



CITY OF BOSTON • MASSACHUSETTS

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
MARTIN J. WALSH

January 14, 2019

TO THE CITY COUNCIL

Dear Councilors:

I hereby transmit for your approval a Home Rule Petition to the General Court entitled: "Petition for a Special Law Re: A Fire Cadet Program for the City of Boston Fire Department." This special act would give the Boston Fire Department (BFD) the authority to establish a Cadet Program to recruit and train more women and people of color to serve as active firefighters.

Last year, I commissioned an external review examining the culture and environment for female firefighters at BFD. I am committed to adopting all of the recommendations that came out of that review to bolster female recruitment efforts and improve workplace conditions, including the passage of this Home Rule Petition.

Existing state law dictates the Fire Department's hiring process, making it challenging to increase the number of women and diverse candidates in new recruit classes. This special act will allow the Boston Fire Department to recruit Boston residents between the ages of 18 – 25 years old to serve as Fire Cadets, receiving on-the-job training and performing civilian duties within BFD Headquarters and firehouses. Upon completion of the program, cadets may receive preference on the list of eligible candidates for up to 33% of an upcoming fire recruit class. In 2015, I reinstated the Boston Police Cadet Program, which has successfully grown our pipeline of diverse talent for our workforce. I am confident that this legislation will do the same.

I urge your Honorable Body to support this special act allowing the Boston Fire Department to establish a Cadet Program to take an essential step towards ensuring that our workplaces in the City of Boston are inclusive, diverse, safe and welcoming to all.

Sincerely,

Martin J. Walsh
Mayor of Boston

CITY OF BOSTON

IN CITY COUNCIL

ORDERED: That a petition to the General Court, accompanied by a bill for a special law relating to the City of Boston, to be filed with an attested copy of this Order be, and hereby is, approved under Clause One (1) of Section Eight (8) of Article Two (2), as amended, of the Amendments to the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, to the end that legislation be adopted precisely as follows, except for clerical or editorial changes of form only:

PETITION FOR A SPECIAL LAW RE: A FIRE CADET PROGRAM FOR THE CITY OF BOSTON FIRE DEPARTMENT.

SECTION 1. The board or officer in the city of Boston authorized to appoint firefighters for the city of Boston may, when so authorized by the affirmative vote of a majority of the city council and approval of the mayor, appoint as a fire cadet, for a period of full-time “on the job” training, any citizen resident of Boston who is not less than eighteen nor more than twenty-five years of age who meets the physical qualifications required of applicants for appointment as a firefighter in Boston, and who is determined by the appointing authority to be of good moral character. Such appointment shall not be subject to the civil service law or rules; nor shall a fire cadet be entitled to any benefits of such law or rules. Such appointment may be terminated by the appointing authority at any time, and shall be terminated whenever a cadet fails to maintain a passing grade in any course of study the appointing authority determines she or he should undertake, and when she or he reaches the age of twenty-seven. A fire cadet shall receive such compensation and such leave with pay as the appointing authority shall determine. No person shall be too old for appointment as a cadet if she or he was of qualifying age at the time of application to a cadet program. An appointment to a cadet program shall not be terminated for age unless the cadet has completed 2 years of service.

A fire cadet shall maintain and file records, operate office machines, answer telephones, receive complaints, enter and index official documents, prepare routine reports, prepare and tabulate facts and figures for statistical purposes, and have similar duties of an administrative rather than firefighting type. She or he shall be considered an employee of the city of Boston for the purposes of workers' compensation.

A fire cadet shall not be subject to or entitled to the benefits of any retirement or pension law nor shall any deduction be made from her or his compensation for the purpose thereof; but a fire cadet who, prior to or during the period of her or his "on the job training," passes a competitive civil service examination for appointment to the fire force of the city of Boston, and is appointed a permanent full-time firefighter, shall have her or his fire cadet service considered as "creditable service" for purposes of retirement, provided she or he pays into the annuity savings fund of the retirement system such amount as the retirement board determines equal to that which she or he would have paid had she or he been a member of said retirement system during the period of her or his training as a fire cadet.

SECTION 2. Notwithstanding the provisions of chapter thirty-one of the General Laws, any person who has completed not less than two years of service as a fire cadet under this act may, subject to a program established by the fire commissioner of the city of Boston and approved by the personnel administrator of the human resources division within the executive office for administration and finance, be appointed to fill a vacancy in a position in the lowest grade in the fire force of the city of Boston without certification from an eligible list prepared under the provisions of chapter thirty-one of the General Laws; provided, however, that such person either is on a fire entrance eligible list prepared under said chapter thirty-one or passes a qualifying examination to be given by said personnel administrator.

SECTION 3. If any federal or state, administrative or court order requires the listing of candidates in separate groups, each group to be listed according to the law of the commonwealth, then this act shall be subject to such listing.

SECTION 4. Not more than thirty-three and one-third percent of the total number of appointments to the regular fire force of the city of Boston in any calendar year, shall be made under the provisions of this act. The fire commissioner of the city of Boston shall report in writing forthwith to the personnel administrator in said division of personnel administration any appointment made under the provisions of this act.

SECTION 5. This act shall take effect upon its passage.

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT
THE FOREGOING, IF PASSED IN
THE ABOVE FORM, WILL BE IN
ACCORDANCE WITH LAW.

BY *Eugene L. O'Flaherty* *ELK*
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CORPORATION COUNSEL