

H 3562 - AN ACT ENABLING PUBLIC HOUSING AUTHORITIES TO BORROW AGAINST REAL ESTATE EQUITY OF PUBLICLY-OWNED PROPERTIES (LAND EQUITY BILL)

Across the Commonwealth, advocates are building a movement to declare housing as a right, as we've done with education and health care. While critical, tenant and homeowner protections alone don't adequately address the affordable housing emergency. Increases in cash revenues through taxes and fees, while necessary, are also insufficient. We must leverage the state's considerable financial resources, held in publicly-owned land, for housing.

What does H 3562 do? The Land Equity Bill enables municipalities to borrow against publicly-owned land anywhere in Massachusetts. The bill's provisions:

1. Declare that safe and affordable housing is a right.
2. Ensure affordable housing and resident services are considered before the land is sold for other purposes.
3. Incentivize resident organizing and creative financing for programs and services impacting public and affordable housing communities.
4. Allow municipalities to raise capital for affordable housing development and services by borrowing against the equity of state-owned property.
5. Allow local housing authorities with publicly-owned property to borrow against the value of the land for housing rehabilitation.

Additional benefits: The Land Equity Bill levels the playing field for residents and non-profit developers, giving them access to capital more quickly. The bill creates a streamlined process for municipalities and housing authorities to use public land to finance safe and affordable housing for all. This enables community-based developers to compete with large private developers.