

By Mrs. Gray of Framingham, petition of Barbara E. Gray, Thomas G. Palumbo and Robert J. Bohigian relative to services for the handicapped and elderly voters at polling places. Election Laws.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year One Thousand Nine Hundred and Eighty-Eight.

AN ACT RELATIVE TO SERVICES FOR THE HANDICAPPED AND ELDERLY VOTERS AT POLLING PLACES.

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

1 Chapter 54 of the General Laws is hereby amended by inserting
2 after section 24 the following sections:

3 Section 24A. All polling places designated by the alderman,
4 selectmen or mayor shall be accessible to handicapped persons
5 in accordance with section 13A of Chapter 22 of the General Laws.
6 All polling places shall reserve parking spaces for vehicles of
7 handicapped persons or for vehicles used to transport such
8 handicapped persons if the number of parking spaces in any such
9 area is twenty-five or more. The parking spaces reserved for
10 vehicles of such handicapped persons shall be clearly marked in
11 accordance with section 13A of Chapter 22 of the General Laws.
12 All polling places shall provide voting services for handicapped
13 persons.

14 Section 23B. Subject to appropriation, the Commonwealth
15 shall pay to cities and towns their costs of assuring that all polling
16 places for federal elections are accessible to handicapped and
17 elderly voters, as required by section three of the federal Voting
18 Accessibility for the Elderly and Handicapped Act. Not later than
19 September fifteenth of the current year, the state auditor shall
20 determine and deliver to the state secretary a statement of said
21 costs for each city and town. The state secretary shall include in
22 his budget recommendations for the succeeding fiscal year a
23 request for an appropriation in an amount equal to such estimated

24 costs, and shall distribute to each city and town its share of any
25 such appropriated funds as soon as possible after their
26 appropriation. Funds so distributed to each city and town shall
27 be deposited in the general fund of the city or town and shall be
28 expended without further appropriation by the city or town to
29 meet said costs.

30 Section 24C. Assistance shall be provided to the deaf, blind
31 and developmentally handicapped voters to enable them to
32 complete the ballot.