

HOUSE No. 698

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Peter V. Kocot

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 resolve:

Resolve relative to protecting the archaeological, geological and fossil resources of western Massachusetts.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:
<i>Peter V. Kocot</i>	<i>1st Hampshire</i>
<i>John W. Scibak</i>	<i>2nd Hampshire</i>
<i>Ellen Story</i>	<i>3rd Hampshire</i>

HOUSE No. 698

By Mr. Kocot of Northampton, a petition (accompanied by resolve, House, No. 698) of Peter V. Kocot, John W. Scibak and Ellen Story for an investigation by a special commission (including members of the General Court) relative to the preservation of the archaeological and fossil resources of the Commonwealth. Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture.

[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION
SEE HOUSE, NO. 744 OF 2013-2014.]

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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**In the One Hundred and Eighty-Ninth General Court
(2015-2016)**
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Resolve relative to protecting the archaeological, geological and fossil resources of western Massachusetts.

1 **Resolved**, There is hereby established a special commission on protecting the
2 archaeological, geological, and fossil resources of the Connecticut River Valley. Said special
3 commission shall review existing special and general laws, may hold hearings at various
4 locations across the Commonwealth to obtain written and oral testimony and may consult with
5 state and federal agencies, educators, technical experts, town boards and commissions and native
6 american tribes to determine if existing state laws and regulations adequately protect and provide
7 public access to the archaeological, geological and fossil resources located within or from the
8 Connecticut River Valley. Said special commission shall be comprised of three members of the
9 House of Representatives, appointed by the Speaker, which shall be from districts in western
10 Massachusetts that include a portion of the Connecticut river that has significant fossil,

11 archaeological or geological deposits; three members of the Senate, appointed by the President,
12 which shall be from a district in western Massachusetts that includes the Connecticut river;
13 eleven of whom shall be appointed by the Governor, of which one shall be a professor of
14 archaeology from a Massachusetts college or university, one of whom shall be a recognized
15 authority on western Massachusetts geological formations who is a professor at a Massachusetts
16 college or university, one of whom shall be a member of a western Massachusetts geological
17 organization, one whom shall be an environmental police officer who has experience with
18 investigating the unlawful removal of archaeological, geological or fossil resources, one who
19 shall be a private landowner who owns property with significant archaeological deposits, two
20 who shall be members of town historical commissions within the region and four of whom shall
21 be of native American descent or active in efforts to preserve and educate the public about native
22 american living, meeting, spiritual and burial sites and ways of life; one member shall be
23 appointed by the secretary of the commonwealth, who shall be knowledgeable of the
24 archaeological and historic resources of the Connecticut river valley. Said special commission
25 shall review all statutes, regulations, ordinances and practices related to these resources,
26 including but not limited to how public and private institutions and agencies collect, preserve,
27 display, notify the public of discoveries, return objects and sacred remains to native American
28 tribes and related organizations and provide public access to educate and inform the public about
29 these archaeological, geological and fossil discoveries. Said special commission may receive
30 funding through state appropriation or grants, federal appropriation or grants, private gifts and
31 donations, provided, that said special commission shall file its report with the joint committee on
32 natural resources and agriculture and the clerks of the House and Senate no later than October 1,
33 2016.