Old Age
8 Assistance. In determining the need for financial
9 assistance, said bureaus shall give consideration to
10 the resources of the aged person. Separate records
11 of all such aged persons who are aided shall be kept
12 and reports returned in the manner prescribed by
13 section thirty-four of chapter forty-one and by sec-
14 tions thirty-two and thirty-three of chapter one
15 hundred and seventeen.

1 SECTION 3. Said chapter one hundred and eighteen
2 A is hereby further amended by striking out section
3 three and inserting in place thereof the following:—
4 *Section 3.* In respect to all aged persons in receipt
5 of assistance under this chapter, the town rendering
6 the assistance shall, after and subject to approval of
7 the bills by the department and subject otherwise to
8 the provisions of section forty-two of chapter one
9 hundred and twenty-one, be reimbursed by the com-
10 monwealth for two thirds of the amount of assistance

11 given, or, if the person so aided has no settlement in
12 the commonwealth, for the total amount thereof.
13 If the person so aided has a legal settlement in another
14 town, one third of the amount of such assistance
15 given may be recovered in contract against the town
16 liable therefor in accordance with chapter one hun-
17 dred and seventeen.

1 SECTION 4. Said chapter one hundred and eighteen
2 A is hereby further amended by striking out section
3 four and inserting in place thereof the following:—
4 *Section 4.* The department shall supervise the work
5 done and measures taken by the boards of public
6 welfare of the several towns in respect to persons
7 aided and service given under this chapter; and for
8 this purpose may make such rules relative to notice
9 and reimbursement, and such other rules relating to
10 the administration of this chapter, as it deems neces-
11 sary, and may visit any person aided, and shall have
12 access to any records and other data kept by the
13 boards of public welfare or their representatives re-
14 lating to such assistance, and may require the pro-
15 duction of books and papers and the testimony of
16 witnesses under oath.

17 If any applicant for old age assistance is denied
18 assistance, or is granted assistance in an amount that
19 he deems to be unsatisfactory, he may appeal in
20 writing to the department of public welfare, which
21 shall cause a hearing to be held on such an appeal
22 within thirty days from the time of the appeal, and the
23 decision of the department shall be final as to the
24 facts and may be attacked in the courts only for
25 fraud.

