



THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

ANDREA JOY CAMPBELL
ATTORNEY GENERAL

ONE ASHBURTON PLACE
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02108

(617) 727-2200
www.mass.gov/ago

March 26, 2023

The Honorable Karen E. Spilka
President of the Senate
State House, Room 332
Boston, MA, 02133

The Honorable Ronald Mariano
Speaker, House of Representatives
State House, Room 356
Boston, MA, 02133

The Honorable Michael J. Rodrigues
Chair, Senate Committee on Ways and Means
State House, Room 212
Boston, MA 02133

The Honorable Aaron Michlewitz
Chair, House Committee on Ways and Means
State House, Room 243
Boston, MA 02133

Re: Extension of chapter 257 eviction protections

Dear Senate President Spilka, Speaker Mariano, Chair Rodrigues and Chair Michlewitz:

I write to express my strong support for an extension of the chapter 257 eviction protections to July 31, 2024. Since its original passage in December 2020, and after previous extensions by the Legislature, chapter 257 has been a critical tool in our collective efforts to keep families housed. However, without further action, this important protection expires on March 31, 2023.

Chapter 257 allows a tenant facing eviction for non-payment of rent to secure a continuance of their case where the non-payment was due to financial hardship and the tenant has applied for rental assistance. This tool, combined with investments from the state and federal governments, has helped countless renters across Massachusetts resolve disputes with their landlords, apply for needed rental assistance and stay housed while their applications for rental assistance are being considered.

Rental housing was the top issue raised in complaints to our Consumer Advocacy and Response Division in calendar year 2022, and we continue to see a high volume of complaints in the first quarter of 2023. In the Attorney General's Office, we regularly hear from tenants wondering how they will afford the latest rent increase and trying to reach a resolution with a landlord to avoid an eviction and homelessness. Rental assistance is often the lifeline that is needed to keep these

residents in their homes, and Chapter 257 ensures that tenants are not needlessly evicted while they are in the process of securing that assistance.

Ensuring access to safe and affordable housing is a top priority for my office. The protections set out by chapter 257 are a proven and essential tool to promote stability for countless households across Massachusetts. I firmly support an extension of this commonsense protection.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Anne Johnson Landry, Chief of my Policy and Government Affairs Division, at (781) 707-8287 or anne.landry@mass.gov.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'AJC', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Andrea Joy Campbell

Cc: The Honorable Lydia Edwards, Senate Chair, Joint Committee on Housing
The Honorable James Arciero, House Chair, Joint Committee on Housing