

HOUSE No. 2050

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, June 11, 1945.

The committee on Military Affairs and Public Safety, to whom was referred the report of the special commission established (under chapter 67 of the Resolves of 1943) to investigate the laws pertaining to the safety of persons in certain places of assembly (Senate, No. 520), report the accompanying bill (House, No. 2050).

For the committee,

GEORGE E. RAWSON.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year One Thousand Nine Hundred and Forty-Five.

AN ACT FURTHER CLARIFYING THE LAWS RELATING TO DOORWAYS AND WINDOWS REQUIRED AS EXITS OR AS MEANS OF EGRESS AND TO THE NUMBER AND LOCATION OF MEANS OF EGRESS FROM CERTAIN BUILDINGS.

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. Section twenty-one A of chapter one
2 hundred and forty-three of the General Laws, inserted
3 therein by section three of said chapter five hundred
4 and forty-six, is hereby amended by striking out all
5 down to and including the word "assembly" in the
6 fifth line and inserting in place thereof the follow-
7 ing: — All doorways and windows which an inspector
8 deems necessary in any building subject to section
9 twenty-one, or which the licensing officer may require
10 under section thirty-four, or which by rules and regula-
11 tions authorized by section three B are required in
12 places of assembly, as such term is defined in section
13 one, either as exits or as means of egress, — so as to
14 read as follows: — *Section 21A.* All doorways and
15 windows which an inspector deems necessary in any
16 building subject to section twenty-one, or which the
17 licensing officer may require under section thirty-
18 four, or which by rules and regulations authorized
19 by section three B are required in places of assembly,

20 as such term is defined in section one, either as exits
21 or as means of egress, shall not be so equipped as to
22 be locked, bolted or otherwise fastened so that they
23 cannot be opened from the inside by the use of the
24 ordinary door knob or by pressure on the door or
25 window or on a panic release device, so called. Any
26 place of assembly, as defined in section one, which is
27 wholly or partly below the ground level shall have at
28 least two means of egress directly to the ground or
29 street level, such means of egress to be located at
30 points as widely separated from one another as may
31 be reasonably feasible.

1 SECTION 2. Said chapter one hundred and forty-
2 three is hereby further amended by striking out
3 section twenty-eight, as amended, and inserting in
4 place thereof the following:—

5 *Section 28.* The inspectors shall from time to
6 time examine all buildings within their respective
7 jurisdictions which are used as places of assembly or
8 which are subject to sections fifteen to sixty, inclusive.
9 If in the judgment of any such inspector such building,
10 conforms to the requirements relative to places of
11 assembly or to the requirements of said sections for
12 buildings of its class, as the case may be, he shall issue
13 to the owner, lessee or occupant thereof a certificate
14 to that effect, specifying the number of persons for
15 whom the egresses and means of escape from fire are
16 sufficient. Such certificate shall continue in force
17 for not more than five years after its date, but while
18 in force it shall be conclusive evidence of a compliance
19 with said sections by the person to whom it is issued.
20 It shall be void if a greater number of persons than
21 is therein specified are accommodated or employed,

22 or assemble, lodge or reside within such building or
23 portion thereof, or if such building is used for any
24 purposes materially different from the purpose for
25 which it was used at the time of the granting thereof,
26 or if its interior arrangement is materially altered,
27 or if any egresses or means of escape from fire in such
28 building at the time of granting the said certificate are
29 rendered unavailable or are materially changed. The
30 certificate may be revoked by an inspector at any
31 time upon written notice to the holder thereof or
32 to the occupant of the premises for which it was
33 granted, and shall so be revoked if, in the opinion of
34 the inspector, circumstances have so changed that the
35 existing egresses and means of escape are not proper
36 and sufficient. A copy of said certificate shall be kept
37 posted in a conspicuous place upon each story of
38 such building by the occupant of the premises covered
39 thereby.