



MASSBAR

A S S O C I A T I O N

October 29, 2021

The Honorable Michael S. Day
House Chair
Joint Committee on the Judiciary
State House, Room 136
Boston, MA 02133

The Honorable James B. Eldridge
Senate Chair
Joint Committee on the Judiciary
State House, Room 511-C
Boston, MA 02133

Re: H.1520 An act to Improve and Modernize the Information Technologies and Capacities of the Judiciary.

Dear Chairs Day and Eldridge:

I write on behalf of the Massachusetts Bar Association and its 14,000 members throughout Massachusetts in strong support of the so-called Court Information Technology Bond bill, which would provide \$164 million in bond bill funding to modernize the courts and move nearly all court functions to efficient, paperless processes and increase digital security.

A vital lesson learned during the COVID-19 crisis is that better technology is essential. In particular, the court system must have modern technology and current information technology systems in place to guarantee access to justice to the citizens of Massachusetts. While the pandemic jump started some IT initiatives while quickly pivoting to a virtual model, it is important that we do not lose that momentum. This measure would fund the replacement of MassCourts (the court's case management system), the expansion of electronic filing, WiFi in all courthouses, real time data access and increase digital security.

Although the court system has dramatically advanced its use of technology in recent years, it struggles to keep pace with the level of technological investment in other branches of government. The court has brought e-filing, e-payment and electronic document storage to fruition in the court system. However, there is a great opportunity to create a seamless court user experience for all and bringing the court system the same modern technology employed in other branches or government and the everyday life of court users.

We respectfully urge to give this bill a favorable report. Thank you for your attention to this matter. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any questions.

Very truly yours,

Martin W. Healy
Chief Legal Counsel and
Chief Operating Officer