



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

House of Representatives

State House, Boston 02133-1054

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Vice Chair
Joint Committee on Higher Education

Committees:
Environment and Natural Resources
State Administration
and Regulatory Oversight
Elder Affairs

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Rep. Mark J. Cusack, Chair
Joint Committee on Revenue
State House Room 34
Boston, MA 02133

Sen. Susan L. Moran, Chair
Joint Committee on Revenue
State House Room 506
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Chair Cusack and Chair Moran,

I write to express support for my sponsored legislation H.2809, An Act relative to the establishment of a means tested senior citizen property tax exemption, jointly filed with Representative David DeCoste. This bill is a local option patterned after a pilot program in Sudbury which has worked well for several years and was, in both 2018, and again 2021, renewed for subsequent 3-year terms. Versions of this legislation passed both the House and Senate in the 190th session.

In essence, in municipalities that choose this provision, seniors who have lived in their communities for at least 10 years and were eligible for the senior circuit breaker tax credit in the previous taxable year would receive a property tax abatement. The abatement would equal the amount of the previous year's senior circuit breaker tax credit plus a percentage of their income. An abatement would not reduce a person's property tax by more than fifty percent.

The income percentage used to calculate the taxpayers' abatement would be set by the municipality each year, with the restriction that the total abatements granted could not increase the total residential tax levy in the city or town by more than .5% in the first year or more than 1% in subsequent years. This limit serves to protect other residential taxpayers from sudden drastic property tax increases. This bill also includes a three-year sunset provision, giving municipalities the option to renew it periodically by a simple vote of their legislative body or allow it to lapse.

With property values rapidly increasing in much of the Commonwealth, seniors living on fixed or reduced incomes can be placed in the difficult position of choosing between continuing to live in the community they have called home for many years and their financial security in retirement. H.2809 recognizes that our neighborhoods are enhanced by the diversity of grandparents among young families.

Sincerely,

Carmine L. Gentile
State Representative
13th Middlesex District