

By Mr. Dukakis of Brookline, petition of Michael J. Dukakis for legislation to authorize cities and towns to impose rent controls and establish minimum standards for housing accommodations. Local Affairs.

## The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year One Thousand Nine Hundred and Seventy.

### AN ACT CONFIRMING THE AUTHORITY OF CITIES AND TOWNS TO IMPOSE RENT CONTROLS AND MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR HOUSING ACCOMMODATIONS.

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

1    *Whereas*, The general court finds and declares that a serious  
2 public emergency exists with respect to the housing of a sub-  
3 stantial number of the citizens of the commonwealth, which  
4 emergency has resulted in a substantial shortage of rental  
5 housing accommodations; that, unless residential rents and  
6 evictions of tenants are regulated and controlled, such emer-  
7 gency and the inflationary pressures resulting therefrom, will  
8 produce serious threats to the public health, safety and gen-  
9 eral welfare of the citizens of the commonwealth.

1    Chapter 40 of the General Laws is hereby amended by in-  
2 serting after section 21B the following section:—

3    *Section 21C.* When public exigency, emergency or distress  
4 exists in any city or town, the city council of such city, with  
5 the approval of the mayor, or the town meeting may, by or-  
6 dinance or by-law, create a rent board for the purpose of con-  
7 trolling rents, minimum standards for the use or occupancy of  
8 housing accommodations in the city or town and evictions of  
9 tenants from such housing accommodations. The rents, stand-  
10 ards and evictions so controlled may be regulated by the rent  
11 board so as to remove hardships or correct inequities for both  
12 the owner and tenants of such housing accommodations. The  
13 rent board shall have all powers necessary or convenient to

14 perform its functions. It may make rules and regulations,  
15 require registration, issue licenses, sue and be sued, compel  
16 the attendance of persons and the production of papers and  
17 information, and issue appropriate orders which shall be  
18 binding on both the owner and tenants of such housing accom-  
19 modations.

20 Any violation of an order of the rent board shall be punish-  
21 able by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars.

22 Any order of the rent board may be appealed by any party  
23 aggrieved by the order to the district court within the district  
24 in which the housing accommodation is located.