

August 26, 2025

City Clerk
City of Somerville
Hoyden Ave.
Somerville MA 02143

2025 AUG 20 P 1:59
CITY CLERK'S OFFICE
SOMERVILLE, MA

Re: Request to ADD this letter (attached) to
the City of Somerville City Council Agenda
for August 28, 2025

Please see the attached letter from
Mayor Emeritus Eugene C. Bruino + Former Mayor
Deborah Kelly Gay.

This letter requests the City Council Adopt
Chapter 53, Section 18B of the MA General Laws.

The adoption of this cite from the MA General
Laws would ensure the voters of Somerville
are fully informed about the new city charter
before they must cast their ballot.

Please contact me with any questions or concerns.
Sincerely,

John M. 'Jack' Connolly

EUGENE C. BRUNE
Mayor Emeritus of Somerville

DOROTHY KELLY GAY
Former Mayor of Somerville

August 8, 2025

Ladies & Gentlemen:

For 107 years Massachusetts voters have enjoyed the constitutional right of initiative. The exercise of this right has resulted in voter approval of many progressive laws, including:

- 1.) the protection of free speech (1948);
- 2.) the right to a clean environment (1972);
- 3.) the investment of highway taxes in mass transit (1974);
- 4.) the mandatory cleanup of hazardous waste sites (1986);
- 5.) the sale and personal use of recreational marijuana (2016); and
- 6.) the millionaire's surtax (2022).

As a required part of the initiative process the secretary of state has mailed to every household with a registered voter an information packet prior to the November election describing the proposed law and the arguments for and against it.

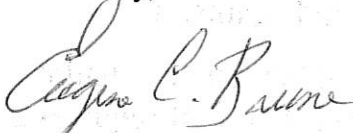
The municipal corollary to this voter information requirement for state law ballot measures is set forth in Chapter 53, Section 18B of the General Laws. It requires a city or town government that proposes a ballot measure to mail voters a similar information packet prior to its general election. But since the city council has never accepted this statute Somerville voters will be kept in the dark about the proposed new city charter right up until the moment they must decide whether to vote for it on November 4.

You have the power to rectify this unfortunate situation and ensure voters are fully informed about the new city charter before they must cast their ballot. All you need to do is vote to accept Chapter 53, Section 18B.

During the fourteen years we had the privilege and honor to serve the people of Somerville as mayor, each of us endeavored to ensure all residents were kept informed about ordinances and policy measures we were contemplating. We believed then, as we believe today, that a well-informed electorate is indispensable to the success of a city government.

With this in mind, we cannot emphasize too strongly how critically important we believe it is for voters to receive as much written information as possible about the new city charter before the November 4 general election. We therefore urge you to accept Chapter 53, Section 18B. We trust you will agree such action will inure to the benefit of all Somerville voters.

Sincerely,



Eugene C. Brune,
Mayor Emeritus



Dorothy Kelly Gay,
Former Mayor