SENATE DOCKET, NO. 370 FILED ON: 1/19/2011

# SENATE . . . . . No. 253

## The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

***Steven A. Tolman***

*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 passage of the accompanying:

An Act relative to the youthbuild program..

PETITION OF:

| NAME: | DISTRICT/ADDRESS: |
|---|---|
| *Steven A. Tolman* | |
| | ☐ *[District]* |
| | ☐ |

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# SENATE . . . . . No. 253

By Mr. Tolman, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 253) of Steven A. Tolman for legislation relative to the youthbuild program. Education.

[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION
SEE
SENATE
, NO. *297* OF 2009-2010.]

## The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

An Act relative to the youthbuild program..

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

SECTION 1. Chapter 71 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2002 Official Edition, is hereby amended by inserting after section 89, the following sections:-

"Section 90. There is hereby established a grant program for YouthBuild. Said program shall be administered by the department pursuant to these sections.

The purpose of the YouthBuild Programs shall be:

(a) to enable economically disadvantaged youth, especially youth who have not finished high school, to obtain the education, job skills training, personal counseling, leadership development skills training, job placement assistance, and long-term follow-up leading to economic self sufficiency.

(b) to provide communities the opportunity to establish or rebuild neighborhood stability in economically depressed and low-income areas, as well as historic areas requiring restoration or preservation, while providing economically disadvantaged youth and youth who have not finished high school an opportunity for meaningful participation in society.

(c) to allow communities to maintain and expand the supply of affordable housing for homeless and other low-income individuals by utilizing the energies and talents of economically disadvantaged youth and young people who have not graduated from high school.

17 (d) to foster the development of leadership skills and a commitment to
18 community development among youth.

19 Section 91: Definitions. In this Act:

20 "Applicant" means a public or private not-for-profit agency eligible to provide
21 education and employment training under federal or State employment training programs.

22 “Commissioner” means the Commissioner of the Department of Education.

23 "YouthBuild" is a program that provides disadvantaged youth with
24 opportunities for comprehensive education, employment, leadership development, and training in
25 the construction or rehabilitation of housing for special needs populations, very low-income
26 households and low-income households.

27 Section 92: Program requirements.

28 The Commissioner is authorized to make grants to applicants for the purpose of
29 providing YouthBuild programs as approved under this Section. All programs funded pursuant
30 to the provisions of this Section shall reflect strong youth and community involvement. In
31 addition, funding provided under this Section shall be used by each YouthBuild program to
32 provide, at a minimum, the following services:

33 (a) Integrated education and job skills training services and activities which are
34 evenly divided within the program, with 50% of students’ time spent in classroom-based
35 instruction, counseling, and leadership development instruction and 50% of their time spent in
36 service learning experiences at construction sites. The programs shall include, at a minimum, the
37 following elements:

38 (1) An education component which includes basic skills instruction, secondary
39 education services, and other activities designed to lead to the attainment of a high school
40 diploma or its equivalent. The curriculum for this component shall include math, language arts,
41 vocational education, life skills training, social studies related to the cultural and community
42 history of the students, leadership skills, and other topics at the discretion of the programs.

43 (2) A vocational learning experience and skills training component
44 apprenticeship program that includes the construction and rehabilitation activities described in
45 subsection (e). The process of construction must be coupled with skills training and with close
46 on-site supervision by experienced trainers. The curriculum for this component shall contain a
47 set of locally agreed upon skills and competencies that are systematically taught, with a student's
48 mastery assessed individually on a regular, ongoing basis. Safety skills shall be taught at the
49 outset. The vocational learning experience and skills training component shall be coordinated to
50 the maximum extent feasible with pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs.

51 (3) Assistance in attaining post secondary education and required financial aid
52 shall be made available to participants prior to graduation.

53 (b) Counseling services designed to assist participants to positively
54 participate in society, which should include all of the following if necessary: outreach,
55 assessment, and orientation; individual and peer counseling; life skills training, drug and alcohol
56 abuse education and prevention; and referral to appropriate drug rehabilitation, medical, mental
57 health, legal, housing, and other services and resources in the community.

58 (c) Leadership development training that provides participants with meaningful
59 opportunities to develop leadership skills such as decision making, problem solving, and
60 negotiating. The program must also encourage participants to develop strong peer group ties
61 that support their mutual pursuit of skills and values. All programs must establish a youth council
62 in which participants are afforded opportunities to develop public speaking and negotiating
63 skills, and management and policy-making participation in specific aspects of the program.

64 (d) Assist with the acquisition, rehabilitation, acquisition and rehabilitation, or
65 construction of housing and related facilities which will serve as the vocational training sites and
66 then to be used for the purpose of providing home ownership for disadvantaged persons,
67 residential housing for homeless individuals, and low-income and very low-income families, or
68 transitional housing for persons who are homeless, have disabilities, are ill, are de-
69 institutionalized, or have special needs, and rehabilitation or construction of community
70 facilities owned by not-for-profit or public agencies.

