

OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH
PUBLIC ACT SUMMARY



PA 12-34—sHB 5318 (VETOED)

Planning and Development Committee

AN ACT CONCERNING THE REVISION OF MUNICIPAL CHARTERS

SUMMARY: By law, a commission appointed to draft or amend a municipal charter or home rule ordinance must consider the changes or items specified in the petition that initiated the adoption or revision process, if applicable, and may consider anything else the appointing authority recommends. Under prior law, the commission could consider additional changes and items it deemed desirable or necessary. This act prohibits a commission appointed on or after October 1, 2012 from considering additional items or changes without the appointing authority's authorization.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2012

BACKGROUND

Charter Adoption and Revision Process

The law authorizes towns to adopt or amend a charter or home rule ordinance and specifies the process for doing so. The town's appointing authority, generally the board of selectmen or town council, or the town's voters, can initiate the process by resolution or petition, respectively. The authority must appoint a commission, which must consider any item the authority or petition specifies.

The commission and the authority must hold public hearings on the proposal according to a statutory schedule. The authority can recommend changes to the commission's proposal, but the commission does not have to accept them. After the commission finalizes its proposed charter or amendments, the authority can accept or reject all or parts of it. Voters can petition for a referendum on the rejected parts and must ultimately vote on the proposal, regardless of whether the authority initially approved it.

OLR Tracking: JRH:RC:PF:DY:eh