

SENATE No. 1305

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Jason M. Lewis, (BY REQUEST)

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the adoption of the accompanying bill:

An Act to study establishment of, and definition of, a Middlesex Regional Commission.

PETITION OF:

NAME:

Vincent Lawrence Dixon

DISTRICT/ADDRESS:

*60 Lake Street Unit N, Winchester MA
01890*

SENATE No. 1305

By Mr. Lewis (by request), a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 1305) of Vincent Lawrence Dixon for legislation to study establishment of, and definition of, a Middlesex Regional Commission. Municipalities and Regional Government.

[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION
SEE SENATE, NO. 1345 OF 2021-2022.]

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

**In the One Hundred and Ninety-Third General Court
(2023-2024)**

An Act to study establishment of, and definition of, a Middlesex Regional Commission.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1 SECTION I. The Massachusetts General Laws are hereby amended by inserting the
2 following new chapter:

3 An Act to Study establishment of, and definition of, a Middlesex Regional Commission.

4 1.) A Middlesex Working Group (MWG), to examine, and specify, the concept, and
5 recommendations regarding a Middlesex Regional Commission, shall be established.

6 2.) Whereas, it appears, and is substantially believed by many individuals, local
7 governments, organizations, and groups, that various undesirable pressures exist, and have been
8 created in many parts of, and much of the region, known as Middlesex County, made up of 54
9 municipalities.

10 3a.) Whereas, it is thought that these pressures include negative impacts from what is
11 called overdevelopment: including reduction, and loss of wetlands, flood plains, watersheds,
12 permeable surfaces, open space, open land, in certain areas, insufficient development of public
13 park and recreation land, loss of farm, and other agricultural land; unplanned pressures on local
14 school district enrollments and budgets; and poor quality of construction, and infill construction.

15 3b.) Aware of particular, and substantial needs for expansion of housing availability,
16 appropriate balances, must be considered, as part of the ultimate goals of the Middlesex Regional
17 Commission.

18 4.) Therefore, this Act is established, to create a study group called the Middlesex
19 Working Group (MWG), to consider the creation of a generally beneficial, and supervisory body,
20 for the 54 municipalities, and people, of Middlesex County, to be known as the Middlesex
21 Regional Commission, composed of a variety of members.

22 4a.) The Special Commission, named the Middlesex Working Group (MWG), is
23 authorized, to be created, referencing the manner, among other reference points, in which the
24 Cape Cod Commission, has been established, and operates; to report back to the public, and the
25 General Court, in a timely manner of between 12, and 24 months.

26 4b.) The MWG shall be composed of representatives from each of the cities, and towns
27 of Middlesex County. Each of the 54 municipalities shall nominate one representative. Once this
28 body is convened, it may consider also the sub-definitions of Middlesex North, and Middlesex
29 South, as either separate districts, or sub-districts of the contemplated Middlesex Regional
30 Commission (MRC). The MWG may also identify, recruit, and otherwise obtain useful
31 additional advice, testimony, and other consultation, as seems needed, and proper.

32 4c.) The MWG shall collect detailed materials, by Open Public Meetings (OPMs),
33 written submission, requested expert testimony, and other relevant means; and shall produce both
34 a Summary Public Report (SPR), and a General Report (GR), of findings, including appropriate
35 analysis, and recommendations for future actions, and the establishment of a permanent
36 Middlesex Regional Commission (MRC).

37 5a.) The Middlesex Working Group (MWG), shall consider the definition of goals, for
38 the Middlesex Regional Commission (MRC) to include a wide range, including, in part:

39 Additional protections of the natural environment, including wetlands, floodplains,
40 watersheds, permeable surfaces, open space, open land, and agricultural uses.

41 5b.) In addition, particular standards to be encouraged should include, enhanced
42 construction standards; welcoming more neighborhood, and community friendly contractors;
43 requiring more durable and substantial forms of building construction, more environmentally
44 responsible design, including solar, wind, geothermal, and other effective, and responsible
45 aspects.

46 6.) There shall be consultation, and evaluation with, local municipal school districts, on
47 their expectations, for advance enrollment projections of at least five, ten, and twenty years, in
48 establishing potential trends, for more fully services integrated communities.

49 7.) Regional housing goals, objectives, and standards, shall be apportioned across the
50 regional commission district of the Middlesex Regional Commission. The Commission goals,
51 are to be specifically oriented to support local community-friendly values.