

HOUSE No. 495

By Messrs. Weinberg of Boston, Cloherty of Boston, Joyce of Boston and Kaplan of Brookline, petition of Norman S. Weinberg, Sumner Z. Kaplan, Peter J. Cloherty and William F. Joyce for legislation relative to the continuation of rent control in certain cities and towns. Mercantile Affairs.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

AN ACT RELATIVE TO RENT CONTROL.

1 *Whereas*, The deferred operation of this act would tend to
2 defeat its purpose which is, in part, to alleviate the severe
3 shortage of rental housing in certain areas of the commonwealth
4 which shortage has caused a serious emergency detrimental to
5 the public peace, health, safety and convenience, therefore this
6 act is hereby declared to be an emergency law, necessary for the
7 immediate preservation of the public peace, health, welfare,
8 safety and convenience.

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. The general court finds and declares that a seri-
2 ous public emergency exists with respect to the housing of a
3 substantial number of citizens in certain cities and towns of the
4 commonwealth which has resulted in a substantial shortage of
5 rental housing accommodations; that unless residential rents
6 are regulated and controlled in such cities and towns, such
7 emergency and the inflationary pressures resulting therefrom
8 will produce serious threats to the public health, safety and
9 general welfare of their citizens; and that such emergency
10 should be met by the commonwealth immediately to enable
11 local communities to establish rent control.

1 SECTION 2. Notwithstanding any contrary provision of chap-
2 ter four hundred and thirty-four of the acts of nineteen hundred
3 and fifty-three, as amended by chapter four hundred and ninety-
4 six of the acts of nineteen hundred and fifty-four, rent control,
5 in accordance with the provisions of said chapter four hundred
6 and thirty-four, as so amended, is hereby, without further ac-
7 tion by the city or town, re-established in every city and town
8 in which the provisions of said chapter four hundred and thirty-
9 four, as so amended, were continued in effect until December
10 thirty-first, nineteen hundred and fifty-five, for a further period
11 of sixty days from the effective date of this act.

1 SECTION 3. Any city or town in which by section two of this
2 act rent control is re-established for a further period of sixty
3 days from the effective date of this act may, by accepting this
4 act within sixty days after its passage, by vote, if a city, of the
5 city council subject to the provisions of the city charter, or if a
6 town, of a town meeting called for the purpose, continue such
7 rent control until such date not later than June thirtieth, nine-
8 teen hundred and sixty, as shall be specified in such vote; but
9 all rent control shall terminate on said June thirtieth in every
10 city and town so accepting this act. Any such city or town may
11 by like vote at any time prior to said March thirty-first rescind
12 such acceptance. No vote accepting this act shall be valid unless
13 it includes a declaration that a substantial shortage of rental
14 housing accommodations exists in such city or town and that the
15 control of rents therein is necessary in the public interest.

1 SECTION 4. Maximum rents under this act shall be no
2 greater than the maximum rents in effect on August thirty-first,
3 nineteen hundred and fifty-eight, subject, however, to adjust-
4 ment by a local rent board to remove hardships or to correct
5 other inequities.

1 SECTION 5. If any provision of this act or the application of
2 such provision to any person or circumstances shall be held in-
3 valid, the validity of the remainder of this act and the appli-
4 cability of such provision to other persons or circumstances shall
5 not be affected thereby.