

HOUSE No. 02791

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Carl M. Sciortino, Jr.

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the passage of the accompanying bill:

An Act relative to the efficiency of subsidized housing procedures.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:
<i>Carl M. Sciortino, Jr.</i>	<i>34th Middlesex</i>
<i>Cory Atkins</i>	<i>14th Middlesex</i>
<i>Benjamin Swan</i>	<i>11th Hampden</i>

HOUSE No. 02791

By Mr. Sciortino of Medford, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 2791) of Swan and others relative to the use of electronic funds transfers and third party designees for tenants of publicly subsidized housing Joint Committee on Housing.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year Two Thousand Eleven

An Act relative to the efficiency of subsidized housing procedures.

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. Chapter 121B of the General Laws is hereby amended by inserting after section
2 32F the following new section:-

3 Section 32G. (a) Housing authorities and public housing agencies or their subcontractors who are
4 administering federal or state public housing or rental assistance programs, and owners or
5 managers of affordable housing developments shall offer electronic fund transfer arrangements
6 to tenants and participants in such programs as a means of ensuring direct and timely payment of
7 rent and satisfaction of debts. Such arrangements shall be available to tenants and participants at
8 no cost and on a voluntary basis. Similar arrangements shall also be offered to otherwise
9 qualified applicants who owe debts to housing authorities or public housing agencies or
10 affordable housing developments that otherwise would be a barrier to acceptance into such
11 public housing, rental assistance, or affordable housing programs provided that the applicants

12 enters into a repayment arrangement which is reasonable in light of the income and
13 circumstances of the applicant. Late payment penalties under section 32 of chapter 121B of the
14 General Laws and costs under section 11 of chapter 186 of the General Laws, if applicable, shall
15 be waived by the Commonwealth for any tenants or participants participating in such
16 arrangements.

17 (b) Housing authorities and public housing agencies who administer state or federal public
18 housing or rental assistance programs and owners or managers of affordable housing
19 developments shall permit tenants or participants in such programs to designate, at the inception
20 of their tenancy or subsidy, or at any point thereafter, a third party who shall receive a copy of
21 any notice provided to the tenant or participant by the housing authority, housing subsidy
22 provider, or owner of an affordable housing development, including any notice reflecting an
23 intention to terminate the tenant's tenancy or participation in a subsidy program. Such third
24 parties may include a friend, family member, a caseworker, or such other person at the tenant
25 may designate. Such designation may include authorization for release of information. Both the
26 designation for third party notice and any authorization for release of information may be
27 revoked by the tenant or participant at any time. In any case in which such designation and
28 release of information is in effect, and an adverse action with respect to the tenancy or
29 participation is under consideration, the parties shall, upon the request of the tenant or the third
30 party, confer regarding any steps that might be taken to preserve the tenancy or subsidy.