71 (e) A stipend must be provided to participants to cover the costs associated with
72 their full time participation in this program. This stipend shall not be considered as income in
73 determining eligibility for other state or federal assistance programs.

74 (f) Stipends may be distributed in a manner that offers incentives for good
75 performance.

76 (g) Full time participation in a YouthBuild program shall be offered for a
77 period of not less than 6 months and not more than 24 months.

78 (h) A concentrated effort shall be made to find jobs for all graduates of the
79 program who have performed well. The skills training curriculum shall provide participants with
80 basic preparation for seeking and maintaining a job. Follow-up counseling and assistance in job-
81 seeking shall also be provided to participants for the 12 months following graduation from the
82 program.

83 (i) All programs serving 20 trainees or more are required to have a full-time
84 director responsible for the coordination of all aspects of the YouthBuild program.

85 Section 93. Eligible participants.

86 Eligible participants are youth 16 to 24 years and who are part of one of the
87 following groups:

88 (a) economically disadvantaged.

89 (b) persons who are not attending any school and have not received a secondary
90 school diploma or its equivalent.

91 (c) young people involved with other state agencies, including but not limited
92 to, the departments of social services, youth services and the court system.

93 Section 94. Eligible Entities and Selection Criteria.

94 Those eligible to be awarded funds under this act are not-for-profit private
95 agencies with experience operating a YouthBuild program or entities that have received a federal
96 Housing and urban Development YouthBuild grant or have experience in serving this population
97 and have plans to incubate a YouthBuild program. Priority in the awarding of funds under this
98 act shall be given to applicants with experience in operating YouthBuild programs or
99 organizations that have received federal HUD YouthBuild funding. Only not for profit private
100 agencies that are affiliates of YouthBuild USA or have received a federal Housing and Urban
101 Development YouthBuild award are eligible to use the term YouthBuild.

102 Section 95. Application requirements.

103 The Commissioner shall require that an application for YouthBuild funds under
104 this act contain at a minimum:

105 (1) a request for an implementation grant, specifying the amount of the grant
106 requested and its proposed uses;

107 (2) a description of the applicant and a statement of its qualifications,
108 including a description of the applicant's past experience running a YouthBuild program, and
109 with housing rehabilitation or construction and with youth and youth education, youth leadership
110 development and employment training programs and other relevant community organizations;

111 (3) a description of the educational and job training activities, work
112 opportunities, and other services that will be provided to participants;

113 (4) A description of the proposed construction or rehabilitation activities to be
114 undertaken and the anticipated schedule for carrying out such activities;

115 (5) a description of the manner in which eligible youths will be recruited and
116 selected, including a description of the arrangements which will be made with community-based
117 organizations, local educational agencies, public assistance agencies, the courts of jurisdiction

118 for status and youth offenders, shelters for homeless individuals and other agencies that serve
119 homeless youth, foster care agencies, and other appropriate public and private agencies;

120 (6) a description of the special efforts that will be undertaken to recruit eligible
121 young women (including young women with dependent children) with plans for addressing
122 appropriate supports they may need, especially childcare;

123 (7) a description of how the proposed program will be coordinated with other
124 youth serving agencies in the service area;

125 (8) assurances that there will be a sufficient number of adequately trained
126 supervisory personnel in the program who have attained the level of journeyman or its
127 equivalent;

128 (9) a description of the applicant's relationship with any local building trade
129 unions, which may exist, regarding their involvement in training, and the relationship of the
130 YouthBuild program with established apprenticeship programs;

131 (10) a description of activities that will be undertaken to develop the leadership
132 skills of participants, including their role in decision making;

133 (11) a detailed budget and a description of the system of fiscal controls and
134 auditing and accountability procedures that will be used to ensure fiscal soundness;

135 (12) a description of any contracts and arrangements entered into between the
136 applicant and other agencies and entities including all in-kind donations and grants from both
137 public and private entities that will serve to augment state YouthBuild funds;

138 (13) the qualifications and past experience of the person who will fill the full-
139 time program director position.

140 (14) other information/factors as deemed necessary by the Commissioner.

141 Section 97. Outcomes and evaluation.

142 Subsection (a) An applicant selected for funding under this act shall provide to
143 the department information on program and participant accomplishments, including but not
144 limited to: attendance, retention, GED attainment, high school diplomas issued, educational
145 improvement levels, placement, construction outcomes and community service
146 accomplishments.

147 Subsection (b) The department shall prepare an initial evaluation report which
148 shall be made available to the Governor and appropriate legislative committees on the progress
149 of individual programs funded under this act. A final evaluation report shall be prepared on
150 individual programs at the times of their completion. The final evaluation report shall include,

151 but not be limited to, information on the effectiveness of the program, the status of program
152 participants and recommendations on program administration at the state and local level."