

AN ACT TO CREATE ACCESS TO JUSTICE

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HD1545, SD1079

SPONSORS: REPRESENTATIVE MESCHINO,
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All people have a right to be protected from environmental pollution, to live and work in a healthy environment, and to enjoy parks and nature. The people most likely to live next to a dirty power plant or close to a noisy highway are people of color, low-paid and low-income people, and those residents who do not speak English well or at all.

This often happens because decisions are being made to benefit wealthy white communities at the expense of Environmental justice communities. The Access to Justice bill will ensure that residents of Massachusetts have legal pathways to fight against environmental discrimination.

THIS BILL WILL



Prevent government entities from adopting any programs with discriminatory effect without legally sufficient justification



Allow discriminatory effect to be proven without requiring proof of intent



Require government entities to prove that there are no alternatives to programs with discriminatory effect

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Supported by Somerville Transportation Equity Partnership, MAPC, and the EJ Legislation Table: Neighbor to Neighbor; GreenRoots; Alternatives for Community & Environment; Coalition for Social Justice; Conservation Law Foundation; Clean Water Action; MA Climate Action Network; Environmental League of MA; MA Public Health Association; Green Energy Consumers Alliance; North American Indian Center of Boston; and UU Mass Action

