

HOUSE No. 1252

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year Two Thousand Nine

An Act relative to third party assistance to trustees and further regulating trust instruments..

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

1 Chapter 203 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2006 Official Edition, is hereby
2 amended by inserting after Section 14B, the following two new sections: Section 14C.
3 With respect to a third person dealing with a trustee or assisting a trustee in the conduct of a
4 transaction, if the third person acts in good faith and for a valuable consideration and without
5 actual knowledge that the trustee is exceeding the trustee’s powers or improperly exercising
6 them: (a) The third person is not bound to inquire whether the trustee has power to act or
7 is properly exercising a power and may assume without inquiry the existence of a trust power
8 and its proper exercise. (b) The third person is fully protected in dealing with or assisting
9 the trustee just as if the trustee has and is properly exercising the power the trustee purports to
10 exercise. Section 14D. (a) A third person may receive a certification of trust in lieu of
11 receiving a copy of the trust instrument to establish the existence or terms of the trust. A
12 certification of trust may be executed voluntarily or at the request of the person with whom the
13 trustee is dealing. (b) The certification of trust may confirm the following facts or contain
14 the following information: (1) The existence of the trust and date of execution of the trust

15 instrument. (2) The identity of the settlor or settlors of the trust. (3) The identity of
16 the currently acting trustee or trustees of the trust. (4) The powers of the trustee. (5)
17 The revocability or irrevocability of the trust and the identity of any person holding any power to
18 revoke the trust. (6) When there are multiple trustees, the signature authority of the
19 trustees, indicating whether all or less than all of the currently acting trustees are required to sign
20 in order to exercise various powers of the trustee. (7) The trust identification number,
21 whether a social security number or an employer identification number. (8) The manner in
22 which title to trust assets should be taken. (c) The certification shall contain a statement
23 that the trust has not been revoked, modified, or amended in any manner which would cause the
24 representations contained in the certification of trust to be incorrect and shall contain a statement
25 that it is being signed by all of the currently acting trustees of the trust. The certification shall be
26 in the form of an acknowledged declaration signed by all currently acting trustees of the
27 trust. (d) The certification of trust shall not be required to contain the dispositive
28 provisions of the trust which set forth the distribution of the trust estate. (e) A person may
29 require that the trustee offering the certification of trust provide copies of those excerpts from the
30 original trust documents and amendments thereto which designate the trustee and confer upon
31 the trustee the power to act in the pending transaction. Nothing in this section is intended to
32 require or imply an obligation to provide the dispositive provisions of the trust or the entire trust
33 and amendments thereto. (f) A person who acts in reliance upon a certification of trust
34 without actual knowledge that the representations contained therein are incorrect is not liable to
35 any person for so acting and the reliant will be fully protected and released to the same extent as
36 though all such representations had been correct. A person who does not have actual knowledge
37 that the facts contained in the certification of trust are incorrect may assume without inquiry the

38 existence of the facts contained in the certification of trust. Actual knowledge shall not be
39 inferred solely from the fact that a copy of all or part of the trust instrument is held by the person
40 relying upon the trust certification. Any transaction, and any lien created thereby, entered into by
41 the trustee named in the certification of trust and a person acting in reliance upon a certification
42 of trust shall be enforceable against the trust assets. However, if the person has actual knowledge
43 that such trustee is acting outside the scope of the trust, then the transaction is not enforceable
44 against the trust assets. Nothing contained herein shall limit the rights of the beneficiaries of the
45 trust against the trustee. (g) A third person who acts in good faith pursuant to a
46 certification under this section is not bound to ensure the proper application of trust property paid
47 or delivered to the recipient thereof. (h) A person's failure to demand a certification of
48 trust does not affect the protection provided that person by section fourteen C, and no inference
49 as to whether that person has acted in good faith may be drawn from the failure to demand a
50 certification of trust. Nothing in this section is intended to create an implication that a
51 person is liable for acting in reliance upon a certification of trust under circumstances where the
52 requirements of this section are not satisfied.